



# **Public University Students' Perceptions of the Connection between Education, Wealth and English in Puerto Rico**

---

A Master thesis submitted in the accordance with the  
requirements of Leiden University for the degree of  
Master of Arts - Latin American Studies

Name: Alissia de Vries  
Student number: 1963937  
Email address: AlissiadeVries@hotmail.com  
Specialization: Language variation and bilingualism  
Academic year: 2017/2018  
First reader: Dr. M. C. Parafita Couto  
Second reader: Dr. E. Alves Vieira  
Date: 20 March 2018

## **Acknowledgements**

Working on this study has been a dynamic, new and joyful experience. I would like to thank Dr. Maria Carmen Parafita Couto for providing me with this research idea and stimulating me to always work hard, Dr. Shannon Bischoff for giving me the opportunity to build on his study and providing me great insight and feedback, and Dr. Catherine Mazak for giving me great advice and making me feel welcome at the UPRM campus.

In addition, I would like to thank the students from the University of Puerto Rico Mayagüez and the University of Puerto Rico Río Piedras for participating in this study. Without them, this study would not have been possible.

## Abstract

Despite the fact that English became the second official language of Puerto Rico in 1902 (Muñiz-Argüelles, 1989), the English language is still not widely spoken in Puerto Rico. In fact, according to the most recent data, 78.1% of the population claims to speak English less than very well (U.S. Census, 2016). Prior research has demonstrated that there is a connection between education, wealth and English in Puerto Rico. English has the reputation of being the language of the Puerto Rican elite (i.a. Pérez Casas, 2016; Torruellas, 1990). This is due to the high costs of private primary and secondary education and not easily accessible English language resources such as a network of English speaking friends, high speed internet and cable television (i.a. Pousada, 2000; Urciuoli, 2013). This current study builds on Bischoff (2017), who argues that the English language requirements at public universities are a barrier to economically disadvantaged students. As a result, one's economical and educational background can serve as either a privilege or a misfortune in one's professional aspirations as well (i.a. Barreto, 2000; Schweers and Hudders, 2000).

The aim of this study was to gain insight into public university students' perceptions of the connection between education, wealth and English in Puerto Rico. Data to address this was collected through the distribution of an online questionnaire and carrying out in-depth interviews with students from the University of Puerto Rico Mayagüez (UPRM) and the University of Puerto Rico Río Piedras (UPRRP). In total, 119 questionnaire responses followed by in-depth interviews with 12 UPRM students were used for analysis. The results showed that, contrary to prior research (i.a. Bischoff, 2017; Pérez Casas, 2016; Pousada, 2000), public university students deny or do not recognize a connection between wealth, education and English in Puerto Rico. Instead, they view English language acquisition as a matter of putting in effort in learning and practicing instead of wealth. Furthermore, English language skills are perceived as necessary tools for professional successes and feeling like a global citizen. Puerto Ricans who lack English skills are perceived as unmotivated, missing out on life and not wanting to feel connected to the US Mainland. Nonetheless, it appeared that the majority of public university students have attended private primary and/or secondary schools, have access to English resources and grow up in a social environment filled with English speakers. In other words, public universities serve increasingly wealthy Puerto Ricans who seem unaware of their privileges, whereas economically disadvantaged Puerto Ricans are blamed for their lack of English skills and presumably experience a misfortune while aiming to reach their academic and professional goals. Studying the perceptions of private university students in Puerto Rico in further research would create the opportunity to compare the perceptions of the current studied Puerto Rican elite students versus those of the presumably economically disadvantaged private university students.

## Table of content

<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Abstract</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>List of Tables</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>2. Literature review</b>	<b>8</b>
2.1 Demographics of Puerto Rico	8
2.2 History and language policy in brief	8
2.3 Primary and secondary education	9
2.4 Higher education	10
2.5 The role of English in social environments	12
2.6 The role of English in the work field	13
2.7 Relocating to the US mainland	14
2.8 The connection between education, wealth and English in Puerto Rico	14
<b>3. Methodology</b>	<b>16</b>
3.1 Materials and measures	16
3.2 Participants	17
<b>4. Results</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>4.1 Quantitative results</b>	<b>18</b>
4.1.1 <b>Personal backgrounds</b>	<b>18</b>
4.1.1.1 US mainland residence	18
4.1.1.2 Bilingualism	18
4.1.1.3 Self-evaluated language skills	19
4.1.2 <b>Primary and secondary education</b>	<b>19</b>
4.1.2.1 Enrollment in private and public schools	20
4.1.2.2 Language of instruction	21
4.1.2.3 School preferences	22
4.1.2.4 The influences on language proficiency	23
4.1.3 <b>Social environments</b>	<b>24</b>
4.1.3.1 The use of English outside of the classroom	24
4.1.3.2 English in the households	24
4.1.3.3 Spanish-English code-switching	25
4.1.3.4 Language attitudes and prejudices	27
4.1.4 <b>Academic and career goals</b>	<b>29</b>
4.1.4.1 Attending a public university	29
4.1.4.2 English language requirements	30
4.1.4.3 Future career goals	31
4.1.4.4 English in connection to the US mainland	32
<b>4.2 Qualitative results</b>	<b>33</b>

4.2.1	<b>Personal backgrounds</b>	<b>33</b>
4.2.2	<b>Primary and secondary education</b>	<b>34</b>
	4.2.2.1 Former public school student	34
	4.2.2.2 One-on-one teaching at private schools	35
	4.2.2.3 Unproperly organized public schools	36
	4.2.2.4 Emphasizing English at private schools	36
	4.2.2.5 Not content with private schools	37
	4.2.2.6 The social environment at private schools	37
4.2.3	<b>Social environments</b>	<b>38</b>
	4.2.3.1 English input in the households	38
	4.2.3.2 Family ties to the US mainland	40
	4.2.3.3 The benefits of growing up bilingual	41
	4.2.3.4 Relating to friends because of English	41
	4.2.3.5 Using English comes natural	42
	4.2.3.6 Private school friends	43
	4.2.3.7 English as a friendship requirement	45
	4.2.3.8 Making no use of the easy accessibility of English	45
	4.2.3.9 Preferring Spanish over English	46
	4.2.3.10 Not wanting to be associated with the US mainland	46
4.2.4	<b>Academic and career goals</b>	<b>47</b>
	4.2.1.1 Choosing UPRM	47
	4.2.1.2 English language requirements	50
	4.2.1.3 Appropriate English requirements	50
	4.2.1.4 Too little English requirements	53
	4.2.1.5 Future plans	55
	4.2.1.6 English in future careers	55
	4.2.1.7 Relocating to the US mainland	55
<b>5.</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>57</b>
	5.1 The connection between English and primary and secondary education	57
	5.2 The connection between English and social environments	58
	5.3 The connection between English and academic and career goals	59
	5.4 The connection between education, wealth and English in Puerto Rico	60
	5.5 The educational and social backgrounds of the participants	60
<b>6.</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>60</b>
	6.1 Further research	61
<b>7.</b>	<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>8.</b>	<b>Appendices</b>	<b>65</b>
	A1 – English version of the Qualtrics questionnaire	66
	A2 – Spanish version of the Qualtrics questionnaire	93
	B – Form of consent	122
	C – List of interview questions	123
	D1 - Interview transcript Carlos	128
	D2 - Interview transcript Luis	135

D3 - Interview transcript Miguel	140
D4 - Interview transcript Sofia	145
D5 - Interview transcript Isabel	153
D6 - Interview transcript Nicole	158
D7 - Interview transcript Enrique	163
D8 - Interview transcript Fabiola	172
D9 - Interview transcript Vivianna	179
D10 - Interview transcript Ivana	188
D11 - Interview transcript Jonathan	195
D12 - Interview transcript Bryan	206

## List of figures and Tables

Figure 1 Puerto Rico: map and area guide	8
Table 1 Spanish and English language acquisition	18
Table 2 Factors that have contributed to the bilingualism of the participants	19
Table 3 Participants' evaluations of their Spanish skills	19
Table 4 Participants' evaluations of their English skills	19
Table 5 Participants' attitudes towards their overall English and Spanish skills	19
Table 6 Enrollment of the participants in private and public elementary schools, Junior High schools and High schools in Puerto Rico	20
Table 7 Reasons for attending a private Elementary school, a private Junior High school and a private High school.	20
Table 8 Reasons for attending public elementary schools, junior high schools and public high schools.	21
Table 9 Language(s) of instruction at private schools	21
Table 10 Language(s) of instruction at public schools	21
Table 11 Preferences for private or public education	22
Table 12 Reasons for preferring private schools	22
Table 13 Reasons for preferring public schools	23
Table 14 Participants' opinions on statements about the influences of education on language proficiency	23
Table 15 Participants' use of English	24
Table 16 Participants' evaluations of their parents' or caretakers' overall Spanish skills	24
Table 17 Participants' evaluations of their parents' or caretakers' overall English skills	24
Table 18 Participants' frequency of code-switching	25
Table 19 Participants' reasons for code-switching while speaking or writing	25
Table 20 Persons around whom the participants feel comfortable to code-switch	25
Table 21 Participants' opinions on statements about code-switching	26
Table 22 Participants' attitudes towards Puerto Ricans who do not speak English well	27
Table 23 Participants' attitudes towards English-speaking Puerto Ricans	27
Table 24 Reasons behind a Puerto Rican not speaking English well	27
Table 25 Reasons behind a Puerto Rican speaking English better than Spanish	28
Table 26 Participants' opinions on statements about the importance and impact of English	28
Table 27 Reasons for attending UPR	29
Table 28 Language of instruction in UPR classrooms	30
Table 29 Participants' opinions on statements about the language requirements at public and private universities	31
Table 30 Participants' opinions on statements about the role of English in their future	32
Table 31 Participants' opinions on statements about English in connection to the US Mainland	33
Table 32 Background information about the interviewed participants	34

# 1. Introduction

Since 1902 Puerto Rico has both English and Spanish as its official languages (Muñiz-Argüelles, 1989). One may expect that for this reason the presence of both languages would result in Spanish-English bilinguals throughout Puerto Rico. However, according to the most recent U.S. census (2016) 78.1% of the population claims to speak English less than very well. The exposure to English, and therefore the ability to acquire the language, mostly depends on educational opportunities, socio-economics and one's social environment. More specifically, private primary and secondary schools in Puerto Rico are known for being expensive, yet providing higher quality education and more English input than public schools (i.a. Bischoff, 2018; Pérez Casas et al., 2008; Pousada, 2000). The Puerto Ricans that are able to attend these expensive and quality private schools, mostly come from an elite background in which English plays a central role in daily communication with their inner circle and in their activities such as watching television and playing videogames (i.a. Pérez Casas et al., 2008; Torruellas, 1990). When one lacks quality English education and/or sufficient English input from their social environment, it is argued that this can affect one's career goals, which starts with not being able to attend public higher education in Puerto Rico (i.a. Bischoff, 2017; Barreto, 2000).

This paper builds on Bischoff (2017), who argues that English is a barrier to economically disadvantaged former public school students, who would want to attend public higher education in Puerto Rico. This argument arose from the comparison Bischoff (2017) made between the costs, matriculation rates and English language requirements of the University of Puerto Rico Mayagüez (UPRM), which is a public university, and two neighboring private universities: Inter American University of Puerto Rico San Germán (Inter) and Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico. Bischoff found that a decrease in student matriculation rates at UPRM was not solely due to an increase in costs, as a result of the global economic crisis of 2007, but that the university's English language requirements were functioning as a contributing factor to this decrease. As a result, public universities in Puerto Rico are serving fewer economically disadvantaged students from public secondary schools and an increasing number of island elites from private secondary schools. The students who are not able to cope with the public university's English requirements, are obligated to attend one of the significantly more expensive private universities on the island, or quit pursuing a university degree completely (Bischoff, 2017).

This current paper seeks to gain insight into the perceptions public university students have regarding English in Puerto Rico, focusing on the research question: "What are public university students' perceptions of the connection between education, wealth and English in Puerto Rico?". To answer this research question, it was divided into 3 sub-questions: 1) "What are public university students' perceptions of the connection between English and primary and secondary education?"; 2) "What are public university students' perceptions of the connection between English and social environments?"; and 3) "What are public university students' perceptions of the connection between English and academic and career goals?". Data to address this was collected through the distribution of an online questionnaire and carrying out in-depth interviews with students from the University of Puerto Rico.

This study contributes to previous research by providing further insight into the awareness of the connection between wealth, education and English, by those who appear to have benefitted from it. The majority of students that attend the University of Puerto Rico are increasingly economically advantaged students who grew up in an English fostering social environment and have had the chance to attend expensive private schools, with as a result a good academic performance in regards to English (Bischoff, 2017; Príncipe, 2005). Also, because public





2000). Initially teachers from the US Mainland were hired to teach English, but later the University of Puerto Rico was established to train Puerto Rican English teachers as well (Vélez, 2000). As for language policies in the public school classrooms, it varied per school or program whether classes were instructed in Spanish or English. However, acquiring the English language was strongly enforced and therefore created an advantage for elite Puerto Ricans (Carroll, 2016). Nevertheless, the Americanization efforts created the reaction of a countermovement by political elite around 1948 (Vélez, 2000). This resulted in the strengthening of Puerto Rican nationalism and therefore a preference for Spanish instruction in the classrooms (Algren de Gutiérrez, 1987; Clampitt-Dunlap, 2000). "American responses to Puerto Rican resistance of their policies prior to 1948 ranged from petulance, impatience, and pedantic arrogance to ethno-sensitive revisions that genuinely addressed islander grievances." (Vélez, 2000, p. 13).

The second period, characterized by cultural nationalism, came in around 1949 (Carroll, 2016). Since then, educational priorities changed as well, which resulted in Spanish being the language of instruction at public schools (Carroll, 2016). "The socioeconomic elite circumvented the intent of this policy by enrolling their children in private schools that either taught in English or otherwise emphasized English." (Vélez, 2000, p. 13). Private schools in Puerto Rico are not funded by the government, and thus were able to deviate from the new language policies. As a result, the majority of these schools chose English instruction and emphasis over Spanish (Barreto, 2000).

Since 1952 Puerto Rico is a self-governing commonwealth of the United States (Vélez, 2000). "Once the islanders had greater political autonomy, the right to vote for legislators on the island and the Governor, Spanish became the language of instruction for all public primary and secondary grade levels and English was taught as a subject." (Bischoff, 2017, p. 7). To date, the language set-up in public versus private schools remained as: Spanish instruction at public primary and secondary schools and mainly English instruction at private primary and secondary schools (Bischoff, 2017). Despite the fact that English became the second official language of Puerto Rico in 1902 (Muñiz-Argüelles, 1989), private school curriculums and significant visibility of the language through media, English is still not widely spoken on the island. More specifically, according to the most recent data, 78.1% of the population claims to speak English less than very well (U.S. Census, 2016).

### **2.3 Primary and secondary education**

According to Pousada (2000), education is the most important factor for English language acquisition in Puerto Rico. Pousada (2000, p. 112) argues that: "it is almost a truism at the University of Puerto Rico that public school students do poorly in English, and private or Catholic school students do better." In Puerto Rico, parents can choose to put their children in a public or private primary and secondary school. However, 'choose' is somewhat inaccurate, because whether or not you attend a public (Spanish emphasized) or private (English emphasized) school, depends in most cases on the amount of financial resources one has.

Private schools (including Catholic) are known for providing better quality education, having strong English language programs, better learning facilities, better teachers and better overall resources (Pérez Casas et al., 2008; Pousada, 2000). "Private schools teach children effectively, and nearly all their students graduate" (Urciuoli, 2013, p. 49). Because parents acknowledge the high economic value of English, in both Puerto Rico and on a global level, having their children learn English is a key goal for most Puerto Rican parents (Suárez, 2005). This perception of the high economic value of English, refers to the fact that English proficiency is a required skill for employment in several sectors. In addition, having a population with strong English proficiency fosters the island's economic growth through international business and export-oriented industrialization (Nunan, 2003; Suárez, 2005).

However, providing children with a private education in Puerto Rico, comes with a hefty price of approximately \$10,000 or more a year (Colegio San Ignacio de Loyola, 2017; Commonwealth-Parkville School, 2017; The TASIS School Dorado, 2017). In addition, "Private schools can be very selective about their admission and retention criteria. Public schools are required to admit any and all students since access to education is a civil right under the Puerto Rican Constitution." (Maldonado, 2000, p. 492). In order to attend a private school, and therefore provide children with strong English language education from a young age, one needs financial resources that the average Puerto Rican does not possess. In fact, Ladd and Rivera-Batiz (in Carroll, 2016) point out that only approximately 20% of the school aged children are able to attend a private school, and therefore be educated in a bilingual environment. In contrast, according to the most recent data, 43.5% of Puerto Rican families live in poverty (United States Census Bureau, 2016), thus are not able to provide their children private education.

## 2.4 Higher education

After finishing High School, Puerto Ricans once more face the choice of attending private or public education. Using the Inter American University of Puerto Rico San Germán (Inter) and the University of Puerto Rico Mayagüez (UPRM) as examples of private and public universities respectively, the main differences between private and public higher education will be discussed.

UPRM was founded in 1911 as *Colegio de Agricultura y Artes Mecánicas Mayagüez* and later became part of the UPR system. The universities stated goals are to provide co-educational, bilingual education (RUM, 2018). The Mayagüez campus is mainly known for its majors in engineering and technology (Rosario, McGee, López, Quintero and Hernández, 2014). According to the engineering faculty of UPRM, more engineers from UPRM work at major corporations and governmental agencies such as NASA, GE and Boeing than any other U.S. institution (Bischoff, 2017). In San Germán, which is located near Mayagüez, Inter was founded in 1912. The San Germán Campus is the oldest campus of the Inter system. "The campus offers a multicultural environment where professors and students from Puerto Rico and different parts of the world meet and interact" (Inter San Germán, 2018). Both Inter and UPRM have become two of the five most popular universities on the island. Still today, these universities matriculate the vast majority of students (Carroll, 2016). Besides the fact that both universities are early founded institutions and are two of the most popular higher educational institutions on the island, several differences can be found as the result of one being public and the other being private.

First, when looking at tuition costs, one would pay \$4274 per year for a degree at Inter (Cappex, 2017a), while one would pay \$1904 per year at the UPRM (Cappex, 2017b). This makes studying at private university Inter more than two times as expensive. Note that these expenses solely include tuition costs and that costs of housing, books, materials and travelling need to be taken into consideration as well as they would increase costs accordingly.

Second, in contrast with private primary and secondary schools, "private universities are viewed by many as inferior schools" (Bischoff, p. 20, 2017). This inferiority can be found in Inter's lower graduation rates and fewer students choosing to return to the campus after their freshmen year than at UPRM. Whereas in the expected time of completion of a degree 35% of students graduate at Inter (College Scorecard, 2017a), 39% of the students graduate at UPRM (College Scorecard, 2017b). In addition, 79% of first time, fulltime undergraduates decide to return to Inter after their freshman year (College Scorecard, 2017a), whereas at UPRM students seem more content with their education and 92% of them decide to continue their degree at the UPRM after their first year (College Scorecard, 2017b). The better reputations of public universities in general could also be a result of their way of teaching in comparison to private universities. Generally, public universities produce students who appear to be more independent, whereas private

university students appear to require more attention and motivation to perform (Príncipe, 2005).

Third, Inter has lower English language requirements than UPRM has. "At UPRM, students are required to have a working knowledge of the English language" (UPRM, 2017, p. 73). When a student applies for a degree at UPRM, he needs to take the University Evaluation and Admissions Tests, which include Spanish, Mathematics level II and English aptitude and achievement tests (UPRM, 2017). Once matriculated, UPRM requires that their undergraduate students take at least 12 credits of English courses, which include two Academic English language courses and two courses whose content is taught in English within the department of English (UPRM, 2017). This corresponds to the mission of UPRM to provide bilingual education. The type of Academic English courses in which their students enroll, is based on the student's scores on the English Evaluation and Admission Test. The courses consider: Basic, Intermediate and Advanced English. As for the other non- English language courses, professors decide which language will be used in class lectures and student evaluation activities (UPRM, 2017). This means that the language of instruction, materials and exams could be provided in English, Spanish or a combination of both. This practice of combining or alternating between the two languages, i.e. translanguaging, is common in the classrooms of the UPRM (Mazak and Herbas-Donoso, 2015). As for Inter, the minimum English language requirement is providing evidence of having taken English courses in high school for two years (Recinto de San Germán, 2017). Inter uses the same University Evaluation and Admission Tests as UPRM does, however in this case the scores of the English tests could be excluded from the overall admission scores as there is no minimum English language score required to get accepted (Interamericana, in Bischoff, 2017). Once matriculated, Inter requires fewer English course credit hours of their undergraduate students than UPRM does. Inter requires a total of 9 credits of English courses, which include an English writing, an English reading and an English speaking course (Interamericana, in Bischoff, 2017). Similar to UPRM, Inter provides English language courses at various levels, nonetheless, Inter also offers an additional course at a lower level of English, namely Remedial English (Interamericana, in Bischoff, 2017).

It seems that students would rather prefer to attend public universities, because these universities provide better quality education, have higher graduation rates, yet offer this at a lower cost. However, while the costs of a public higher education are lower in its actual dollar costs, the costs could be considered higher when the ability to meet the English requirements are taken into consideration. Bischoff (2017, p. 302) argues that besides actual dollars: "Academic English is the currency that must be paid in order to pursue a diploma at UPRM". Bischoff points out how the majority of former public school students enroll in the lowest level of English and the majority of former private school students enroll in Intermediate and Advanced English at UPRM. This is in accordance with the fact that private primary and secondary schools focus on and emphasize the English language significantly more than public primary and secondary schools do, as discussed above.

As a result of the economic crisis in 2007, the government of Puerto Rico implemented austerity measures in the public university system, which lead to in an increase of tuition costs and a decrease of subsidy for public university students (Archibald and Feldman, in Bischoff, 2017). During this time, a decline of student matriculation rates occurred. This led to fewer enrollments in the lowest level of Academic English courses offered by UPRM: in other words, mainly former public school students were not matriculating into UPRM (Bischoff, 2017). Simultaneously to the decline in student matriculation at the UPRM, an increase in student matriculation at the neighboring private university Inter was shown which led Bischoff (2017) to argue that an additional factor must play a role in the decline in student matriculation at UPRM. Because, why

would economically disadvantaged students quit pursuing their degree, or not attend, a public university, but instead enroll in a private university which is more than double the cost of a public university? The latest data shows that 84% of the students who are currently enrolled at Inter receive a Pell Grant subsidy<sup>1</sup> (Niche, 2018a), in comparison to 69% of students enrolled at UPRM that receive Pell Grants (Niche, 2018b). In addition, according to the latest data, 27% of the students enrolled in Inter receive a Federal Loan in order to pay for their education (College Scorecard, 2017a), in comparison to 15% of the students enrolled in UPRM (College Scorecard, 2017b).

When comparing Inter and UPRM, one factor that could make Inter seem appealing to former public school students, is the fact that the university has lower English requirements. As mentioned above, the majority of former public school students are placed into the lowest English proficiency courses at UPRM. These courses could help students to improve their English language skills, however, the time and money necessary to continue the sequence of required English language courses may make matriculation prohibitive. For those that do matriculate into UPRM, English could still be the cause of failed classes, and therefore perhaps lead students to leave UPRM. When continuing their degree at UPRM is not an option, students face the decision of enrolling in an expensive private university, which is viewed as a lower quality institution and would only be partly subsidized by their Pell Grant and Federal Loan, or not attending higher education at all.

“The operations of a dual and underfinanced educational system in Puerto Rico produces a mass of undereducated Puerto Rican youth on the island. Pushed from their schools, these young people are forced to choose between a life of dependency, idleness or underemployment” (Urciuoli, 1996, p. 50)

## **2.5 The role of English in social environments**

As discussed in the previous section, the English language is easier to access for Puerto Ricans with an economically advantaged background. This is due to the simple fact that the wealthy are able to afford expensive private education. This provides the necessary foundation of English skills, to be able to get a degree at a public university such as UPRM which provides quality education. This section explores the social environments of elite Puerto Ricans and how and why English plays such a significant role outside of their classrooms.

Pérez Casas (2016) discusses how the English language is present in the everyday lives of elite, or economical privileged, Puerto Ricans and how it is used to understand, construct, accept and reject social membership among the islands economic elite. Elite Puerto Ricans are known for spontaneously alternating English and Spanish in their conversations, i.e. code-switching (CS), which fosters the existence of these social memberships (Pérez Casas, 2016).

“The habitual inclusion of English in speakers’ day-to-day conversations means English words or phrases are no longer something foreign. Thus, CS becomes part of what identifies speakers as individuals or as members of a group; it becomes part of their identities.” (Pérez Casas, 2016, p. 43)

Besides in private schools, Puerto Rican elites use English outside of the classroom to communicate with their inner circle. Fayer (in Nickels, 2005) points out that even though speaking English amongst family members is not considered a social norm, it offers a possibility

---

<sup>1</sup> Pell Grants are subsidies provided by the US Federal Government to low income students and their families to subsidize higher educational costs. There are restrictions on how the funds can be spent. Unlike a Federal Loan, a Pell Grant does not have to be repaid, except under certain circumstances (Federal Student Aid, 2018)

to practice English language skills in a familiar environment in which speakers do not have to worry about making mistakes. As for friendships, it is common for elite Puerto Ricans to have access to English speaking networks and therefore elites are also capable of consciously picking English-speaking Puerto Ricans to be their friends, with the result of more English input and opportunities to practice their language skills (Pérez Casas et al., 2008).

Torruellas (1990) points out that the use of English indicates belonging to the upper class in Puerto Rico. Providing children with opportunities to become proficient in English and therefore reproducing the elite status, is considered an important motive behind enforcing the English language in the lives of elite children (Torruellas, 1990). "In Puerto Rico, English stands beside Spanish as a marker of prestige and is an important requisite for upward social mobility." (Pérez Casas et al., 2008, p. 217). English proficiency is a required skill for employment in several sectors (Suárez, 2005) and is perceived as making the difference between being the manager or being hired as the assistant (Clachar, 1997).

Factors that make English, especially now, so accessible are cable television, videogames and the internet. Pérez Casas et al. (2008) points out that young elite Puerto Ricans incorporate English words into their vocabulary because of exposure to English spoken content such as advertisements, commercials, series and movies. In addition, elites often visit English websites and play online English videogames with other (English speaking) people. Having access to American or other foreign television channels and access to (high speed) internet is considered quite a luxury in Puerto Rico. The most recent data of communication access shows that 21% of the population has no cable television and 14% of the population has no internet access at their house (Federal Communications Commission, 2011). More specifically, only 40% of the households that do have internet access have access to 3G internet, which means that the majority of the households on the island copes with a slow or bad 2G internet connection (Federal Communications Commission, 2011). The latest data shows that 56% of the population is still referred to as "underserved" because of a lack of quality internet access and having less than 2 wired providers, which makes it unable for them to switch between more than one or two devices at the same time (Broadband Now, 2016).

Growing up in an environment in which English is frequently spoken by your family members and friends and in which English content is easily accessible, can be considered an extra privilege on top of the strong English language programs in private schools. By enforcing English input to their children, elite bilingual parents are reproducing their elite status and assuring their children of being accepted at superior universities and increasing their chances of employment in higher positions.

## **2.6 The role of English in the work field**

"English is viewed as a global language that opens doors for study and career advancement opportunities" (Dominguez Rosado, Simounet, Faraclas and Pousada, 2012, p. 124). Being bilingual in both English and Spanish, is often a requirement for numerous occupations in work fields such as, e.g. commerce, the military, finance, federal agencies, education, and mass media (Clachar, 1997). Especially in the metropolitan areas, Puerto Rico's economy mainly drives on its growing tourism and hospitality services (Smith and Cooper, 2000). A significant amount of effort is put into training and educating employees to perpetuate the growth of these domains. The goal is to produce employees who are not only capable of providing quality customer service and are technically proficient, but are in addition trained as a workforce of world-class quality that consist of fluent English-Spanish bilinguals (Smith and Cooper, 2000). Besides tourism, Barreto (2000) points out that American-owned firms dominate the island's economy and that the complete federal public sector operates in English. In other words, English language proficiency will be taken into consideration in job applications in the majority of work fields.

However, having sufficient English language skills can bring you further than simply increasing your chances of employment in your aspired work field. "Speaking English opens many options the monolingual Puerto Rican does not have" (Schweers and Hudders, 2000, p. 77). English is perceived as the language of those who end up as managers or supervisors. Those that solely speak Spanish end up working in lower positions and working for the English-speaking Puerto Rican who is in charge (Clachar, 1997).

By offering curriculums in which the English language plays a significant role and thus establishing an environment which prepares and strengthens students for the employment that demands English, public universities could be viewed as more attractive or as providing more than private universities. By producing Puerto Ricans with sufficient English language skills, a contribution is made to the island's economy as well, such as the fostering of international business and export-oriented industrialization (Nunan, 2003; Suárez, 2005).

## **2.7 Relocating to the US mainland**

In addition to a preference for studying at public universities, wealthy Puerto Ricans are more likely to send their children to universities on the US mainland. According to Barreto (2000), the motive behind this is not solely based on improving English language skills, but additionally to obtain a degree that symbolizes being elite on the island.

"Because Puerto Rico is a territory of the United States, Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens and can therefore move freely between the two "countries"" (Ramos, 1992, p. 49). Having obtained a degree on the mainland or not, Puerto Ricans who are fluent in English are in general more likely to choose to (permanently) relocate to the US mainland than those who lack English-language fluency (Mora, Dávila and Rodríguez, 2017). Those who lack in sufficient knowledge of English, yet decide to move to the US mainland, are mainly employed in service or agricultural occupations, whereas those with adequate English skills are employed in white-collar jobs and earn a higher salary as a result (Mora et al., 2017; Barreto, 2000).

Otterstrom and Tillman (2013) examined Puerto Ricans that moved to the US mainland and found that whereas traditionally most Puerto Ricans settled down in New York and New Jersey, over the last two decades most of them relocated not only to the large metropolitan areas along the East coast, but increasingly the majority are settling in Orlando. Duany and Rodríguez (2006, p. 3) note that:

"The migrants' relatively high educational status is reflected in their ability to speak English. In the 2000 census, 63.2 percent of all Puerto Ricans in Central Florida claimed they could speak English very well, compared to 64.2 percent in New York City and only 28.1 percent in Puerto Rico."

The majority of the Orlando-based Puerto Ricans are employed in white-collar jobs in the tourism sector (Otterstorm and Tillman, 2013). In addition, "Puerto Ricans in Central Florida are more likely to be employed in retail trade, professional, scientific, and technical services, transportation, finance, real estate, insurance, and other services than in Puerto Rico." (Duany and Rodríguez, 2006, p. 4). Obtaining one of these white-collar jobs on the mainland could result in earning a family income of \$33,500 a year versus staying on the island and having a family income of \$19,606 per year (Duany and Rodríguez, 2006; United States Census Bureau, 2017).

## **2.8 The connection between education, wealth and English in Puerto Rico**

Previous research shows that there is a connection between education, wealth and the English language in Puerto Rico. This connection is fostered by the overall quality and English language programs at expensive private schools, the limited access to English-speaking networks,

highspeed internet and cable television, the English language requirements at public universities and the importance of being bilingual to increase your chances of employment as well as indicating membership in society as an “elite”. The question that arises from this is whether Puerto Ricans that are positively or negatively influenced by this connection, are aware of it or recognize it.

Because public universities’ matriculated students would mainly be Puerto Ricans with an English-supporting background and because they currently deal with university requirements and choosing future careers, it was believed that this group would provide great insight into their own perceptions of the connection between education, wealth and English and whether they perceive such connections as rendering privileges that foster their educational and career goals.

The main research question that this study addresses is: What are public university students’ perceptions of the connection between education, wealth and English in Puerto Rico? In order to answer the main research question, the study is divided into the following sub research questions:

- 1) “What are public university students’ perceptions of the connection between English and primary and secondary education in Puerto Rico?”
- 2) “What are public university students’ perceptions of the connection between English and social environments in Puerto Rico?”
- 3) “What are public university students’ perceptions of the connection between English and academic and career goals in Puerto Rico?”

The following hypothesis for the outcomes of the study were built on the previously discussed prior research:

- 1) “Public university students perceive that attending private primary and secondary schools in Puerto Rico result in the privilege of having better English skills than public primary and secondary school students.”

Private primary and secondary schools in Puerto Rico place a significant emphasis on English by providing English language programs and English instruction. Therefore, private schools create a privilege for children who are able to attend these schools, whereas public school students are offered significantly less English input, less quality of education and less opportunities to practice their English skills (i.a. Pérez Casas et al., 2008; Pousada, 2000; Barreto, 2000).

- 2) “Public university students perceive that growing up in an English fostering social environment in Puerto Rico, is an exception and thus a privilege for English language acquisition.”

The English speaking population in Puerto Rico mainly consist of elites. They are known for alternating English and Spanish, which shows their social membership in their English speaking networks (ia. Pérez Casas, 2016; Torruellas, 1990). In addition, because of the low number of households that have access to resources such as cable television and highspeed internet, these resources of English language input are quite a luxury (i.a. Pérez Casas et al., 2008; Federal Communications Commission, 2011).

- 3) “Public university students perceive that English language skills are necessary for succeeding at public universities and for future employment in Puerto Rico, especially in higher positions.”

In comparison to private universities, public universities (such as UPR), require higher English skills from their students. Public university students need these English skills not solely to



enroll, but also to keep up with the English instructed courses and translanguaging practices in class (i.a. Bischoff, 2017; Mazak and Herbas-Donoso, 2015). In the work field, possessing English skills opens many doors that stay closed for monolingual Puerto Ricans, such as employment in white-collar jobs, earning a higher salary and the opportunity to successfully relocate to the US mainland (i.a. Otterstrom and Tillman, 2013; Duany and Rodríguez, 2006).

### **3. Methodology**

Two methods were combined to gain insight into public university students' perceptions of the connection between education, wealth and English in Puerto Rico. The first method concerned distributing an online Qualtrics questionnaire and the second method concerned carrying out in-depth follow-up interviews. Both methods focused on the following topics: 1) personal background information, 2) languages in their life, 3) education, 4) identity and culture, 5) the use of English, 6) code-switching and 7) the future of English. The reason for using and mixing both methods was to collect both quantitative data of a large portion of the target group which could easily be analyzed because of the numerical data (the questionnaire), and, in addition, qualitative small-scale in-depth insight which could provide more context and background information behind the results of the questionnaire (the follow-up interviews). The study followed the Ethics Code for linguistic research in the faculty of Humanities at Leiden University, which approved its implementation.

The initial purpose of this study was to compare the perceptions of students from private university Interamerican University San German (Inter), to the students from public university the University of Puerto Rico Mayagüez (UPRM). However, by the time of data collection the final semester at Inter had ended and summer courses had begun. Hence, only very few Inter students were able to participate in the study. This resulted in a change of plan, namely to focus on public university students.

The data collection took place between May and July 2017, which appeared to be an interesting time to carry out this research in Puerto Rico. The UPRM students were involved in a strike as a result of 450 million dollars of expected cuts to the public university system. This strike started around the beginning of April 2017 and resulted in an assembly of students on May 30 2017 (La Isla Oeste, 2017; Primera Hora, 2017). During this assembly, the majority voted against the strike. As a result of the month-long strike, the UPRM' students had to catch up on missed classes and exams and finish the semester in June 2017. The ending of the strike entailed two consequences for this study. First, a significant number of students were recruited on the Mayagüez campus for participation. Second, it was a thought-provoking time to discuss how the students experience their enrollment in the public education system and what makes it different from enrolling in the private education system.

#### **3.1 Materials and measures**

##### I Online questionnaire

Bischoff wanted to carry out a follow-up study, thus he already piloted a questionnaire with UPRM faculty member Dr. Mazak and twenty of her students. Using a modified version, based on the pilot and feedback from Dr. Mazak and her students and the questionnaire used in Harala (2011) as an example, the online survey tool Qualtrics was used for the formation and distribution of a new questionnaire for this study. The English and Spanish version of the questionnaire can be found in appendix A.

The questionnaire included both an English and Spanish version to allow the participants to decide what language they would feel most comfortable working with. The questionnaire consisted of 117 close-ended questions which targeted the respondent himself, his inner circle and Puerto Ricans in general. Participants were only exposed to questions that applied to their

situation that was based on their given responses, e.g. the questionnaire skipped the questions about private schools when a respondent indicated that he has only attended public schools. The expected duration to complete the questionnaire was 22 minutes, which made filling it out a fairly small task which could be completed on any device with internet access. To be able to cover all aspects that could be linked to their English language perceptions, the questionnaire was divided into the following sections: 1) personal background information, 2) languages in their life, 3) education, 4) identity and culture, 5) the use of English, 6) code-switching and 7) the future of English. After completing the questionnaire, the participants were asked whether they would like to participate in a follow-up interview that would take place a few weeks later. In case of interest, the participants were asked to provide their email address.

## II Interviews

The purpose of the interviews was to gain more insight into the motives and thoughts behind the overall given responses in the questionnaires. To structure the interviews, a list of questions was prepared and utilized. Thus the interviews were semi-structured and the order of the topics and the emphasis that was given to each question and topic in general varied for each of the participants in response to their answers and interests. The list of interview questions is attached in appendix C.

The interviews were carried out in an office at the UPRM. The aim was to create an atmosphere in which the students would feel comfortable to speak open and honestly. Before the interviews, the interviewer initiated a light conversation about studying at UPRM and how the students' day went. The participants signed a consent form agreeing with the purpose of the interview, to use their real name and to confirm to have received the compensation for the interview. This compensation was five US dollars in cash. The interviews were audio recorded on a mobile device and transcribed after. Even though all participants gave permission to use their real names in the paper and transcripts, it was decided to use pseudonyms in accord with best practices. The consent form can be found in appendix B.

The duration of the interviews varied between 20 minutes and 80 minutes. All interviews were carried out in English, however, all participants occasionally switched to Spanish during the interviews. This switching varied from using a single Spanish term to giving a complete response to a question in Spanish. The transcripts of the interviews are attached in appendix D, in which code-switching practices are marked in blue.

### **3.2 Participants**

The recruitment of participants took place in the courtyard, cafeteria and several buildings on the UPRM campus. The students were given a short introduction to the study and asked to provide their email address in case of interest in participating. The students were also asked to share the survey link in their inner circle.

A total of 180 responses was collected, however, several responses were incomplete. As a result, 119 responses were used for analysis. 106 of these responses are from UPRM students and 13 of the responses are from students from the UPR campus in Río Piedras (UPRRP). 59 of these respondents are male and 60 of the respondents are female. The participants were born between the year 1989 and 2000, which made them between 17 and 28 years by the time of data collection, with a mean age of 21. The majority (95 students) completed the questionnaire in English.

For the interviews, a sample of 12 participants was selected from the 106 UPRM students. This selection aimed for inclusion of students that had different backgrounds, e.g. living on the US mainland, having bilingual or monolingual parents and attendance of solely private or public schools. However, the overall responses and backgrounds of the respondents that were interested in participating in the interviews appeared to be quite similar. Moreover, not all

participants were either interested in participating in the follow-up interview or able to participate because of their hectic schedule as a result of the strike. Therefore, the aim to solely select students whose backgrounds differed from one another, was not possible. The participants were approached via the email address they provided in the Qualtrics questionnaire. These participants included 6 females and 6 males. Personal background information of these students is stated in Table 32 in the qualitative results section.

## 4.1 Quantitative results

This section discusses the results of the online Qualtrics questionnaire. All results include a reference to the relevant question numbers in the questionnaire in appendix A.

### 4.1.1 Personal backgrounds

The purpose of the first section of the questionnaire was to gain more insight into the personal backgrounds of the participants. More specifically, whether they have lived outside of the island, whether they would identify themselves Spanish-English bilinguals, what factors contributed to their language skills and how they would evaluate their language skills (see questionnaire: questions 4-5, 8-16).

#### 4.1.1.1 US mainland residence

The participants were asked whether they had lived on the US mainland, and if so, at what age. (see questionnaire: questions 4 and 5).

The results show that 21% (N=18) of the participants had lived on the US mainland. The length of their residence varied from 1 to 20 years, with an average length of 4 years of residence.

#### 4.1.1.2 Bilingualism

In the questionnaire, the participants were asked whether they consider themselves speakers of both English and Spanish and what language they learned first (see questionnaire: questions 14 and 15).

95% (N=113) of the participants considers themselves to be Spanish-English bilinguals, whereas the remaining 5% (N=6) considers themselves to be Spanish monolinguals. The results in Table 1 show that the majority acquired the Spanish language first and only few acquired English first.

Table 1. *Spanish and English language acquisition (N=113)*

Language acquisition	Number of times indicated
Spanish as L1	72 (64%)
English as L1	5 (4%)
Both languages as L1	36 (32%)

The 113 participants who consider themselves bilingual were asked what factor(s) contributed to their bilingualism (see questionnaire: question 16). The participants were able to indicate several answers. As displayed in Table 2, the participants responded that watching television and education were the factors of greatest influence and input. Other frequently indicated factors were the influence of their parents, friends and hobbies.

Table 2. *Factors that have contributed to the bilingualism of the participants (N=113)*

Factors	Number of times indicated
Watching television	101
Education	97
Parents	74
Friends	67
Hobbies	65
Other family members	40
Travelling	37
Living outside of Puerto Rico	14
Work	10

#### 4.1.1.3 Self-evaluated language skills

The participants were asked to rate their own Spanish and English speaking, listening, reading and writing skills and to give insight into their attitudes towards their language proficiency (see questionnaire: questions 8-13). The majority of the participants consider themselves to be native Spanish speakers and are proud of their Spanish language skills (Table 3 and 5). As for English, the majority of the participants were satisfied or proud of their English language skills, which they generally indicated as professional (Table 5 and 4).

Table 3. *Participants' evaluations of their Spanish skills (N=119)*

Level	Speaking	Listening	Reading	Writing
Beginner	2 (2%)	1 (1%)	0	0
Intermediate	5 (4%)	2 (2%)	10 (8%)	21 (18%)
Professional	18 (15%)	23 (19%)	25 (21%)	19 (16%)
Native	94 (79%)	93 (78%)	84 (71%)	79 (66%)

Table 4. *Participants' evaluations of their English skills (N=119)*

Level	Speaking	Listening	Reading	Writing
Beginner	2 (2%)	1 (1%)	0	0
Intermediate	43 (36%)	16 (14%)	17 (14%)	39 (33)
Professional	50 (42%)	67 (56%)	70 (59%)	57 (48)
Native	24 (20%)	35 (29%)	32 (27%)	23 (19)

Table 5. *Participants' attitudes towards their overall English and Spanish skills (N=119)*

Attitude	Overall English Skills	Overall Spanish skills
Ashamed	3 (3%)	0
Neutral	17 (14%)	9 (8%)
Satisfied	47 (39%)	37 (31%)
Proud	52 (44%)	72 (61%)

#### 4.1.2 Primary and secondary education

This section discusses the educational history of the participants, i.e. their enrollment in private and/or public elementary schools, junior high schools and high schools, and how they perceive these schools in relation to English. In addition, the participants were asked about preferences for private or public education and the influences of the school of attendance on one's English language proficiency.

#### 4.1.2.1 Enrollment in private and public schools

The questionnaire the participants filled in included the following two questions about their enrollment in primary and secondary schools (see questionnaire: questions 17 and 38).

- 1) Have you ever attended a private school in Puerto Rico?
- 2) Have you ever attended a public school in Puerto Rico?

Based on their answers, the participants were asked whether they have attended a private/public elementary school, junior high school and high school in Puerto Rico. When applicable, the participants were asked about the reasons behind them enrolling in these schools, their main language(s) of instruction and whether they would have rather attended another form of education (see questionnaire: questions 18-32 and 39-53).

Table 6 displays the enrollment of the participants. The majority of the participants attended solely private schools, less participants attended solely public schools and few attended both type of schools. The reasons behind attending private schools are displayed in Table 7. The participants were able to indicate several reasons for their (or their parents') decision to attend these schools. The foremost reasons for attending private schools were the quality of the education and the good reputation of the schools. Factors such as the schools being close to their home and the schools providing a strong English language program were also frequently indicated as reasons for attending these specific private schools.

Table 6. *Enrollment of the participants in private and public elementary schools, Junior High schools and High schools in Puerto Rico (N=119)*

Type of school	Enrolled in a private school	Enrolled in a public School	Enrolled in both private and public schools	Never enrolled
Elementary school	63 (53%)	45 (38%)	8 (7%)	3 (3%)
Junior High school	65 (55%)	45 (38%)	3 (2%)	6 (5%)
High school	60 (50%)	56 (47%)	1 (1%)	2 (2%)

Table 7. *Reasons for attending a private Elementary school, a private Junior High school and a private High school.*

Reasons for attending	Elementary School (N=71)	Junior High School (N=68)	High School (N=61)
The quality of the education	50	44	37
The good reputation of the school	36	34	30
Close to home	23	29	22
The strong English language program	21	22	13
Religious reasons	17	14	14
English as a language of instruction	15	6	6
Family member(s) went there	12	10	11
Spanish as a language of instruction	7	5	5
Friends went there	5	17	20
Other	10	13	17

Table 8 displays the reasons behind the participants' decisions to attend public schools. Again, the participants were able to indicate several reasons for their (or their parents') decision to attend these schools. In this case, the most frequently indicated reasons related to the lower costs and the schools being located close to the participant's home. The quality of the education

and the good reputations of the schools were also frequently indicated as reasons to attend these schools, though less than for private schools.

Table 8. *Reasons for attending public elementary schools, junior high schools and public high schools.*

Reasons for attending	Elementary School (N=53)	Junior High School (N=48)	High School (N=57)
The quality of the education	14	19	27
The good reputation of the school	16	16	26
Close to home	37	30	23
The strong English language program	6	6	7
Religious reasons	0	0	0
English as a language of instruction	5	6	6
Family member(s) went there	11	14	15
Spanish as a language of instruction	4	7	8
Friends went there	9	15	21
Lower costs	36	30	29
Other	7	9	8

#### 4.1.2.2 Language of instruction

After indicating what type of schools the participants attended, the participants were asked to indicate whether their language of instruction at these schools was English, Spanish or both (see questionnaire: questions 19, 24 and 29 for private education and questions 40,45 and 50 for public education). Table 9 and 10 show that at both private and public schools most students were instructed in Spanish. Nonetheless, former private school students were also frequently instructed in English (either partly or completely). This happened significantly less in the classrooms of former public school students.

Table 9. *Language(s) of instruction at private schools*

Type of school	English instruction	Spanish instruction	Both
Elementary schools (N=71)	9 (13%)	36 (51%)	26 (37%)
Junior High schools (N=68)	5 (7%)	33 (49%)	30 (44%)
High schools (N=61)	4 (7%)	31 (51%)	26 (43%)

Table 10. *Language(s) of instruction at public schools*

Type of school	English instruction	Spanish instruction	Both
Elementary schools (N=53)	2 (4%)	44 (83%)	7 (13%)
Junior High schools (N=48)	3 (6%)	39 (81%)	6 (13%)
High schools (N=57)	2 (4%)	44 (77%)	11 (19%)

#### 4.1.2.3 School preferences

In addition to providing information about the schools that they attended, the participants were asked whether they would have rather liked to attend another form of education (private or public) and for what reasons (see questionnaire: questions 21, 22, 26, 27, 31 and 32 for private school students and questions 42, 43, 47, 48, 52 and 53 for public school students).

26% (N=31) of the participants was not content with the form of education they have attended in the past. This number includes participants who would have preferred to change solely one of

their attended private and/or public schools, two of their attended private and/or public schools and those who were discontent with all of their attended schools.

Table 11 displays the number of participants who would have liked to switch schools. These results are organized per type of school and form of education, thus participants could be included in more than one of the stated numbers in the table because several participants were discontent with more than one of their attended schools and/or have attended both forms of education. The stated percentages show the amount of participants who would have liked to switch schools in relation to the total amount of participants who attended this specific form and type of school (which numbers are stated in Table 6 as well). The results show that more students who have attended private schools would have rather attended public schools than former public school students would have rather attended private schools.

Table 11. *Preferences for private or public education*

Type of school	Number of participants who went to a private school, but preferred attending a public school	Number of participants who went to a public school, but preferred attending a private school
Elementary school	11 (15% of N=71)	9 (17% of N=53)
Junior High school	14 (21% of N=68)	5 (10% of N=48)
High school	9 (15% of N=61)	2 (4% of N=57)

In addition, the participants were asked to indicate their reasons for this preference for public or private education (they were able to indicate several answers). For participants who attended public schools, but who would have rather attended private schools, the most frequently indicated reasons were the quality of the education and the good reputation of private schools (Table 12). As shown in Table 13, for participants who attended private schools, but would have rather attended public schools, the reasons most frequently indicated were: lower costs and the quality of the education at public schools.

Table 12. *Reasons why public school students prefer private schools*

Reasons for preference	Elementary School (N=9)	Junior High School (N=5)	High School (N=2)
Lower costs	0	0	0
The quality of the education	7	5	2
Closer to home	0	0	0
Friends went there	1	0	0
Family member(s) went there	0	0	0
English as a language of instruction	2	1	2
Strong English language program	2	2	1
Spanish as a language of instruction	0	0	0
The good reputation	6	2	2
Other	2	1	0

Table 13. *Reasons why private school students prefer public schools*

Reasons for preference	Elementary School (N=11)	Junior High School (N=14)	High School (N=9)
Lower costs	9	8	7
The quality of the education	4	7	4
Closer to home	2	3	3
Friends went there	2	3	3
Family member(s) went there	2	0	1
English as a language of instruction	1	1	0
Spanish as a language of instruction	1	2	0
The good reputation	1	2	1
Other	3	7	3

#### 4.1.2.4 The influences on language proficiency

Questions 64, 65, 80 and 99 in the questionnaire concern the impact attending private or public schools could have on one's English language proficiency. The participants were asked to indicate whether they (strongly) disagreed or agreed with the statements.

As shown in Table 14, the majority of the participants would have also wanted to learn English for other reasons than being admitted to university. However, results show universities with higher English language requirements did stimulate the participants to practice and acquire the language when still in school. The results on the third statement show that there is a small tendency towards associating Spanish-English code-switching more with private school students than with public school students. And last, the participants do not perceive high English requirements at universities to be unfair to public school students.

Table 14 *Participants' opinions on statements about the influences of education on language proficiency (N=119)*

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	No opinion
If it wasn't for my education, I would not want to learn English	51 (43%)	52 (44%)	6 (5%)	1 (1%)	9 (8%)
High English requirements at universities inspire and stimulate students to do their best at school	8 (7%)	20 (17%)	58 (49%)	14 (12%)	19 (16%)
People who went to private schools are more likely to mix languages	18 (15%)	27 (23%)	36 (30%)	12 (10%)	26 (22%)
High English requirements at universities are unfair to students who come from public high schools	33 (28%)	49 (41%)	23 (19%)	1 (1%)	12 (10%)



### 4.1.3 Social environments

This section discusses the participants' use of English and code-switching amongst friends and family. Furthermore, this section discusses the participants' English language attitudes and possible prejudices that arose from this.

#### 4.1.3.1 The use of English outside of the classroom

In the questionnaire the participants were asked about their use of English (see questionnaire: question 84). The participants were able to indicate several answers. Table 15 shows that the participants, besides in educational contexts, also frequently use English in their free time.

Table 15. *Participants' use of English (N=119)*

Context	Number of times indicated
At school or in studies	116
In free time	98
At work	46
Other	60

#### 4.1.3.2 English in the households

In order to evaluate whether English has been present in the households of the participants, the participants were asked to evaluate the overall English and Spanish skills of their parents or other caretakers (see questionnaire: questions 6 and 7). As shown in Table 16, the majority of the participants consider their parents or caretakers to be native Spanish speakers. As shown in Table 17, the participants' evaluations of their parents' or caretakers' English skills, varies more, but are most frequently referred to as beginner or intermediate. This assumes that the majority of the participants was able to interact in English with one or both of their parents and would probably do so.

Table 16. *Participants' evaluations of their parents' or caretakers' overall Spanish skills (N=119)*

Level	Overall Spanish skills father	Overall Spanish skills mother
None	2 (2%)	1 (1%)
Beginner	3 (3%)	7 (6%)
Intermediate	16 (13%)	5 (4%)
Professional	11 (9%)	15 (13%)
Native	87 (73%)	91 (76%)

Table 17. *Participants' evaluations of their parents' or caretakers' overall English skills (N=119)*

Level	Overall English skills father	Overall English skills mother
None	17 (14%)	12 (10%)
Beginner	32 (27%)	42 (35%)
Intermediate	42 (35%)	43 (36%)
Professional	20 (17%)	20 (17%)
Native	8 (7%)	2 (2%)

#### 4.1.3.3 Spanish-English Code-switching

The questionnaire included the following questions about Spanish-English code-switching (see questionnaire: questions 91-93):

- 1) How often do you mix or switch between Spanish and English while speaking or writing a sentence?
- 2) What is the reason that you mix these languages?

3) With who do you feel comfortable mixing languages?

The results in Table 18 show that 99% (N=118) of the participants code-switches while speaking or writing. The majority of the participants indicated doing this often. The 118 participants that code-switch, with any possible frequency, were asked to indicate the reason(s) behind their linguistic behaviour. The foremost mentioned reasons were that either finding another suitable expression would be difficult, because people around them show the same linguistic behaviour and/or that it happens unconsciously (see Table 19).

Table 18. *Participants' frequency of code-switching (N=119)*

Frequency of code-switching	Number of times indicated
Often	80 (67%)
Occasionally	33 (28%)
Rarely	5 (4%)
Never	1 (1%)

Table 19. *Participants' reasons for code-switching while speaking or writing (N=118)*

Reasons for code-switching	Number of times indicated
Finding another suitable expression is difficult	79
The people I interact with do the same	67
I do not even notice that I am doing it	65
That is how we speak in Puerto Rico	52
It is a good way to create an effect	41
To use professional terminology	27
Otherwise I would not be understood	17
I want people to know I speak both languages	6

In addition, the participants were asked which people they feel comfortable code-switching in front of or with. They were able to indicate several answers. The results stated in Table 20 show that the participants feel most comfortable code-switching around their friends, classmates and their partners, i.e., people their age. Though less frequently indicated, many participants also feel free to code-switch around their parents and other relatives.

Table 20. *Persons around whom the participants feel comfortable to code-switch (N=118)*

Persons	Number of times indicated
Friends	112
Classmates	94
Partners	76
Parents	72
Relatives	72
Colleagues	66
Fellow hobbyists	53
Teachers	37
None	3

Questions 94-98 and 100 concern statements about the effects of code-switching on language proficiency, the appropriateness of doing it in an educational environment and the participants' attitudes towards persons who show this linguistic behaviour. The participants were asked to indicate whether they (strongly) disagreed or agreed with the statements.

The results on the first row of Table 21 show that the opinions are slightly divided on whether code-switching shows proficiency in two languages, however most think this is indeed the case. In addition, the results on row 2 and 3 show that the participants' opinions are significantly divided on whether code-switching can do damage to one's Spanish and English language proficiency. Nonetheless, most participants think mixing languages cannot do damage to one's language proficiency.

Row 4 and 5 of Table 21 show the participants' opinions regarding code-switching at the university. The results show that the majority of the participants perceive code-switching as socially accepted at university. In addition, code-switching is accepted to such degree that most participants do not mind when their professors show this linguistic behaviour as well.

The last row of Table 21 shows that (contrary to prior research) the majority of the participants (strongly) disagree with the statement that people code-switch to show membership of a high socioeconomic group.

Table 21. *Participants' opinions on statements about code-switching (N=119)*

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	No opinion
Mixing languages shows proficiency in two languages	6 (5%)	30 (25%)	47 (40%)	18 (15%)	18 (15%)
Mixing English and Spanish can do damage to someone's Spanish proficiency	23 (19%)	38 (32%)	38 (32%)	8 (7%)	12 (10%)
Mixing English and Spanish can do damage to someone's English proficiency	24 (20%)	39 (33%)	37 (31%)	6 (5%)	13 (11%)
Mixing languages is socially accepted at universities	6 (5%)	23 (19%)	52 (44%)	19 (16%)	19 (16%)
I would not mind if my teacher would mix languages	6 (5%)	13 (11%)	61 (51%)	34 (29%)	5 (4%)
People mix languages to show they are part of a high socioeconomic group	33 (28%)	48 (40%)	14 (12%)	3 (3%)	21 (18%)

#### 4.1.3.4 Language attitudes and prejudices

To gain insight regarding whether the participants are used to being surrounded by speakers of English, the participants were asked how they feel when a Puerto Rican does not speak English well (see questionnaire: question 89). In addition, they were asked about their attitudes when a Puerto Rican is proficient in English (see questionnaire: question 90). For both questions, the participants were able to indicate several answers.

Table 22 and 23 show that most participants do not have a certain attitude towards Puerto Ricans who speak English well and towards those who do not. However, many participants indicated that they feel at ease when surrounded by English speakers and they would feel related to them, i.e., it would feel like a familiar social environment. In contrast, when the participants were asked how they would feel surrounded by fellow Puerto Ricans who do not speak English well, many of them indicated that they would feel the need to teach them English and that they would feel sorry for those who could not use English, i.e., would feel that they are missing out on something.

Table 22. *Participants' attitudes towards Puerto Ricans who do not speak English well*(N=119)

Attitude	Number of times indicated
None	55
The need to teach them	46
Sorry for them	26
Related to them	14
Irritated	10
At ease	7

Table 23. *Participants' attitudes towards English-speaking Puerto Ricans* (N=119)

Attitude	Number of times indicated
None	43
At ease	40
Related to them	38
Inspired by them	33
Inferior to them	7
Irritated	2

In addition, the participants were asked to provide possible reasons for Puerto Ricans lacking English language skills and for Puerto Ricans being more proficient in English than in Spanish (see questionnaire: questions 87 and 88). The results displayed in table 24 show that participants felt that when a Puerto Ricans lacks English skills, this is mainly because they are not motivated enough to learn the language or do not want to acquire English because they do not think that having English language skills would be valuable. The results displayed in Table 25 show that Puerto Ricans who are more proficient in English than in Spanish, presumably grew up on the US mainland and/or had a "proper education".

Table 24. *Reasons behind a Puerto Rican not speaking English well* (N=119)

Motive	Number of times indicated
A lack in motivation	82
Thinking English is not valuable	69
Does not need it for his education or career	34
Wanting to remain his Spanish identity	30
Attending proper education	5
Coming from a high socioeconomic background	4
Growing up on the mainland	4
Attending private education	1

Table 25. *Reasons behind a Puerto Rican speaking English better than Spanish (N=119)*

Motive	Number of times indicated
Grew up on the Mainland	77
Has had a proper education	62
Is motivated to get a good career	37
Was a good student	36
Comes from a high socioeconomic background	31
Feels less connected to his Latin American identity	29
Thinks Spanish is not valuable	11
Is lacking in talent	1
Is lacking in motivation	0

Questions 67, 72, 78, 79 and 82 concerned statements about the importance and spread of the English language in Puerto Rico. The participants were asked to indicate whether they (strongly) disagreed or agreed with the statements.

The results in the first and second row of Table 26 show that the majority of the participants find English important to such a degree that they cannot imagine their lives without the English language. Furthermore, the results in the third and fourth row also show that the majority of the participants have a positive attitude towards the English language in relation to their identity and the Spanish language. The spread of English is to most participants perceived as enriching one's identity and not a threat to the importance of Spanish in Puerto Rico. The results in the last row show that the participants do not recognize a connection between socioeconomic (dis)advantages and acquiring English, i.e. the privilege of being a wealthy Puerto Rican is not necessarily perceived as a factor when it comes to English language acquisition.

Table 26. *Participants' opinions on statements about the importance and impact of English (N=119)*

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	No opinion
The importance of English in Puerto Rico is overrated	25 (21%)	48 (40%)	26 (22%)	3 (3%)	17 (14%)
I can't imagine a life without English	8 (7%)	31 (26%)	44 (37%)	15 (13%)	21 (18%)
The spread of English is enriching my identity	1 (1%)	11 (9%)	57 (48%)	38 (32%)	12 (10%)
The spread of English in Puerto Rico is a threat to the Spanish language	43 (36%)	47 (39%)	21 (18%)	4 (3%)	4 (3%)
Being able to speak English well has nothing to do with what socioeconomic class you belong to	7 (6%)	25 (21%)	31 (26%)	49 (41%)	7 (6%)

## 4.1.4 Academic and career goals

### 4.1.4.1 Attending a public university

In the personal background section of the questionnaire, 106 participants indicated that they are a UPRM student and 13 participants indicated that they are a UPRRP student. In the education section of the questionnaire, the participants were asked whether they are attending a public university (see questionnaire: question 54). Here, a contrary result appeared, namely that 23% of the participants (N=27) indicated that they are not attending a public university. It is not clear why these participants indicated that they are not public university students. Several factors could have caused this issue. First, the choice could have reflected a negative attitude towards the public university system, which made students want to switch universities after summer and not consider themselves a UPR student anymore (as a direct result of the strike that recently ended at the time of the data collection). Second, it could also be that the good reputation of the UPR and the significant role English plays in their curriculum, that the university is considered equal in the minds of the students to the private schools they attended and is therefore not linked to the public education system. Third, students could be taking minors or extracurricular courses at or outside the UPR at the time of data collection. Fourth, they could just happened to be on campus at the time with friends who were students and have already completed their studies. However, these factors are only speculations and alternative factors could have created this confusion or miscommunication as well. It was decided to include these responses in the data because these participants for some reason did indicate that they are attending UPRM or UPRRP, whether this was in the recent past or because they are attending only for one semester.

The 92 participants that indicated they are attending a public university, were asked to indicate the reasons behind attending UPR (see questionnaire: question 56). The participants were able to indicate several answers. Table 27 shows that the foremost reasons for attending UPRM or UPRRP are the quality of the provided education, lower costs and the good reputations of the universities.

Table 27. *Reasons for attending UPR (N=92)*

Reasons for attending	Number of times indicated
The quality of the education	85
Lower costs	84
The good reputation of the school	82
Close to my home	30
Attendance of family members	29
Attendance of friends	29
The good English language program	15
The English requirements were higher than at private universities	14
Other	13
The Spanish requirements were higher than at private universities	12
Spanish is the language of instruction	7
English is the language of instruction	7
The English requirements were lower than at private universities	0
The Spanish requirements were lower than at private universities	0
Religious reasons	0

The participants were also asked in what language they are mainly instructed (see questionnaire: question 55). The results in Table 28 show that the participants are either fully instructed in Spanish or in both English and Spanish, which could also refer to the use of English books and PowerPoint presentations and Spanish spoken instruction, i.e. translanguaging.

Table 28. *Language of instruction in UPR classrooms (N=92)*

Language of instruction	Number of times indicated
English	0
Spanish	41 (45%)
Both English and Spanish	51 (55%)

The participants were asked whether they would rather attend a private university and for what reason(s) (see questionnaire: questions 57 and 58). However, all participants (N=92) were content with their decision to attend UPR, with the result that none of the participants would have rather attended a private university.

#### **4.1.4.2 English language requirements**

Furthermore, the participants were asked to give their opinion on statements about the current English language requirements and instruction at public and private universities and their expectations regarding such requirements for the near future (see questionnaire: question 59, 60, 63, 108, 110 and 107). The participants were asked to indicate whether they (strongly) disagreed or agreed with the statements.

The results in Table 29 show that only a small number of participants find the English requirements at public universities too high. The same goes for the English requirements at private universities, however, many participants have no opinion on the requirements of private universities. Last, most participants do not have an opinion (or do not want to share their opinion) on whether they think that public university students have better English skills than private university students have.

Table 29. *Participants' opinions on statements about the language requirements at public and private universities (N=119)*

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	No opinion
The English requirements are too high at public Universities in Puerto Rico	30 (25%)	68 (57%)	12 (10%)	2 (2%)	7 (6%)
The English requirements are too high at private Universities in Puerto Rico	34 (29%)	44 (37%)	3 (3%)	0	38 (32%)
Students from public Universities in Puerto Rico have better English skills than students from private Universities in Puerto Rico	8 (7%)	33 (28%)	22 (18%)	11 (9%)	44 (37%)
It is likely that in the future all courses from Public Universities in Puerto Rico will be taught in English	20 (17%)	60 (50%)	21 (18%)	3 (3%)	15 (13%)
It is likely that in the future all courses at Private Universities in Puerto Rico will be taught in English	16 (13%)	53 (45%)	22 (18%)	4 (3%)	24 (20%)
In the future universities in Puerto Rico will become less accessible for students from lower socioeconomic classes	19 (16%)	18 (15%)	39 (33%)	31 (26%)	12 (10%)

#### 4.1.4.3 Future career goals

The participants were asked to give their opinion on statements about the role of English in their future careers and in Puerto Rico in general. (see questionnaire: questions 113, 114, 101 and 202). The participants were asked to indicate whether they (strongly) disagreed or agreed with the statements.

Table 30 displays the results of these statements. As shown in the first and second rows, the majority of the participants are anticipating a career in which English plays a role, and in addition, expect this to happen as well. Furthermore, the results in the third and fourth rows show that most participants expect that the importance of having English skills for Puerto Rican citizens will increase, however, the importance of English will not outdo or undo the importance of Spanish.



Table 30. *Participants' opinions on statements about the role of English in their future (N=119)*

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	No opinion
I would like to pursue a career in which English plays a role	2 (2%)	11 (9%)	63 (53%)	21 (18%)	22 (18%)
I don't think my English skills will play a huge role in my future career	48 (40%)	62 (52%)	4 (3%)	1 (1%)	4 (3%)
In the future the importance of speaking English in Puerto Rico will have increased	3 (3%)	10 (8%)	65 (55%)	31 (26%)	10 (8%)
In the future speaking English will become more important than speaking Spanish in Puerto Rico	21 (18%)	63 (53%)	12 (10%)	4 (3%)	19 (16%)

#### 4.1.4.4 English in connection to the US mainland

The participants were asked to give their opinion on statements about attitudes towards English in connection to the US mainland (see questionnaire: questions 74-77 and 83). The results are displayed in Table 31.

The results in the first row show that most participants perceive English proficiency as an indication of being a global citizen. The results in the second row show that for half of the students, this feeling does not necessarily results in a stronger feeling of connectedness towards the US mainland as well. As for the other half, English does makes them feel more connected towards the US mainland because of their English proficiency and/or the English input they receive. However, most participants agree that the spread of English does not disconnect them from their Latin American and Caribbean origin.

Table 31. *Participants' opinions on statements about English in connection to the US mainland (N=119)*

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	No opinion
Speaking English is a sign of being a global citizen	9 (8%)	14 (12%)	64 (54%)	19 (16%)	13 (11%)
The spread of English in Puerto Rico makes me feel more connected to the US mainland	24 (20%)	29 (24%)	41 (34%)	12 (10%)	13 (11%)
I want to feel more connected to the US mainland	26 (22%)	34 (29%)	22 (18%)	5 (4%)	32 (27%)
The spread of English in Puerto Rico makes me feel less connected the Latin American society	44 (37%)	52 (44%)	15 (13%)	1 (1%)	7 (6%)
The spread of English in Puerto Rico makes me feel less connected the Caribbean society	47 (39%)	54 (45%)	10 (8%)	1 (1%)	7 (6%)

## 4.2 Qualitative results

In the follow-up interviews, the participants were asked about similar topics that appeared in the questionnaire, but they were asked to provide more background and motivation for their answers. The results of the interviews are discussed per sub-research question. All transcripts of the interviews can be found in appendix A.

### 4.2.1 Personal backgrounds

The respondents that participated in the follow-up interviews concerned 12 UPRM students, whose age ranged from 18 to 23. In the questionnaires, the participants evaluated their English proficiency as varying from intermediate to native. Table 32 displays the participants pseudonyms, year of birth and self-evaluated English proficiency.

Table 32. Background information about the interviewed participants (N=12)

Participant number	Name	Year of birth	Self-evaluated English proficiency
1	Carlos	1996	Professional
2	Luis	1996	Intermediate
3	Miguel	1998	Native
4	Sofia	1997	Native
5	Isabel	1997	Professional
6	Nicole	1996	Native
7	Enrique	1994	Professional
8	Fabiola	1999	Native
9	Vivianna	1996	Intermediate/Professional
10	Ivana	1996	Professional/Native
11	Jonathan	1995	Professional/Native
12	Bryan	1995	Professional/Native

## 4.2.2 Primary and secondary education

The participants were asked about their educational background. More specifically, what schools they have attended, how they experienced their education, what their classroom situations in terms of the language looked like and their opinions on private versus public schools.

### 4.2.2.1 Former public school student

11 of the 12 participants attended at least two private schools. The only student that had never attended a private school is Carlos. He thinks that the reason for him attending only public schools was that his mother is a teacher in the public school system. Carlos discussed how he feels that private schools students have privileges and how he is not fond of this. He does not like the idea that students are not able to attend a certain school because of a lack of financial sources. However, he does believe that the public school system is changing in a good way.

*"My mom was a teacher in the public school system and I think that is one of the reasons why my parents wanted me to go to a public school. I was not really fond of private schools either. The ambiance is really different from a public school. You have to be privileged to be able to pay for a private school in Puerto Rico. It's not that hard, because if you're in the middleclass, you can pay for it, if you work for it. But I believe in the public school system.*

*(..) It's all about money. When you're spending money, you want a compensation, so you want a generous and less bendable education. When you have to pay for it, you'll better have a good education, and if your kids didn't liked something, they would tell you and you would go to the principal. I think that's the reason why private schools provide higher quality and privileged education.*

*(..) I have a big problem with privilege. I am not a non-privileged person, but I don't like to use the privilege over others. For example, I don't think it's fair that people cannot have a private education without the high costs. I would love that public education would be as good as private education, but I don't like the idea of me having to pay for it. I seriously believe in the public school system, I think it's doing better and there have been a lot of changes already."*

Carlos also explained that he did have the opportunity to attend a public bilingual school, however he decided not to change schools because he wanted to stay with his friends. In all of

the public schools he attended, he was instructed solely in Spanish. For this reason, he regretted not attending the bilingual school and having the opportunity to receive more English input.

*"I almost got into a bilingual school, a public one, but I wanted to stay with my friends. (..) My classes were completely in Spanish, except for the English class where some professors insisted that you speak only in English. I actually regret not attending the bilingual school. The friends who did go to the bilingual school, got other privileged opportunities that I did not have. Because of that, I kind of regretted it, but right now I don't. I would have been different and things would not have happened that I loved that they happened at my high school period. "*

#### **4.2.2.2 One-on-one teaching at private schools**

Three of the 11 participants that went to private schools all shared the opinion that the good quality education that private schools provide is grounded in the schools having less students and therefore smaller classes.

Miguel went to private schools but was home-schooled from third until eight grade. He points out that because teachers at private schools have fewer, yet more motivated, students to focus on, the provided education is better and the rules are more strict:

*"In my Senior year of high school I compared myself to my friends from other private schools and public schools. I feel that the education I got from the private schools is a little bit better than the ones from the public schools, because of the smaller amount of students. Usually there are smaller amounts of students in private schools, it's easier to focus on a smaller class in comparison to a larger group of students that are probably not really interested in going to class. Another thing was that in the public schools I would hear a lot of stories about kids cutting class, which was never ever possible to do in the private schools I attended. I believe that the education I got in a private school was better."*

Isabel went to a public elementary school and a private junior high school and high school. The private schools Isabel went to only had one class per grade, which meant that her teachers were able to spend much more time on one-on-one teaching, which resulted in ample English input for Isabel.

*"I went to a good public elementary school, but the private middle schools was smaller and the education was better because there was only one classroom per grade, so the teachers had more time to focus on their 30 students, versus 120 students. I definitely think I learned a lot of English at my middle school, it had to do with the fact that it was a small, private school."*

Enrique solely went to private schools. He discussed how public schools can provide good education too, however, that this is overshadowed by the larger number of students that teachers have to focus on.

*"Public schools here are great, but they are kind of lacking in the sense of a more centered approach to teaching. Public schools are very big, they have classes with 200, sometimes 300 students and they have their teachers pretty much spread out, versus private schools here that are a little smaller and they're better for more one-on-one teaching."*

#### 4.2.2.3 Unproperly organized public schools

Two participants that went to private schools discussed that the quality of education at public schools is lacking because of how the classes are organized. More specifically, the lack of good teachers and not having sufficient material for all students.

Sofia solely went to private schools. In her opinion, the English teachers at public schools are less competent:

*"If I would have been to a public school, where the English teachers are not that fluent and not that knowledgeable, then I probably wouldn't be as fluent in English as I am now."*

Vivianna went to a public elementary school and to a private junior high school and high school. She points out that at the public school she went to, absent teachers were not replaced and students had to share books because the school could not provide sufficient materials for all of its students:

*"I would say that private school gives you all the material that you need. They had the books, the computers and the teachers were not always absent. If they were absent, a substitute would come. That's something that I didn't experience when I was in public school, because if a teacher was absent, they would just dismiss you or you would have a free hour. There were always problems with the books. There were not enough books for all of the students, so you had to share them. So, I don't want to say that the education was bad but we did not have sufficient materials."*

#### 4.2.2.4 Emphasizing English at private schools

Four participants illustrated the overall emphasis on English at their formerly attended private schools.

Nicole went to a public and a private elementary school and a private junior high school and high school. She described how she was taught only "some" English at the public school she went to and that at the private schools she attended the teachers focused more on English.

*"The private school gave me a lot of homework, but the public schools had more activities in class. Classes were in Spanish, except for the English class. In public school, we were taught some English, but we were not instructed in English, In private school the teachers wanted us to speak English. It helped me to get better in English."*

Fabiola solely attended private schools and she is content with that because in her opinion, attending public schools would have not benefitted her English language skills.

*"If I would have attended public schools, I wouldn't be as fluent as I am right now. I would still watch English television, I would still speak English, but not in the same way that I speak it now. I think public schools should emphasize English education for students more because it's very important. Not only for work, but for life as a whole."*

Jonathan went to a private elementary school and junior high school and a public high school. When comparing the two forms of education, he points out that Spanish is emphasized in public schools whereas English is neglected in public schools.

*"In private school they focus a lot on English, they make you read a lot in English and write all essays in English. In public schools in Puerto Rico it is not the case, English falls behind, instead you have to read a lot of Spanish books, it's really intense. But public school education here is not sufficient to learn and understand English to the full extend."*

Bryan solely went to private schools and he is content with that. Before, he did not know the difference between private and public education, but he assumes public education requires less from its students.

*"I am content with only attending private schools. I never really knew the difference between public school and private school. But from what I have heard, public schools are less demanding and the classes are supposedly easier."*

#### **4.2.2.5 Not content with private schools**

Two participants that attended private schools, were less content with their education. Luis and Ivana believe they experienced more and better English instruction at their public schools than their private school.

Luis attended a private elementary school and junior high school and a public high school. He thinks that the English classes at the public school contributed significantly more to his English skills than his private school classes did.

*"My parents wanted me to go to private schools until high school, but because of our economic problem, I had to go to a public school after 10th grade. It was a very good school, in comparison to the private schools I went to. In private school I was in the bilingual grade, but still all my teachers spoke Spanish, so it was not that incredible for my education. In my public high school, the only English I was exposed to was the English class. Still, they obligated me to speak English all the time, it was a lot more practical, so I could develop my English a lot more."*

*(..) I had friends who went to a private high school. In terms of their English skills, in comparison to mine in that moment, I think mine got a little bit more developed than theirs. Some of them liked the language so maybe they learned it outside of the classroom. However, I think that my public high school was a lot more developed in that area than the private school was. Maybe that private school I went to wasn't the best, it's actually one of the cheapest ones on the island. Maybe it wasn't the best education you can get here, but it was decent."*

Ivana attended a public elementary school and a private elementary school, junior high school and high school. She discussed how the public school she attended provided better English instruction than the private schools she went to.

*"When I was in a public school, English was very well instructed. My private schools were not that good, they were normal. You just had to pay for your education and to have a structure, it was a religious school. But in terms of the education, when I went to public school in 5th grade, all classes were good. In only one of the private schools the English class was in English. In the others, English was instructed in Spanish. It does not make sense."*

#### **4.2.2.6 The social environment at private schools**

In addition to discussing the instruction and quality of the education at private and at public schools, Luis and Sofia discussed the differences in social settings at these schools.

Luis described private school as a cage, whereas public schools provide life lessons.

*"In private school you're in a cage that you don't get out that much, you don't know about life. There are exceptions, but in private schools you don't learn a lot about life, people, getting through the different phases of teenage life."*

Sofia considers enrolling her future children in public school, because there they will learn to deal with different kinds of people.

*"I would definitely put my future kids in private schools. But maybe I would put them at least 1 year in public school, because socially they can develop their skills better. I know it maybe sounds mean to say, but in public schools you have your cliques, you have your bullies, you have everything. So you develop social skills as a person, that I developed when I went to university."*

### **4.2.3 Social environments**

The participants were asked to tell about language as it relates to their social environments, i.e. the use of English amongst their family members and friends.

#### **4.2.3.1 English input in the households**

All 12 participants discussed how watching English spoken series and movies on television and listening to English music was part of their daily lives. Furthermore, in the households of 7 of the participants, English was not or not commonly spoken by their parents, however, because they had access to cable television and their parents listened to English music, the language still played a significant role in their daily lives.

Carlos explained that the average Puerto Rican parent speaks to their child in Spanish, but that the English language is also present in the household because of television and the internet. This was also the case for him. Even though his father spent part of his childhood on the US mainland, it was only after he learned to speak English with the help of education and pop culture, that Carlos spoke it more frequently in his household.

*"English was not commonly spoken in my household. My dad was born in New York, Long Island, and he lived there until he was five. As a kid I didn't ask my father "Are you American?" Well, we're all American.. But I didn't ask him "Are you from the United States?" When I was a little bit older, I found out that he's a very proud Puerto Rican from New York.*

*(..) Later in life when I started speaking English, my father and I started to get comfortable about the idea of speaking both languages. It's the normal Puerto Rican way of educating your kids: They learn English in school, or from social media and television. It's not normal to speak to your children in English, it's not very common. "*

In Luis' family, hardly anyone speaks English. For that reason, Spanish was the only language that was spoken in his household. Through videogaming, reading books, television and practicing with their father when optional, Luis and his brothers acquired the English language.

*"Everyone in my family likes to speak English, but almost no one speaks it. Spanish was spoken in my household all the time. My father speaks English, but it's like mine, not very fluent. But my mother doesn't know any English. My brothers do know English, they learned it because of videogames, series, movies, and all that. Other than them, no one in my family speaks it*

*(..) All my books, movies, tv series were in English and sometimes my father talked to me in English so I could learn to speak it a little bit better. Other than that, I did not see a lot of English in my daily life. I learned it by using technology."*

Isabel was exposed to English through English television and her mom listening to English music. As a result, English played a significant role in her life, even though her mother was not able to speak it with her.

*"A little bit of both but mostly Spanish was spoken in my household. (..) From a young age I was in touch with English through cartoons, mostly Barney, and music. Even though my mom doesn't speak English that well, she always listened to music in English, for example Pink or R&B songs. English has always been a part of my life."*

Nicole's parents solely spoke Spanish to her. Nonetheless, because of a good English teacher, but primarily because she watched English television, Nicole was able to become proficient in English.

*"Only Spanish was spoken in my household. I got in touch with English when I was 6 years old because I watched television, a lot of Cartoon Network. In the second grade I had a really good English teacher, that helped me. But I have learned English mostly because of television."*

Enrique's parents primarily spoke Spanish to him because of their lack of English skills. It was only after Enrique started to watch English television and he started practicing his English skills with his parents, that the language happened to play a role in their household.

*"My mother understands English, but she has a very hard time speaking English. There used to be this type of discrimination back in the days, with Latin American people and the United States, I would call them Spicks, because they can't really articulate the words right and instead of saying "I speak English" they would say "I spick English" and they would talk weird. My mom is kind of like that. She can't articulate the words right. My dad understands English, he speaks it a little bit better, but he is not fluent-fluent in English."*

*(..) Spanish was always the predominant language in my household. But, because of things like watching movies and tv shows in English and going to bilingual schools since a very early age, my father and mom been dealing with my English classes and trying to practice with me. But it wasn't that common."*

Ivana's parents never spoke to her in English. She explained that education helped her to acquire English, however watching English television was her main source of learning.

*"All schools in Puerto Rico teach English classes, are good and help you to write and speak in English. But, I learned English because I had a tv and I watched almost everything in English. But my parents never talked to me in English."*

Jonathan's father spoke English, but his parents chose to emphasize teaching him Spanish. However, because Jonathan has access to cable television and his father played English music, he still received a significant amount of English input.

*"Spanish was spoken 99% of the time. But my father is ex-military so he spoke English. When I was little, my parents wanted me to learn English, but they focused on Spanish. So everything like DVD's, movies and everything they had was in Spanish. But because of cable television I had constant contact with English and when we were in the car, my father put Bon Jovi and van Halen and that sort of music."*



#### 4.2.3.2 Family ties to the US mainland

Three participants pointed out that acquiring English as fast a pace as they did, was different from most young Puerto Ricans. These participants' parents have ties with the US mainland. As a result, Miguel, Bryan and Vivianna learned English because of their parents' language skills, in addition to their access to cable television and interest in English music.

Miguel's father grew up in New York. It was both because of Miguel's father's spoken input, watching television in English and listening to English music, that Miguel has acquired the language on a native-like level. Miguel acknowledges that this situation was different from others around him and that all of this input has been an advantage to him.

*"My father is from New York and my mother is from Puerto Rico. I would say that I have learned English first and that it was more strongly enforced, maybe because of television and my father. We mostly watched tv in English and listen to English music. Nonetheless, most of my friends around me and in school, Spanish was spoken. I would consider myself native in both languages. (..) I feel it was a great advantage, in comparison to everybody else in my society.*

*(..) I feel that being able to communicate in both languages is very important. You would either find yourself having to explain to some elderly person how to get across the street in Spanish or having to explain to your relatives from New York something about Puerto Rico in English. It's very useful to have more instead of less and be limited."*

Bryan spent the first years of his life in the United States. English remained part of his family's household when they returned back to Puerto Rico, however, Spanish became more present than it was on the mainland. Bryan discusses how his background in the United States and watching English television, has made a difference in his language acquisition when comparing it to most of his friends.

*"I was born in Tampa Bay, Florida and I lived there for 3 years. My parents are both Puerto Rican. English and Spanish, but mostly Spanish, were both spoken in my household. I assume that when we lived in the United States we spoke mostly English, but I do not really remember that.*

*(..) I learned the language faster than most of my friends because I used to watch everything in English. Plus, instead of just watching local tv, I watched tv from outside of Puerto Rico. That helped me learn a lot to learn to speak English and understand it better. I like it, it's good to know two languages."*

Vivianna's mother spent part of her life living on the US mainland. Therefore, she decided to make both Spanish and English part of Vivianna's life. In comparison to her sister, she also watched English television, which made her develop her English skills faster than her sister did.

*"In my household, Spanish and English were both very important. My mom grew up here and she was born here, but she spent many years living in the States, especially in New York. So I always had that background of speaking English and Spanish. So it was never a problem. (..) In my case, tv was very important. I was always watching cartoons or the Disney channel. I started speaking English before my sister did because of that."*

#### 4.2.3.3 The benefits of growing up bilingual

Two of the participants' parents have no direct ties to the US mainland, yet decided to speak to them in English and thus teach them a second language at a very young age.

In Sofia's case, it was her mother who wanted to implement the English language in their household. As a result, Sofia was able to understand and speak English from a young age. Later in life, she noticed a difference in language proficiency between her and fellow private school students, which she turned into an opportunity to help them. Sofia thinks being monolingual limits you, whereas being bilingual or multilingual opens doors.

*"My dad wanted me to stick strictly to Spanish, but mom always exposed me to English. So I always watched cartoons, movies, what not in English. So it helped me a lot and even than when I was 3 or 4 years old, when my parents were talking about something that they didn't wanted me to understand, they said it in English. By the time I was 6, I understood them.*

*(..) It was actually really different from the people around me. Even though I went to a private school, where the education was supposed to be better. In English classes I always helped my classmates. I was always translating stuff for them so they could understand it. In a way I felt way more advanced than they were. In that sense it was different. I was not trying to let it get to my head, or that I thought I was better than them in any way, so I translated that feeling into helping them understand.*

*(..) It goes deeper than just speaking the language. Because, being multilingual helps your brain a lot and it helps in your writing, in your everyday living. Because by only knowing 1 language, you limit what you were able to do, what you are able to think about, how your brain is able to function. When you're bilingual or multilingual, it's like, whole different doors have opened and you can do things faster, you can do things better."*

Fabiola explains that her family wanted her to learn English mostly because it would increase her chances to reach her future career goals. For that reason, she was exposed to English television from a young age. She finds it important that Puerto Ricans speak Spanish and English because it will play a role in future careers, being able to communicate with a wide range of people and better self-expression.

*"I think it was very important for my family for me to know a second language, in case of future career moves. When I was little, and now still, I watched most tv in English, like Friends, the Big Bang Theory and I watch a lot of news in English, like the weather channel.*

*(..) I think it is very important for children to be educated in both languages, because you may never know what job opportunity requires to speak both languages. Also, it's important because you can communicate with a lot of people and I think you can express yourself better."*

#### 4.2.3.4 Relating to friends because of English

All 12 participants pointed out that they often use English amongst their friends. They either have full conversations in English or code-switch between Spanish and English.

Three participants mentioned shared interests, such as English music or videogaming, as motivation for them to form or get into social groups in which English is often spoken.

Carlos wanted to be part of one of these groups because he felt a connection with the members and because his brother was a member as well. The names of the group also gives an impression of having to be a member to be able to understand them.

*"I only spoke English with the English speaking friends. It's not bad, it was not like "I speak English, I feel oppressed" at all. It just was a different connection with them, because I was able to do things that I couldn't do with other friends, or that wouldn't understand me or be more picky.*

*(..) Here we have different social groups in the schools. There is a social group that speaks English, they are the weird kids, and I was part of that when I was in Middle School and in High School. They were just cool to me. They were called the Hot Tub Time Machine Family, it's a movie, it was a weird inside joke that I didn't understand at the time. I just naturally got into the group. Later some of them graduated and the new generation came in and they called the group the Rockers Corner because most of them liked English music, which was not popular. "*

Isabel talked about how she felt more comfortable being around people who listened to English music, watched English television and spoke English more regularly.

*"I am more easy going in English and the things I like are mostly in English, so I am probably more at ease speaking about something that we have in common. I feel like there are a lot of rules in the Spanish language that I don't know, so I feel more comfortable speaking in English.*

*(..) I started to feel more comfortable speaking in English because most of the things I liked were in English, so I couldn't relate to people who only listened to Spanish music or watched Spanish television. With all of my friends I spoke English, that's how we related to each other, it was because of the language."*

#### **4.2.3.5 Using English comes natural**

Two participants discussed that English is familiar and thus the use of it is natural to them. The reason for this is that they have been exposed to it since a young age and now still use it almost as frequently as Spanish.

For Fabiola and her friends, code-switching happens naturally. She uses both languages to express herself better and is so used to doing this, that when she is not allowed to switch, it is hard for her to suppress it.

*"I talk English and Spanish with my friends, it's kind of a mixture between both languages. I've been speaking in both languages since I was little. It's like second nature for me to understand both of them. I could say a word in Spanish, but then go right back to English.*

*(..) It's hard for me to suppress it because I'm just so used to doing it every day. In such degree that when it's a serious matter, for example a presentation, and I say something in English and I think "I should be talking in Spanish all the time". Sometimes I don't know how to express myself in Spanish, so I just say it in English."*

Luis explains that their lives have always been a combination of Spanish and English. He also finds suppressing switching challenging, but acknowledges that he should practice to stick to English more often to improve his English skills.

*"Our language is a combination of Spanish and English. It's very complicated. We've never learned the languages separately, it was always a combination of both. Switching between English and Spanish is not hard, it's part of our daily life. We're practically born in Spanish, speaking Spanish but reading and seeing everything else in English. It's pretty weird sometimes, but we are used to it.*

*(..) It's really hard to suppress the switching. I am thinking in Spanish and translating it all while speaking it. But if I would do this a lot more, it would make my English better."*

#### **4.2.3.6 Private school friends**

Five of the 12 participants mention how their friends or other students from private schools more often use English in their free time, than their friends from public schools do. When surrounded by such friends, it is likely that you are able to speak English too and do this regularly. Code-switching however, is not necessarily linked to a specific group or background by all participants.

Sofia describes that social groups such as "the gamers" talk English even more often than English majors such as herself. However, she points out that she and her friends code-switch often. She explains that (former) private school students are more likely to code-switch or use English in their free time.

*"Some of the cliques, like the gamers and some computer nerds are always speaking English. When I compare them to English majors, we rarely speak English. Socially, we code-switch all the time, it's talking Spanglish, some cliques do it more than others.*

*(..) Definitely those who have attended private schools do it more often. I have friends that went to public schools and they only speak Spanish unless they are obligated to say something in English, and it's not a pretty English. "*

Miguel also refers to his former private school friends as more likely to code-switch, while his former public school friends are less able to communicate in English.

*"Most of my friends speak both languages. Half of my friends speak Spanglish. I would say people from private education, especially high school backwards, are more likely to code-switch. I would find my friends from public schools to be more efficient in speaking Spanish, in comparison to communicating in English."*

Enrique made friends at his private schools who he mainly spoke English with. However, he does not link code-switching to specific backgrounds or people.

*"Attending private schools was fun, I made friends and I spoke English with them. Mostly after 6th grade I spoke mainly English with my friends. I think it was good.*

*(..) I switch a lot between languages. I see pretty much everyone do it here. Because there are words that we don't know how to say in Spanish and we just say it in English and add an o or a at the end, or roll a letter, make it sound Spanish. It just happens."*

Nicole points out that private school students are more likely to use English. When surrounded by such people, you are most likely a good speaker of English as well. She also uses English often, mainly in the form of code-switching. Similar to Enrique, she does not link code-switching specifically to private education or having a high socioeconomic status.

*"Mostly that people that have a high socioeconomic status, they go to really good schools, they are usually bilingual so they get a good English education. If you hang out with people who speak English, you speak English too.*

*I speak Spanish and out of nowhere I say a word in English. When I am around people who code-switch I feel understood, because that's what I usually do: I speak and I switch. I would feel more comfortable. And I feel more funny, because they would get my jokes. Usually people my age do it. It's everywhere and I don't think it has to do with education or socioeconomic status."*

Ivana explains that at UPR, all students are exposed to English and it is not a matter of being economical (dis)advantaged like back in school. Therefore, former public school students are nowadays just as exposed to English input as former private school students were and still are.

*"There are people here at the university that always speak English, their main language is Spanish, but they are mostly exposed to English. In school days, the people who had more money knew more English. But here at the university, even if you don't have money you're being exposed to English."*

#### **4.2.3.7 English as a friendship requirement**

Two participants described how English proficiency could be considered a norm or requirement due to the frequent use of the language.

Bryan talked about how speaking and understanding both Spanish and English is a common practice for younger people and kind of the norm while communicating in his group of friends.

*"If I wouldn't practice my English a lot, it would probably get rusty and I would not know how to speak it as well as I do now. I speak English at least once per day because of where I study and my friends. Sometimes I am talking and I forget how the word is translated into Spanish and I would just say it in English. At least in my group of friends, everybody is going to understand what I am saying, because they all understand and speak English fluently.*

*We like to mix our words a lot when we speak. Even outside of my close group of friends, a lot of other people that I know also speak either English or Spanish and they sometimes mix the words as well. It's a common practice here, at least for the younger generation."*

Vivianna discussed how being able to understand English well, could make the difference between feeling like an in- or outsider. In her group of friends, Spanish-English code-switching is a common practice. When a new person was introduced into her circle, he started to engage in their way of talking too.

*"My group of friends are like me, they switch from Spanish to English. If you have a certain group of friends that only speak Spanish, and you're the person that speaks English, they are going to look at you weirdly. Just as if you would have a group of friends that switch between Spanish and English and you are the only one speaking Spanish. If they say a word in English and you don't understand, you're going to feel like an outcast.*

*My boyfriend does not speak English, not because he doesn't understand it, but because he's afraid to speak the language. Since he has been with me, he is also switching Spanish and English. Not as often, but it has happened to him. So the influence of a person switching between two languages, is going to affect the other person. "*

#### 4.3.2.8 Making no use of the easy accessibility of English

The responses of all 12 participants had in common that they shared the opinion that lacking English skills is due to your state of mind. This could concern being unmotivated and not wanting to practice, finding Spanish more important, or having a negative attitude towards the US mainland.

According to 7 of the participants, the reason behind a lack in English knowledge is mainly due to lacking motivation and not using all available sources. English is perceived as easily accessible in Puerto Rico by the participants, mostly because of the internet, and thus the participants believed that there are opportunities to practice your language skills, even when you come from a social and educational background where learning English is less encouraged or available.

Carlos argued that less exposure to English and not wanting to practice, are reasons why many Puerto Ricans do not acquire English.

*"I don't think intelligence plays a part in learning languages, it's practice, it's listening, if you want to learn it, you will learn it. I think that's one of the reasons, some people just don't want to because they have not been exposed as much."*

Luis perceives English as a tool that often comes in handy. In his opinion, not being motivated enough to get over the obstacle of practicing, stops many from acquiring English

*"It depends on how you see it. I see English as a tool to get further, read more, know more basically. But if you settle down and see it as an obstacle, you may stop learning English. I see it as a motivation, to become better, to push us in the right way."*

According to Isabel, learning English is all about how much effort you put into it. She argues that having parents who encourage you to learn English helps, but that one's socioeconomic background is not involved in the ability to learn the language.

*"It's nature versus nurture. Not because you're born in a certain place you are more likely to learn English or not. But it depends on your initiative on learning. If your parents hate the US, they are not going to teach their kids English. But if you want, you should."*

Nicole mentions that a lack of interest or motivation could be a deal breaker for language acquisition. She also mentions the importance of input from parents.

*"There are people my age that didn't have much of an interest in English when they were little and now they struggle with it. But since it's all around us, they try to learn at least the most important words. If they would show more interest or their parents had enforced it more, they would have learned it better"*

Vivianna does not think there is a main reason why certain Puerto Ricans lack English language skills. However, she points out that a lack of motivation or enthusiasm must be involved.

*"I don't think there is a main reason, maybe it could be motivation or enthusiasm, not practicing it. Cause if you are not practicing it, you are not going to learn it. So it has to do with those kind of things."*

Jonathan mentions how socioeconomic factor do not necessarily have an impact on English language acquisition. According to him, learning English is a matter of being motivated enough, because the language is very accessible.

*"I have a friend, a really poor friend. He has 1 pair of shoes and had the same pair of shoes for 4 years, he's really poor. But I think he speaks better English than me because he learned it with the help of the internet. English is really accessible here, if you want to learn English, you can learn it"*

Bryan became proficient in English because he exposed himself to English television and his English classes at his private schools. In his opinion, these sources make English very accessible, thus he expects that anyone would use these sources to their advantage and at least tries to understand the language.

*"I learned a lot of English from reading in English and watching tv and movies in English and English classes. So if they don't have any of that, and their parents completely hate English, I would see them not knowing English in today's age. But with all the help that they have, I would assume that they at least understand English."*

#### **4.2.3.9 Preferring Spanish over English**

Two participants discussed that certain Puerto Ricans do not want to get too much involved in learning English, out of fear of losing Spanish as their main language.

Fabiola thinks that Puerto Ricans do not want to learn or speak English out of fear of losing their Spanish skills or perhaps identity.

*"I don't know. It's kind of ignorant of me but I think if they use English, they'll forget Spanish or something and they just want to keep their main language with them forever."*

Enrique points out that reason behind not wanting to learn or speak English could be fear or a negative language attitude.

*"Maybe cause they feel ashamed of their English, if they're not that fluent. Or maybe they could be like "Spanish is my main language, that is what I am going to speak, and if you don't understand me, just go away". There's also that mentality."*

#### **4.2.3.10 Not wanting to be associated with the US mainland**

Similar to Enrique and Fabiola, the following 3 participants account for a lack of English skills to negative language attitude. However, these participants associate this with a negative attitude towards the US mainland and not wanting to be perceived as an American.

Miguel thinks that the Puerto Ricans who strive for an independent island, do not want to learn English, which may include the elderly.

*"People who want for Puerto Rico to be independent or elderly people would have their reasons not to learn English, but that's more for cultural reasons."*

Sofia linked not wanting to acquire or speak the English language to having a negative attitude towards the US mainland and wanting independence. Sofia herself does not agree with these motives.

*"Political issues, that's the only thing that comes to mind. If they're diehard Independendistas [Puerto Ricans who want independence], they are like "I am not going to speak English, because that represents the USA and blah blah blah" and you see me on the corner like "that's not it man""*

Ivana argues that a lot of factors can be the reason for a Puerto Rican to not acquire the English language well. She mentions being proud, finding the language not important and having a

negative attitude towards the US mainland as possible factors. Ivana also discussed her “rich” friend, who had more opportunities and privileges that helped her acquire the English language to an advanced level, mainly because of the ability to afford private education. However, she also emphasizes that for those who do not have this kind of privilege, but do have the motivation, English is accessible.

*“It can be because of a lot of things. They can be proud, but most of the people that speak English, prefer to speak it and even criticize Spanish. But they would probably think that it's not important, that's the problem. They see it like “Oh my god the US will have the power over us if we learn English”*

*I have a friend that lives in one of the most richest places here in Puerto Rico. She learned English since she was little. Most richer people look for schools that emphasize on English more than on Spanish. People who are rich speak more than one language. If people don't have that kind of money, the only way to learn it, is wanting to learn a language. Even if you are poor, there are ways, such as the internet and the library. But people that have more money are more exposed to more than one language.”*

#### **4.2.4 Academic and career goals**

The following section discusses how the participants experience studying at UPRM, their views on the English language requirements and their future career goals.

##### **4.2.1.1 Choosing UPRM**

The participants were asked about their reasons for choosing to attend UPRM and whether they have also thought about attending a private university or a university on the US mainland. Due to multiple overlapping reasons, the results of the 12 participants are not split up in this section.

Carlos explains that he attended UPRM because it is the only university that offers a degree in economics. Nonetheless, he wanted to enroll in a public university and is still content with his studies.

*“It was completely my own decision. My parents told me “learn what you love, do what you love and money would come”, money is extra, it's not the reason why you're working. Since I was in third grade I wanted to study economics in Mayagüez. I still love what I am studying and this is the only place where you can study economics in Puerto Rico. (..) I wanted to be in the public university system and I was not looking at other universities.”*

Luis' first choice was to obtain a degree on the US mainland, but for financial reasons he chose the UPR system. After two years of attending the UPR campus in Bayamón, he switched to the UPRM campus as a result of hearing positive feedback about this campus.

*“My parents didn't force me to go anywhere or study a specific thing. I learned about engineering in my high school. I started my first year at the UPR in Bayamón and after two years I moved to UPRM. They just told me that UPRM was good. My first choice was a university in Iowa, but because of financial issues I couldn't go there. UPR is the best here for me and it's pretty cheap.”*

Miguel decided to stay in Puerto Rico during his studies due to the higher costs of relocating to the US mainland. In his first year he thought about switching to a private university. The reason



for this was that he expected that public universities would be limited in their program offerings in the future due to a decrease in government funding.

*"Most of my high school years I always wanted to stay in Puerto Rico, just for the fact that getting a Bachelor degree in Puerto Rico, in comparison to the continental US, would be a lot cheaper. As far as my parents input, they did not have a lot to do with it. Of course my father, being from New York, would have preferred me to seek other options, but he's not mad at me for staying here."*

*(..) Throughout my first year of college I thought about attending a private university. Public schools rely on government funding. I feel that in a couple years the university will be limited to the amount of programs they can offer, in comparison to private schools for which the government could be crashing, like it is right now, and they would sustain themselves."*

Sofia's family members all attended UPRM which inspired her to attend this university as well. However, she also considered attending a private university on the US mainland but because of the cost, she decided to stay in Puerto Rico.

*"I have to say I was sort of brainwashed into it because both of my parents and my sisters graduated from here. So, I never had another option actually. Dad always told me "okay you have three options: Colegio, UPRM or CAAM", those are the 3 names of Colegio. So yeah it was always this and nothing else."*

*(..) I thought about attending a private university in the States, because I used to dance and I still dance a lot. One of my teachers had other students that went to private universities in the States, where they continued studying dance.. I looked it up and it seemed amazing because I could combine dance and English, which is what I am studying now. But at the end of the day it was a lot of money and here I am still studying one of the two things I wanted to study and I am still dancing as well."*

Isabel chose UPRM because the university is known for its engineering programs. During the strike, she considered changing universities, but currently she is content with studying in the UPR system.

*"I study mechanical engineering and UPRM is the best at engineering."*

*(..) We never really talked about private universities. But because of the strike, we were thinking "Where else could we go?" But for now, no. This is the best system."*

Nicole has always preferred the public university system because its reputation of providing better quality at lower costs

*"I decided it by myself. (..) I always preferred the public system because I have always been taught that this public system was really good, better than the private ones. You get good quality education, without the costs of a private university."*

For Enrique, the university being close to home, attendance of family members, costs and quality all played a role in the decision to attend UPRM. He points out how private universities are known for providing easier courses and having lower requirements.

*"The UPRM is close to home and it's the cheapest option. In my experience, and what I've seen with people from other universities, it is the best option for your money. In addition, both my father and my mother, my uncle, my aunt and a lot of my family graduated from this university and I wanted to continue the heritage."*

*Every time I am doing bad in my courses, I am like "wow, if I was at private university, I would be acing this". But it's always jokingly. I have not had first-hand experience, but I would say that the level at private universities is very different. I have a friend here at the UPRM who took some courses for his major and he failed them. After, he took them in summer at a private university, both courses in summer, knowing very well that summer courses are intensive, and he aced them both. So I would say that there is a difference."*

Fabiola also considered attending a university on the US mainland, but chose UPR because of its reputation of being one of the best universities in the States and presumably the Caribbean. During the recent strike, she thought about switching to a private university, but since the strike ended she is content again with studying at UPRM

*"My parents let me decide which university I would go to. I also sent applications to colleges in the United States, but it was very important for me to receive my education here in Puerto Rico. It is one of the best universities in the land and probably in the Caribbean, so I prefer to be here.*

*(..) I thought about attending a private university because of the recent strike. I had some thoughts about changing to another university. But thanks to God it all got better and I don't plan on changing universities any time soon."*

Vivianna studies pre-veterinary and chose UPRM because it is the only university on the island that offers that degree. She considered obtaining her degree on the US mainland because her mother informed her about the public university system and possible strikes. However, she chose to stay on the island because of the lower costs and is aiming to get her PhD in the US mainland.

*"My mom was always like "you should go to the States". I study Pre-vet and the only university in Puerto Rico that offers it is Mayagüez, so I did not have much of an option. My mom was always like "you should go to the states" and it was not because of the education, it was more about that she was afraid of the situation with the strikes and how the system works, she was concerned. But I decided to stay here because of economic reasons, because I did not want to be in student debt until my Bachelor degree. I mean, I wanted to be able to have a really good economic base and when I am able to provide for myself and be able to rent an apartment and have the economic resources to be independent, that's when I would be able to go to the States and finish my PhD. So it was my decision, but I always had my mother's support."*

The lower costs of UPRM were the foremost reason for Ivana to attend the UPRM. However, she mentions how she loves the system and the more challenging level, in comparison to private universities

*"I was obligated to go to a public university, because we are a poor family. This is a great university: public and affordable for us.*

*(..) I love UPR a lot. I love how they make us study. It is not easy, but I compare myself to students from private universities and I can see the differences in education, even in writing and speaking. I assume there are people in private universities that have good education, even better, but from my experience, I like UPR better. They say classes are easier over there and that they don't give a lot of work. Even if I was bad at a class over here, I still had more knowledge than they had. But I prefer to get a C instead of an A and know nothing."*

Jonathan's parents did not force him to get any specific degree, but they preferred an engineering degree and that is what Jonathan decided to pick. He explains that UPRM has the reputation of being the best university to obtain a degree in engineering on the island. The second best is a university in San Juan, however, Jonathan points out that the costs are significantly higher and that he would not want to attend a private university because of their reputation of being less difficult and are even referred to as "the last hope" for students who cannot get into public universities.

*"My parents told me "if you were a shoemaker, then be the best god damn shoe maker you can be". But they told me you can go study anything you want, be good at it and try to be the best you can be at that field. But they wanted me to study engineering of course. At the end, that's what I decided. (..) In Puerto Rico this is the best engineering school. If you can't go here, you have to go to San Juan, where the reputation of the school is not as great and the price is really, really high.*

*(..) I would not like to study at a private university. The public universities here are better than private universities. The private universities, we call them here the last hope, the resort or the red cross, that is the point of view we have of private universities here. If you can get to the public university, you're smart, you can get along, that's the view here in Puerto Rico. (..) I have friends in private universities and when I see a test, it's easy, it's way easier for them. The level of difficulty is not the same, in my opinion at least."*

Bryan chose UPRM because of the location, costs and attendance of family, but most of all because of the quality. He points out how private university Inter is known for being less challenging than UPRM.

*"I didn't want to move out, I didn't want to rent an apartment, so the university would have to be local. It was basically down to UPRM or Inter Americana, even though there are others, but not as famously known as those two. I obviously wanted to attend the best one, and that was UPRM. I really never even considered Inter, it was always UPRM for me, even though my parents did give me the choice to study at whichever university I wanted.*

*(..) Inter is way more expensive and the quality of teaching in the UPRM is actually much, much better than it is at Inter. Inter is considered "the easy route" . It's not that it's a bad university and that if you study there you are dumb, but the joke that we have in the UPRM is for example "if you study at Inter, it's because you couldn't get into UPRM". Although some people do study there by choice. But it was a no-brainer for me at least to study at UPRM. It was the best and it had what I wanted, it was cheap and that's were my entire family had studied, so I didn't want to break tradition."*

#### **4.2.1.2 English language requirements**

The participants were asked to illustrate their classroom situations in terms of the language use and whether they (dis)agree with the English language requirements.

#### **4.2.1.3 Appropriate English requirements**

Seven of the 12 participants perceive the English requirements at UPRM as appropriate. The English language program at UPR makes it possible for Puerto Ricans who lack English skills, to matriculate and work on their language skills while obtaining their degree.

Luis pointed out that any professor should make their students practice more with speaking in English, because this would come in handy for their career goals. According to Luis, the English requirements are appropriate because it makes the university fairly accessible, but then again not open to simply anyone.

*"All my professors here speak Spanish, I don't think that has been a problem. Almost every single book is in English, but translating it all to Spanish has never been a problem for us. It makes us able to fall back on Spanish all the time. Maybe for our future it will be a little bit of a problem because we don't speak a lot in English in the classroom. Some of the professors do make us do presentations in English, also the job fairs that are held here are filled with companies that present in English. It could help us a lot more if professors would make us speak English in the classroom all the time*

*(..) The English requirements were decent, I don't think they were too high based on what we should know at this level. If they would be higher, not a lot would get in. If they would be lower, it would make everyone come here and that would be chaos."*

Sofia thinks the English requirements are appropriate because it prevents students who are proficient in English from being obligated to take easy basic classes, but at the same time the university helps students who lack English skills to become more proficient.

*"I think the requirements are really appropriate because I entered straight to advanced courses. In my case, I found that really refreshing cause I didn't have to go through the basic and intermediate stage that are really beginner level. Some of my friends entered through basic and they are really basic. I saw a book from the basic course and they are the sort of classes that I took when I was in the 11th or 12th grade of high school. So it's really basic. But then again, when someone's English is quite rusty, it really helps them.*

*(..) Some of the students that enter engineering or similar programs, only need English to read the books and to understand some of the professors that are English speakers. They don't have to read a lot, or analyze things like us English majors have to do. So, even if the science majors have that basic/intermediate level of English, it's really good for them. And if they cut it out, it's going to be quite a challenge for them."*

Nicole pointed out that several students in her class require the class material to be translated into Spanish, otherwise they would not pass. According to Nicole, the requirements are appropriate and fair.

*"The professors show that they know English, but 10% of the students need for the professors to translate it or they wouldn't know what is going on.*

*(..) They put me in advanced English. I would say the requirements are pretty good and fair."*

Fabiola explained that the only class which is solely provided in English, is her English class. She would prefer if more professors would instruct their classes in English so students would be able to practice more often. Nonetheless, she thinks that the English language program of UPRM is appropriate, because less English proficient students are given the chance to work on their language skills.

*"Probably the only class that everything is in English, is English. But in my biology class and my chemistry class, the books and presentations are in English. (..) It would be nice if more classes would be taught in English, because not all people here are fluent in*

*both languages and as I said before, it's really important for them to know both languages in case of further studies or job opportunities. So I think it's better for the university to apply English more in other classes.*

*(..)I think the requirements are really good, because if you're not that good in English, you can't be expected to be in an advanced class without having the complete knowledge, it's best if you start with the basic and learn the language bit by bit."*

Vivianna discussed that even though most of her classes are instructed in Spanish, translanguaging is often the case. She perceives this as confusing and thinks classes should be either solely in English or solely in Spanish. Vivianna argued that the UPRM' English language program is appropriate because it creates the opportunity for the university to understand what level of English their students are at and what courses they need in order to increase their language skills.

*"The classes are mostly given in Spanish, except for obviously the English courses. I have had really good professors in the English department. I have had professors, from which their presentations were in English but their language of instruction is Spanish. Or the class is in Spanish and the test in English. So I think there is a good balance between both languages, but I think it is a little bit confusing.(..) If the material is provided in English, the class should be entirely in English. Not mix both languages, because obviously, you're going to get confused.*

*(..) I think it's good because that way you know in what position each student is. (..) So I think that's good because that way the students have the opportunities to feel on the same level to each student."*

Depending on the level of English instruction in a class, Ivana thinks the courses could be a struggle for some students. However, because of the Basic classes, those students are given the opportunity to improve their English skills. But she does not completely agree with the English language program of UPRM, because she felt like she was misplaced in Intermediate English instead of Advanced.

*"When the professor speaks in English, he speaks well, professionally or even native. I like it, because it's a challenge for me to learn new English words, and I love that. If we talk about the people that do not know English, it is difficult. They can learn English, but it's not the same.*

*The English requirements here are awful. Why do I have to take a test to be in an advanced class? I almost got a "perfect" in English in college, and they were like "oh no you have to start in intermediate, because you did not take the test". So I had to take 2 years of English and it was hideous, awful. I think that for people that don't know English, who start in the Basic class, that's okay. Those are easy classes. I took a class once with a friend and I thought that that was good for her to take. But Intermediate classes are a bit challenging for those people, because you have to write in English all the time. Sometimes they don't give the class in Spanish. It's a very basic class, but you always had to write in English. I didn't like starting in Intermediate because I already knew a lot of English. I would have liked it if they would have already gave me those 6 credits and put me in Advanced. "*

Bryan explained how the level of English at UPRM could be an issue for students, but that this is not the case for him. He thinks that the division into basic, intermediate and advanced classes are good, especially for those who struggle with English.

*"I understand everything perfectly fine, but I would see how somebody that doesn't know English at all, would maybe struggle. At UPR, you take a test to see how good you are in English and that actually helps a lot. I have a couple of friends that were not good at English and they took the Basic classes and that actually helped them a lot to understand English better. Maybe they can't speak it well, but they can at least understand it better now."*

#### **4.2.1.4 Too little English requirements**

Five of the 12 participants argue that the English requirements at UPR should be higher. The reason for this is it is hard to pass classes when one lacks English skills, because of the translanguaging. In addition, several participants mention that universities such as UPR can require more from their students because of the rigor and reputation of the UPR system.

Carlos explained that the English requirements at the UPRM should be higher because English plays a great part in their education and many of their professors solely speak English. Therefore, students should already have a basic level of English when applying to this university. In addition, he argued that his friend lacked English skills and took basic English at the UPRM. As a result, he comprehends English but still lacks speaking skills because these classes do not emphasize on spoken English.

*"My college board scores were not so high, but I had a good GPA that compensated for it. It was very easy to get into this university, for me at least. (..) I think the English requirements should be higher. There is a Basic English class here that teaches English to students who already got Basic English in their High School. I don't think it would be needed for the new generation. It's an extremely easy class. (..) I think that when you want to apply for a university, you should already have a Basic level of English. There are some people that don't even know what a verb is. The requirements should be a little higher because it's a big part of our education and a lot of professors only speak English, for example my professor from Sri Lanka. We did not know that when we came here. But English is only part of the total exam, that you can compensate with the other exams. If you feel like you don't know enough English, you can learn it. That may have been a problem for the past or present generation, but the new generation will not have this problem*

*(..) I also have a friend that does not speak English and can barely understand it. He had to take classes here to learn English. Now, he does understand it, but he does not speak it and is very shy about it. He took the Basic class and did not even do the exam. The Basic class is so Basic, that it does not even count how well you do on the speaking part, it counts how much time you speak. (..) If you can already get into the university, into the Basic classes, they should really make you speak English."*

Before, Miguel agreed with the English requirements of UPR, because this would filter the students and prevent mediocre students from attending. However, he thinks that the requirements should be higher because English is the second language of Puerto Rico. Nonetheless, he adds that English should be better taught at primary and secondary schools, to make sure the students will have sufficient skills to pass classes at university.

*"I thought that the requirements were fairly acceptable because being the public university that it is known for, a very good school, I feel that the GPA required for the programs was good at the time. It would prevent mediocre students and filter students going into college. I feel like the level was okay.*

*(..) Since it is expected that a Puerto Rican is not as good in English, I feel that they are a little bit too nice. I don't feel that way because it is the second language here and the requirements should be higher.*

*I feel like it should be taught better, so it's not as hard here. English in high school is easy next to this, it doesn't matter if you attended a public or private school, you're still going to have a hard time with the classes taught here."*

Isabel argued that translanguaging affects her test scores even though she has advanced English language skills and perceives the requirements as perhaps too low. She passed the English exam unexpectedly, but she argued it would be unfair to less English proficient students if the requirements should be increased.

*"I only have one professor that teaches in English, the rest teaches in Spanish, but the books are in English. That's hideous to say the least, because you have to learn something in English and have to translate it. This has affected my test scores.*

*(..) I thought the admission exam would be harder. I started with advanced English and I am taking English right now as an elective because it's easy for me. When I took the test back in 12th grade, I remember that my essay was not good, it was not a proper essay and I thought I was going to fail. But when I got the score back, I ended up having a 5 out of 5. They may not be requiring as much as I thought they would, because they let you pass with a 4 or a 5. The fact that my essay was not good at all and I still got a 5 was unexpected.*

*(..) Some people don't have the initiative to learn English like I do or the access like I have. If some people don't have access or a proper education it would be unfair to increase the requirements. A lot of influence comes from the parents. If they don't teach their child English, they wouldn't. So you can't blame the child for the parents and the restrictions of the education they had."*

The fact that UPRM is known for having higher requirements is seen as a good thing by Enrique. He discussed how having these higher requirements is preventing the possibility that anyone could attend fairly easily and how it creates a stimulating and encouraging environment.

*"I think I am pretty content with the requirements they have at UPRM, because these universities are, kind of tougher than the private universities. With such high admission requirements, they can take out the lower level students... not lower level, but not-as-applied students in their field. I think that's great because it pretty much perpetuates an environment of constant betterment to be ahead of your class, be at your level or above it, and I wouldn't change that. "*

According to Jonathan, the English requirements are not high compared to the Spanish requirements. He explains that the overall attitude concerns that English will be acquired eventually and needs less enforcement. Nonetheless, he thinks the English requirements should be higher, especially for the younger generation to which English will be even more accessible.

*"The Spanish requirements are high compared to English. Many people that don't even know a lot of English can get into intermediate English, but as for Spanish in the College Board part, it is a lot harder to get into intermediate Spanish. Spanish proficiency is really enforced here. I think people think you'll know English eventually. We're constant in contact with English and we are going to learn it eventually, we have to. I feel like Spanish is protected, by the constitution, by the University and by public standards. With English it's like "you'll learn it".*

*(..) I think the English requirements should be a little harder. In one way, English is easier for us because in Spanish you have accents and a lot of special rules, so writing English is easier. But I think that the requirements should be higher because we get students that are more proficient in English and the tests are becoming a little outdated by the generation that is nowadays applying for a study here. (..) I don't think it will be a problem to get into here because the requirements will be high, yes, but if you don't know English, you can learn it here. You can go to basic English here, which will take longer, but you will learn English."*

#### **4.2.1.5 Future plans**

The participants were asked about their future career plans and what would happen to their plans if they would lack English skills.

#### **4.2.1.6 English in future careers**

Two participants mentioned that they will need English skills for their future careers.

Fabiola argues she cannot go to medical school to become a doctor without sufficient English skills.

*"I aspire to be a doctor and in medical school almost everything is in English, I wouldn't even understand what's going on in there, so I would have to pick another profession."*

According to Nicole, it is harder to find a job when lacking in English skills. If this was the case for her, she would try to look for tools to help her, but she argues it would limit her nevertheless. Nicole aspires to be a nurse, thus she needs to understand and be able to explain numerous English terms.

*"It will be harder to find jobs if you don't speak English. Anywhere you go there's always going to be someone who speaks English. But if I wouldn't speak English, there are a lot of resources, I would find something on my phone to communicate in other ways. But it would limit me in a lot of ways.*

*(..) I would definitely want English to play a role in my career. I study nursing so there are a lot of English terms, so it would help me to understand those and make the patients understand the medical terms too."*

#### **4.2.1.7 Relocating to the US mainland**

The other 10 participants have in common that they aspire to move to abroad, i.e. need their English language skills. In most cases, this concerned specifically the US mainland, but other countries were mentioned as well. Several students are thinking about relocating for a short period to do an exchange or internship, while others have a more permanent stay in mind.

Even though Carlos is not planning on permanently moving to the US mainland, he would consider doing an exchange.



*"Maybe I would do an exchange for one semester, but not permanently because I have my whole life over here."*

Luis is aiming for a mechanical engineering internship abroad. After graduating, he would like to relocate, preferably to the US mainland.

*"I'm in mechanical engineering, so once I get an internship, I would go and get to know some other States and places: Europe, the US, Latin-America. So if I would find a better place than Puerto Rico, maybe I'll move after I graduate. The economy here is not the best, so I would move. Right now my preference is the US, not Puerto Rico."*

Miguel is content with his decision to attend UPR, however, he would consider relocating abroad to get a degree and definitely to do an internship.

*"I would not have chosen another school here but maybe if I had the chance to I would have looked at other options outside of the island."*

*(..) I will definitely get an internship on the mainland, but I am not sure when."*

Sofia aspires to go to New York University, however the costs could be an obstacle. For now, she is looking more into getting an internship or her PhD on the US mainland when she is near graduating from UPRM.

*"I thought about doing an internship and maybe getting my PhD over there. My dream is NYU, but it's a bit costly. But I know there are really good universities in the mainland that offer great curriculum in literature or in English. So that's definitely a thing I plan to research more, when I am near graduating here."*

According to Isabel, studying at a university in the US is not a necessity. However, she is considering an exchange during her studies, or moving there if she should receive a job offer.

*"I don't think it's necessary to go study in the US. Maybe for an internship or intercambio [exchange], but more for the experience than the actual education."*

*(..) But if I get an offer to work in the US, I wouldn't mind moving there"*

Enrique's goal is to save money and relocate to the US mainland to find a good job.

*"My goal right now is to get a job somewhere else, maybe to start on the island, build up some capital and move to the US and get a better job."*

Vivianna described how bilingualism provides opportunities in life. One of these opportunities for her is to be able to get her PhD on the US mainland and have a career in which English plays a role. She noted that she would not feel comfortable in a career setting in which using English or code-switching is prohibited.

*"If I wouldn't be able to speak English, I wouldn't be able to continue my PhD in the States, so it would affect my future study plans and career. I think that I would like to have a career in which English plays a role. I switch from Spanish to English and this has been a big part of my life. People are criticizing me because I switch and it's not professional, it would be kind of disturbing for me to limit myself to Spanish, I would have rather have English playing a role in my career too."*

Ivana studies French literature, which limits her in finding a job in Puerto Rico. Therefore, she considers moving abroad, whether that will be the US mainland or another region.

*"I study French literature and you can't do anything on this island with that degree. So, I have to be open-minded and think about moving. The US is one of my options, but I would like to visit other countries. I would feel comfortable in the US, but I would like to expand my knowledge about other cultures."*

Jonathans' plan is to move to Quebec. When asked whether he would rather not speak English or Spanish anymore for the rest of his life, he points out that he would keep English because it is more universal and not to limit his career aspirations, yet would want to keep Spanish because it is more an indication of who he is.

*"I have aspirations to live in Quebec. So French would be the primary language.*

*(..) English is more universal, it's spoken everywhere in the world. Given the importance and the range of English in the world and due to my personal aspirations and to not limit myself, I would have to keep English. But if you ask me by heart, I would keep Spanish. Spanish is my main language and I am very attached to it. Spanish will never be taken away from me, it will always be there. Even though I wouldn't speak it daily, I will get home sick eventually and then listen to salsa. You cannot take Spanish away from me."*

Bryan thought about relocating to Florida to attend a university that is specialized in management. Although he currently just wants to graduate as soon as possible at UPRM, he still considers obtaining a degree in the US mainland.

*"I study management. There's a university in Florida that specializes in that specifically, so I thought about going there to study. But at this point in my studies I just want to graduate and get a job as fast as I can. But I would also not be opposed to go study out in the US mainland, it would seem interesting."*

## **5. Discussion**

Two methods were combined to gain insight into public university students' perceptions of the connection between education, wealth and English in Puerto Rico. These methods included distributing an online questionnaire and carrying out follow-up interviews. To increase the chances of external validity, a random sample of students to participate which aimed to cover varying experiences, ages, language attitudes and future goals, was selected. While sweeping generalizations cannot be made based on the 119 responses, more insight into public university students' perceptions about the connection between English and primary and secondary education, social environments and academic and career goals, has been gained.

### **5.1 The connection between English and primary and secondary education**

The first research question concerned: What are public university students' perceptions of the connection between English and primary and secondary education in Puerto Rico? Previous studies showed that private primary and secondary schools in Puerto Rico provide higher quality education than their public counterparts. (i.a. Pérez Casas et al., 2008; Pousada, 2000; Urciuoli, 2013) This higher quality is partly grounded in preparing their students for university by providing strong English language programs and English instruction in content area classes. The hypothesis for the current study stated: "Public university students perceive that attending private primary and secondary schools in Puerto Rico result in the privilege of having better English skills than public primary and secondary school students".

The results showed that the majority of the students surveyed, had attended one or more private schools. In comparison to public schools, these schools are generally indicated and described by the students as: properly organized, providing in high quality education and emphasizing their students' English language acquisition. The students were instructed by good teachers who instructed their classes partly in English, were given decent and sufficient materials and were placed in small classes that offered one-on-one teaching. It can thus be argued that attending these good quality private schools is perceived as a privilege for English language acquisition. However, on the contrary, more former private school students would have preferred to attend public schools than former public school students would have preferred to attend private schools. In addition, public schools were also frequently, though less than private schools, indicated as providing good quality education and having a good reputation. Furthermore, the English requirements at public universities, such as UPR, are perceived as stimulating and encouraging, instead of unfair to specifically former public school students who allegedly received less English input during their education. However, as seen above, many saw the English requirements as a way to keep certain kinds of students out of the public university in order to maintain its reputation and quality.

These results partly support the hypothesis: "Public university students perceive that attending private primary and secondary schools in Puerto Rico result in the privilege of having better English skills than public primary and secondary school students." Although public university students perceive the high quality education and English language programs at private schools as contributing to English language acquisition, the students do not perceive attending these schools as a privilege. Instead, the students acknowledge the role of primary and secondary education as only part of many factors that support English language acquisition. These other factors mainly include language activities, tools and resources outside of the classroom. This will be further explained in the following section.

## **5.2 The connection between English and social environments**

The second research question concerned: What are public university students' perceptions of the connection between English and social environments in Puerto Rico? Previous studies showed that economically advantaged Puerto Ricans are often surrounded by an English speaking network (i.a. Fayer, in Nickels, 2005; Pérez Casas et al., 2008). In addition, having highspeed internet and cable television which provide English content and thus input, is quite a luxury that not any Puerto Rican is able to afford (Broadband Now, 2016; Federal Communications Commission, 2011; Pérez Casas et al., 2008). The hypothesis for the current study stated: "Public university students perceive that growing up in an English fostering social environment in Puerto Rico, is an exception and thus a privilege".

The results showed that it is common for public university students to use English outside of their classrooms. Most of their parents speak English at an at least intermediate proficiency level. The participants who were not raised Spanish-English bilingual and were not able to practice their English language skills with their parents, still received English language input from watching English television series and movies on their cable television and having highspeed internet access in their homes. In addition, most of them speak English with their friends and classmates, in whose conversations knowledge of Spanish-English code-switching is often the norm to understand their stories and inside-jokes.

Puerto Ricans who lack English skills are mainly viewed as unmotivated or not eager to learn English. The tools and resources that the students use to acquire and practice their language skills are perceived as easily accessible. Thus, those who have not acquired English, must have had no intention to use these accessible resources to their advantage. English is viewed by the students as part of the daily lives of Puerto Ricans and therefore it is possible for relatively

anyone on the island to acquire the language. Not making use of these resources and thus not acquiring the language is perceived as missing out on life and the students would feel sorry for those that do not speak English and feel a need to teach them.

According to the students, another explanation for Puerto Ricans lacking English skills is their negative attitude towards the language and not wanting to be associated with the US mainland, but having the desire to be identified as a Spanish speaking islander. This would mainly concern Puerto Ricans who want independence. According to this perspective, the student with English proficiency sees himself as a global citizen with increased communication skills and chances of finding a job, instead of solely linking English to the US. Additionally, students do not seem to perceive Spanish at the same level of global importance as English, and also less important for reaching career goals.

These results partly support the hypothesis: "Public university students perceive that growing up in an English fostering social environment in Puerto Rico, is an exception and thus a privilege.". The students argue that having English speaking parents are an advantage, that English speaking friends encourage you to speak English as well and that resources such as English series and movies, videogames and the internet are crucial for acquiring the language. Nonetheless, these English speaking networks and resources are perceived as available to anyone, instead of privileges of those that grow up in a wealthy family.

### **5.3 The connection between English and academic and career goals**

The third research question concerned: What are public university students' perceptions of the connection between English and academic and career goals in Puerto Rico? Previous studies (i.a. Bischoff, 2017; Mazak and Herbas-Donoso, 2015) showed that public universities in Puerto Rico are known for providing high quality education for a low price, when compared to private universities. However, public universities require higher English language skills from their students, which are grounded in their English entry exams and programs, translanguaging in the classrooms and their obligation of taking 12 credits of English courses. In addition, previous studies (i.a. Clachar, 1997; Mora et al., 2017; Barreto, 2000) demonstrated that English proficiency increases one's chances of employment, can make the difference between getting hired in a low position or as the manager and opens doors to earn a higher salary on the US mainland. The hypothesis for the current study stated: "Public university students perceive that English language skills are necessary for succeeding at public universities and for future employment in Puerto Rico, especially in higher positions".

The results showed that the students decided to attend UPR because the university has a good reputation for providing quality education at a low price. Private universities are viewed as inferior because of their easier courses and because these universities require less effort from their students. The students view the English language requirements at UPR either as appropriate or too low. Several students pointed out that one should be proficient in English when applying for a university degree. The level of the courses, which are partly or fully taught in English, require a proficient level of English. Furthermore, English proficiency is often a job requirement and thus students would like to be prepared for this, which could be accomplished by receiving English instruction in class and more opportunities to practice their English speaking skills, such as giving presentations. Although for some students this desire for extra practice and preparation is solely due to perceived job requirements, some students are deliberately seeking jobs in which English plays a significant role. These jobs could be found on the island, yet several students are interested in exploring their career chances on the US mainland, due to better job opportunities and a more stable economy.

The results support the hypothesis: “Public university students perceive that English language skills are necessary for succeeding at public universities and for future employment in Puerto Rico, especially in higher positions.”. The results are in agreement with Bischoff (2017); Mazak and Herbas-Donoso (2015), who illustrate the significant role of English at public universities such as UPR, and with i.a. Duany and Rodríguez, (2006); Schweers and Hudders (2000), who argue that English proficiency increases one’s chances on the job market.

#### **5.4 The connection between education, wealth and English in Puerto Rico**

The results show that public university students denied or did not recognize a connection between education, wealth and English, despite research to the contrary. Even though expensive private schools provide a strong English language program which benefits language acquisition, according to students, acquiring English is mainly a matter of using the accessible language resources outside of the classroom. These language resources include English proficient family members, friends, classmates, the internet and cable television. These resources are perceived as easily accessible to any Puerto Rican, and thus lacking English skills would be the result of not having the desire or motivation to learn the language. As a consequence, students think that these Puerto Ricans are less able to cope with the English requirements at public universities, which could lead to not being able to obtain a degree and decrease their chances of employment.

#### **5.5 The educational and social backgrounds of the participants**

Despite that public university students’ deny or do not recognize the connection between education, wealth and English in Puerto Rico, their backgrounds in fact confirm the existence of this connection. The majority of the students rate their English language skills as professional, have at least one English speaking parent, went to at least one private school, had cable television and access to internet in their homes, are part of English speaking social groups, do not view the English requirements at UPR as problematic and are aiming for occupations in which English plays a significant role. In other words, English may seem accessible to them, however this is less likely the case for Puerto Ricans with an economically disadvantaged background: the majority of Puerto Ricans. The students may not be fully aware that their educational backgrounds and social environments are privileged in ways that make English language acquisition less a matter of being eager to learn or having a positive language attitude and more a case of wealth.

The fact that the majority participants in this study are Puerto Ricans who have had one or more of these English language privileges, supports the claims made in Bischoff (2017). Public universities, such as UPRM and UPRRP, seem to serve more wealthy students and fewer economically disadvantaged students who presumably went to public schools, whose family members and friends lack English skills and/or who have less access to cable television and the internet.

## **6. Conclusion**

The purpose of this study was to gain more insight into public university students’ perceptions of the connection between education, wealth and English in Puerto Rico. Previous research has shown that the majority of wealthy Puerto Ricans are privileged with quality education and English language programs in their schools, a network around them to practice their English language skills with and easy access to resources such as cable television and the internet. These privileges increase their chances of enrolling at quality public universities and employment in higher positions. Using an online questionnaire and carrying out in-depth follow-up interviews, this study aimed to analyze whether Puerto Rican students who would presumably have these

privileges, acknowledge or recognize the connection between education, wealth and acquiring the English language. This study shows that these public university students denied or did not recognize a connection between education, wealth and English. According to the students, the degree and pace of English language acquisition in Puerto Rico depends on one's willingness to acquire the language instead of one's socioeconomic background.

### **6.1 Further research**

Studying the perceptions of private university students in Puerto Rico would create the opportunity to compare the perceptions of public versus private university students. Prior research suggest that private university students would experience a negative, and therefore perhaps stronger, correlation between education, wealth and the English language in Puerto Rico, than public university students do. The reason for this is that presumably private university students mainly include students who were not able to meet the English requirements of public universities such as UPR and as a result were obligated to attend private universities, though in certain cases this is was not in best interest of their financial resources.

## 7. Bibliography

- Algren de Gutiérrez, E. (1987). *The movement against teaching English in the schools of Puerto Rico*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.
- Barreto, A. A. (2000). *Speaking English in Puerto Rico: the impact of affluence, education and return migration*. *Centro Journal*, 12(1). at UPRM. Mayagüez, PR: University of Puerto Rico MA thesis.
- Bischoff, S. (2017). *Is English a Language Barrier to Public Higher Education in Puerto Rico*. *Multilingua*
- Broadband Now. (2016). *Internet access in Puerto Rico*. Retrieved from <https://broadbandnow.com/Puerto-Rico> (accessed 14 January 2018)
- Cabán, P. A. (1999). *Constructing a Colonial People: Puerto Rico and the United States, 1898-1932*. Routledge.
- Carroll, K.S. (2016). *Language policies in Puerto Rican higher education: conflicting assumptions of bilingualism*, *Current Issues in Language Planning*, 17:3-4, 260-277
- Cappex. (2017a). *Inter American University of Puerto Rico-San German Stats, Info and Facts*. Retrieved from <https://www.cappex.com/colleges/Inter-American-University-of-Puerto-Rico-San-German> (accessed 10 October 2017).
- Cappex. (2017b). *University of Puerto Rico-Mayaguez Tuition and Costs*. Retrieved from <https://www.cappex.com/colleges/University-of-Puerto-Rico-Mayaguez/tuition-and-costs> (accessed 10 October 2017).
- Cardona Matos, M., Rivera, M.A.I., Munoz C.A., and Santana Sierra, M. (2014). *English as a Second Language Adult Learners' Perceptions about Language Learning as a Product of Their Socio-cultural Experiences in Puerto Rico*, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.
- Clampitt-Dunlap, S. (2000). *Nationalism and native-language maintenance in Puerto Rico*. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 142, 25–34.
- Clachar, A. (1997). *Students' Reflections on the Social, Political, and Ideological Role of English in Puerto Rico*. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 19(4), 461-478.
- Colegio San Ignacio de Loyola. (2017). *Requisitos y solicitud*. Retrieved from <http://www.sanignacio.pr/admissions/#requisitos-y-solicitud> (accessed 23 November 2017)
- College Scorecard. (2017a). *Inter American University of Puerto Rico-San German*. Retrieved from <https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/school/?242617> (accessed 8 January 2018)
- College Scorecard. (2017b). *University of Puerto Rico Mayagüez*. Retrieved from <https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/school/?243197> (accessed 8 January 2018)
- Commonwealth-Parkville School. (2017). *Tuition and fees*. Retrieved from <https://www.cpspr.org/page/admissions/application-process/tuition-and-fees> (accessed 13 November 2017)
- Dominguez Rosado, B., Simounet, A., Faraclas, N., and Pousada, A. (2012). *Language and Identity: The Study of a Possible Ongoing Change in Attitudes towards American English and Puerto Rican Spanish in Puerto Rico*, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.
- Duany, J., and Rodríguez, F. V. M. (2006). *Puerto Ricans in Orlando and Central Florida* (Vol. 1, No. 1). Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños, Hunter College (CUNY).
- Federal Communications Commission (2011). *Puerto Rico's Broadband Landscape*. Retrieved from <https://ecfsapi.fcc.gov/file/7021919529.pdf> (accessed 12 January 2018)
- Federal Student Aid (2018). *Federal Pell Grants*. Retrieved from <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/types/grants-scholarships/pell> (accessed 10 January 2018)
- Harala, R. (2011). *National Survey on the English Language in Finland: Uses, meanings and attitudes*
- Hernández-Acosta, J. (2017) *Designing cultural policy in a postcolonial colony: the case of Puerto Rico*, *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 23:3, 285-299
- Inter San Germán. (2018). Retrieved from <http://www.inter.edu/en/department/san-german/> (accessed 8 January 2018)

- Krogstad, J.M., Starr, K.J. and Sandstrom, A., (2017). Key findings about Puerto Rico. Retrieved from <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/03/29/key-findings-about-puerto-rico/> (accessed 8 January 2018)
- La Isla Oeste. (2017, 7 April). UPRM se une a la huelga. Retrieved from <https://laislaoeste.com/2017/04/07/uprm-se-une-a-la-huelga/> (accessed 15 March 2018)
- Maldonado, N. I. (2000). The teaching of English in Puerto Rico: One hundred years of degrees of bilingualism. *Higher Education in Europe*, 25(4), 487-497.
- Mazak, C.M., and Herbas-Donoso, C. (2015). Translanguaging Practices at a Bilingual University: A Case Study of a Science Classroom. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 18(6), 698-714.
- Mora, M. T., Dávila, A., and Rodríguez, H. (2017). Population, Migration, and Socioeconomic Outcomes among Island and Mainland Puerto Ricans: La Crisis Boricua. Lexington Books.
- Muñiz-Argüelles, L. (1989). The status of languages in Puerto Rico. *Langue et droit*, 457-472.
- Niche. (2018a). Inter American University of Puerto Rico - San German. Retrieved from <https://www.niche.com/colleges/inter-american-university-of-puerto-rico---san-german/> (accessed 12 January 2018)
- Niche. (2018b). University of Puerto Rico – Mayagüez. Retrieved from <https://www.niche.com/colleges/university-of-puerto-rico---mayaguez/> (accessed 12 January 2018)
- Nickels, E. (2005). English in Puerto Rico. *World Englishes*, 24(2), 227-238.
- Nilep, C. (2006). 'Code switching' in sociocultural linguistics.
- Nunan, D. (2003). The impact of English as a global language on educational policies and practices in the Asia-Pacific Region. *TESOL quarterly*, 37(4), 589-613.
- Otterstrom, S., and Tillman, B. (2013). Income Change and Circular Migration: The Curious Case of Mobile Puerto Ricans, 1995-2010. *Journal of Latin American Geography*, 12(3), 33-57.
- Pérez Casas, M. (2016). Codeswitching and identity among island Puerto Rican bilinguals. *Spanish-English Codeswitching in the Caribbean and the US*, 11, 37.
- Pérez Casas, M., Walsh, T.J., De Fina, A., and Schilling-Estes, N. (2008). Codeswitching and Identity among Island Puerto Rican Bilinguals, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.
- Pousada, A. (2000). The competent bilingual in Puerto Rico. *International journal of the sociology of language*, 142(1), 103-118.
- Primera Hora. (2017, 30 May). Estudiantes de UPR de Cayey y Utuado levantan la huelga. Retrieved from <http://www.primerahora.com/noticias/gobierno-politica/nota/estudiantesdeuprdecayeyutuadolevantanlahuelga-1227312/> (accessed 15 March 2018)
- Príncipe, H. R. (2005). Factors influencing students' academic performance in the first accounting course: A comparative study between public and private universities in Puerto Rico. Unpublished Doctor in Business Administration, Argosy University.
- Puerto Rico Channel: map and area guide [Illustration]. (n.d.). Copyright 1995-2018, Puertorico.com. Retrieved from <http://www.puertorico.com/map/> (accessed 13 March 2018)
- Ramos, F. (1992). Out-migration and return migration of Puerto Ricans. In *Immigration and the workforce: Economic consequences for the United States and source areas* (pp. 49-66). University of Chicago Press.
- Recinto de San Germán Universidad Inter Americana de Puerto Rico. (2017). Admisiones. Retrieved from <http://www.sg.inter.edu/index.php?page=admisiones-modalidades> (accessed 29 December 2017)
- Recinto Universitario de Mayagüez. (2018). Historical Sketch. Retrieved from <http://www.uprm.edu/cms/index.php/page/632> (accessed 8 January 2018)
- Rivera, A. J., and Mazak, C. M. (2017). Analyzing Student Perceptions on Translanguaging: A Case Study of a Puerto Rican University Classroom. *How*, 24(1), 122-138.
- Rosario, H., McGee, D., López, J. M., Quintero, A. H., and Hernández, O. A. (2015). PUERTO RICO: The Forging of a National Identity in Mathematics Education. In *Mathematics and Its Teaching in the Southern Americas: with An Introduction by Ubiratan D'Ambrosio* (pp. 381-404).



- Rodríguez, V. M. (2011). Social protest and the future of Higher Education in Puerto Rico. *Academe*, 97(4), 27.
- Schmidt, J. R. (2014). *The politics of English in Puerto Rico's public schools*. Boulder, CO: First Forum Press
- Schweers, C., and Hudders, M. (2000). The reformation and democratization of English education in Puerto Rico. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 142(1), 63-88.
- Smith, G., and Cooper, C. (2000). Competitive approaches to tourism and hospitality curriculum design. *Journal of Travel Research*, 39(1), 90-95.
- Suárez, S. L. (2005). Does English rule? Language instruction and economic strategies in Singapore, Ireland, and Puerto Rico. *Comparative Politics*, 459-478.
- The TASIS School Dorado. (2017). Tuition and fees. Retrieved from <http://www.tasisdorado.com/page.cfm?p=531> (accessed 23 November 2017)
- Torruellas, R. (1990). Learning English in three private schools in Puerto Rico : Issues of class, identity and ideology.
- United States Census Bureau. (2016). Community Facts Puerto Rico. Retrieved from [https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community\\_facts.xhtml](https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml) (accessed 11 March 2018)
- United States Census Bureau. (2017). Quick facts Puerto Rico. Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/PR> (accessed 11 March 2018)
- Urciuoli, B. (1996). *Exposing prejudice: Puerto Rican experiences of language, race, and class*. Waveland Press.
- UPRM. (2017). Undergraduate Catalogue 2017-2018. Retrieved from <http://www.uprm.edu/cms/index.php?a=fileandfid=16054> (accessed 29 December 2017)
- Vélez, J. (2000). Understanding Spanish-language maintenance in Puerto Rico: Political will meets the demographic imperative. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 0(142), 5.
- White House. (1998). Metropolitan Areas. Retrieved from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/whitehouse.gov/files/omb/bulletins/metro.pdf> (accessed 13 January 2018)

## **8. Appendices**

**Appendix A1 English version of the online Qualtrics questionnaire**

Q1 What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

Q2 What is your year of birth?

- 1987
- 1988
- 1989
- 1990
- 1991
- 1992
- 1993
- 1994
- 1995
- 1996
- 1997
- 1998
- 1999
- 2000
- 2001
- 2002
- Other

Q3 What University are you currently attending?

- American University of Puerto Rico
- Ana G. Méndez University System
- Metropolitan University
- Metropolitan University at Aguadilla
- Metropolitan University at Bayamon
- Metropolitan University at Jayuya
- Metropolitan University at San Juan
- Universidad del Este
- Eastern University at Cabo Rojo
- Eastern University at Carolina
- Eastern University at Manati
- Eastern University at Santa Isabel
- Eastern University at Utuado
- Eastern University at Yauco
- University of Turabo
- University of Turabo at Barceloneta
- University of Turabo at Cayey
- University of Turabo at Gurabo
- University of Turabo at Isabela
- University of Turabo at Naguabo

- University of Turabo at Ponce
- University of Turabo at Yabucoa
- Antillean Adventist University
- Atlantic University College
- Bayamon Central University
- Biblical and Pentecostal College of Puerto Rico
- Caribbean University
- Caribbean University at Bayamon
- Caribbean University at Carolina
- Caribbean University at Ponce
- Caribbean University at Vega Baja
- Carlos Albizu University, San Juan Campus
- Center for Advanced Studies on Puerto Rico and the Caribbean
- Central University of the Caribbean
- Conservatory of Music of Puerto Rico
- Eugenio María de Hostos School of Law
- Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico
- Herbert Fletcher University
- Interamerican University of Puerto Rico
- Interamerican University of Puerto Rico at Aguadilla
- Interamerican University of Puerto Rico at Arecibo
- Interamerican University of Puerto Rico at Barranquitas
- Interamerican University of Puerto Rico at Bayamón
- Interamerican University of Puerto Rico at Fajardo
- Interamerican University of Puerto Rico at Guayama
- Interamerican University of Puerto Rico at Ponce
- Interamerican University of Puerto Rico at San Germán
- Interamerican University of Puerto Rico, Metropolitan Campus
- Interamerican University of Puerto Rico, School of Aviation
- Interamerican University of Puerto Rico School of Law
- Interamerican University of Puerto Rico, School of Optometry
- National University College
- Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico
- Ponce School of Medicine
- Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico
- Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez
- Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico School of Law
- San Juan Bautista School of Medicine
- Escuela de Artes Plásticas y Diseño de Puerto Rico
- University of Phoenix
- University of Puerto Rico
- University of Puerto Rico at Aguadilla
- University of Puerto Rico at Arecibo
- University of Puerto Rico at Bayamón
- University of Puerto Rico at Carolina
- University of Puerto Rico at Cayey
- University of Puerto Rico at Humacao

- University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez
- University of Puerto Rico at Ponce
- University of Puerto Rico at Rio Piedras
- University of Puerto Rico at Utuado
- University of Puerto Rico, Medical Sciences Campus
- University of the Sacred Heart

Q4 Have you lived on the US mainland?

- Yes
- No

Q5 Where were you living at this age?

	the US mainland	Puerto Rico	Other country	I have not reached that age yet
1 year old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
25 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
27 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
28 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

29 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
30 years old	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q6 How would you evaluate the overall English skills of your father and mother (or caretakers)?

	None	Beginner	Intermediate	Professional	Native
Father	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mother	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q7 How would you evaluate the overall Spanish skills from your father and mother (or other caretakers)?

	None	Beginner	Intermediate	Professional	Native
Father	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mother	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q8 Do you consider yourself a speaker of English?

- Yes
- No

Q9 How would you evaluate your English skills?

	Beginner	Intermediate	Professional	Native
Speaking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Listening	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reading	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Writing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q10 How do you feel about your overall English skills?

- Ashamed
- Neutral
- Satisfied
- Proud

Q11 Do you consider yourself a speaker of Spanish?

- Yes
- No

Q12 How would you evaluate your Spanish skills?

	Beginner	Intermediate	Professional	Native
Speaking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Listening	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reading	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Writing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q13 How do you feel about your overall Spanish skills?

- Ashamed
- Neutral
- Satisfied
- Proud

Q14 Do you consider yourself to speak both English and Spanish?

- Yes
- No

Q15 What language did you learn first?

- English
- Spanish
- Both English and Spanish at the same time

Q16 What factor(s) have contributed to your ability to speak both these languages?(You can choose several options)

- Parents
- Other family members
- Relationship
- Living outside of Puerto Rico
- Education
- Work
- Future work goals
- Future educational goals
- Friends
- Hobbies
- Travelling
- Other

Q17 Have you ever attended any private school or private University in Puerto Rico?

- Yes
- No



Q18 Have you attended a private elementary school?

- Yes
- No

Q19 What was the main language of instruction?

- English
- Spanish
- Both

Q20 What factor(s) played a role in the decision to attend a private elementary school?(You can choose several options)

- Lower costs
- Close to my home
- My friends went there
- My family member(s) went there
- The good reputation of the school
- The quality of the education
- Spanish was the language of instruction
- English was the language of instruction
- The strong English language program
- Religious reasons
- Other

Q21 Would you have rather attended a public elementary school?

- Yes
- No

Q22 Why would you have rather attended a public elementary school?(You can choose several options)

- Lower costs
- Closer to my home
- My friends went there
- My family member(s) went there
- The good reputation
- The quality of the education
- English as a language of instruction
- Spanish as a language of instruction
- Religious reasons
- The strong English language program
- Other

Q23 Have you attended a private Junior High School?

- Yes
- No

Q24 What was the main language of instruction?

- English
- Spanish
- Both

Q25 What factor(s) played a role in the decision to attend a private Junior High School?(You can choose several options)

- Lower costs
- Close to my home
- My friends went there
- My family member(s) went there
- The good reputation of the school
- The quality of the education
- Spanish was the language of instruction
- English was the language of instruction
- The strong English language program
- Religious reasons
- Other

Q26 Would you have rather attended a public Junior High School?

- Yes
- No

Q27 Why would you have rather attended a public Junior High School?(You can choose several options)

- Lower costs
- Closer to my home
- My friends went there
- My family member(s) went there
- The good reputation
- The quality of the education
- English as a language of instruction
- Spanish as a language of instruction
- Religious reasons
- The strong English language program
- Other

Q28 Have you attended a private High School?

- Yes
- No

Q29 What was the main language of instruction?

- English
- Spanish
- Both

Q30 What factor(s) played a role in the decision to attend a private High School?(You can choose several options)

- Lower costs
- Close to my home
- My friends went there
- My family member(s) went there
- The good reputation of the school
- The quality of the education
- Spanish was the language of instruction
- English was the language of instruction
- The strong English language program
- Religious reasons
- Other

Q31 Would you have rather attended a public High School?

- Yes
- No

Q32 Why would you have rather attended a public High School?(You can choose several options)

- Lower costs
- Closer to my home
- My friends went there
- My family member(s) went there
- The good reputation
- The quality of the education
- English as a language of instruction
- Spanish as a language of instruction
- Religious reasons
- The strong English language program
- Other

Q33 Are you attending a private University?

- Yes
- No

Q34 What is the main language of instruction?

- English
- Spanish
- Both

Q35 What factor(s) played a role in the decision to attend a private University?(You can choose several options)

- Lower costs
- Close to my home
- My friends went there/attended
- My family member(s) went there/attended
- The good reputation of the school
- The quality of the education
- Spanish is the language of instruction
- English is the language of instruction
- The strong English language program
- The English requirements were lower than at public Universities
- The Spanish requirements were lower than at public Universities
- The English requirements were higher than at public Universities
- The Spanish requirements were higher than at public Universities
- Religious reasons
- Other

Q36 Would you have rather attended a public University?

- Yes
- No

Q37 Why would you have rather attended a public University?(You can choose several options)

- Lower costs
- Closer to my home
- My friends went there/attended
- My family member(s) went there/attended
- The good reputation
- The quality of the education
- English as a language of instruction
- Spanish as a language of instruction
- Lower English admission requirements
- Higher English admission requirements
- Lower Spanish admission requirements
- Higher Spanish admission requirements
- Religious reasons
- The good English language program
- Other

Q38 Have you every attended any public school or public University in Puerto Rico?

- Yes
- No

Q39 Have you attended a public elementary school?

- Yes
- No

Q40 What was the main language of instruction?

- English
- Spanish
- Both

Q41 What factor(s) played a role in the decision to attend a public elementary school?(You can choose several options)

- Lower costs
- Close to my home
- My friends went there
- My family member(s) went there
- The good reputation of the school
- The quality of the education
- Spanish was the language of instruction
- English was the language of instruction
- The strong English language program
- Religious reasons
- Other

Q42 Would you have rather attended a private elementary school?

- Yes
- No

Q43 Why would you have rather attended a private elementary school?(You can choose several options)

- Lower costs
- Closer to my home
- My friends went there
- My family member(s) went there
- The good reputation
- The quality of the education
- English as a language of instruction
- Spanish as a language of instruction
- Religious reasons
- The strong English language program
- Other

Q44 Have you attended a public Junior High School?

- Yes
- No

Q45 What was the main language of instruction?

- English
- Spanish
- Both

Q46 What factor(s) played a role in the decision to attend a public Junior High School?(You can choose several options)

- Lower costs
- Close to my home
- My friends went there
- My family member(s) went there
- The good reputation of the school
- The quality of the education
- Spanish was the language of instruction
- English was the language of instruction
- The strong English language program
- Religious reasons
- Other

Q47 Would you have rather attended a private Junior High School?

- Yes
- No

Q48 Why would you have rather attended a private Junior High School?(You can choose several options)

- Lower costs
- Closer to my home
- My friends went there
- My family member(s) went there
- The good reputation
- The quality of the education
- English as a language of instruction
- Spanish as a language of instruction
- Religious reasons
- The strong English language program
- Other

Q49 Have you attended a public High School?

- Yes
- No

Q50 What was the main language of instruction?

- English
- Spanish
- Both

Q51 What factor(s) played a role in the decision to attend a public High School? (You can choose several options)

- Lower costs
- Close to my home
- My friends went there
- My family member(s) went there
- The good reputation of the school
- The quality of the education
- Spanish was the language of instruction
- English was the language of instruction
- The strong English language program
- Religious reasons
- Other

Q52 Would you have rather attended a private High School?

- Yes
- No

Q53 Why would you have rather attended a private High School?(You can choose several options)

- Lower costs
- Closer to my home
- My friends went there
- My family member(s) went there
- The good reputation
- The quality of the education
- English as a language of instruction
- Spanish as a language of instruction
- Religious reasons
- The strong English language program
- Other

Q54 Are you attending a public University?

- Yes
- No

Q55 What is the main language of instruction?

- English
- Spanish
- Both



Q56 What factor(s) played a role in the decision to attend a public University?(You can choose several options)

- Lower costs
- Close to my home
- My friends went there/attended
- My family member(s) went there/attended
- The good reputation of the school
- The quality of the education
- Spanish is the language of instruction
- English is the language of instruction
- Good English language program
- The English admission requirements were lower than at private Universities
- The Spanish admission requirements were lower than at private Universities
- The English requirements were higher than at private Universities
- The Spanish requirements were higher than at private Universities
- Religious reasons
- Other

Q57 Would you have rather attended a private University?

- Yes
- No

Q58 Why would you have rather attended a private University?(You can choose several options)

- Lower costs
- Closer to my home
- My friends went there/attended
- My family member(s) went there/attended
- The good reputation
- The quality of the education
- English as a language of instruction
- Spanish as a language of instruction
- Lower English admission requirements
- Higher English admission requirements
- Lower Spanish admission requirements
- Higher Spanish admission requirements
- Religious reasons
- The good English language program
- Other

Please indicate how strongly you (dis)agree with the following statements. Respond to each statement, giving your initial reaction, please answer all items.

Q59 The English requirements are too high at public universities in Puerto Rico

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q60 The English requirements are too high at private universities in Puerto Rico

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q61 The Spanish requirements are too high at public universities in Puerto Rico

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q62 The Spanish requirements are too high at private universities in Puerto Rico

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q63 Students that study at public universities in Puerto Rico have better English than students that study at private universities in Puerto Rico

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q64 High English requirements at universities inspire and stimulate students to do their best at school

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q65 High English requirements at universities are unfair to students who come from public high schools

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q66 The spread of English is a threat to my identity

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q67 The spread of English is enriching my identity

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q68 I am more myself when I speak in Spanish than when I speak in English

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q69 I am more myself when I speak in English than when I speak in Spanish

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q70 You are not allowed to call yourself a Puerto Rican if you don't speak English

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q71 You are not allowed to call yourself a Puerto Rican if you don't speak Spanish

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q72 The spread of English in Puerto Rico is a threat to the Spanish language

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q73 The spread of English in Puerto Rico is a threat to the Puerto Rican culture

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q74 The spread of English in Puerto Rico makes me feel less connected the Latin American society

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q75 The spread of English in Puerto Rico makes me feel less connected the Caribbean society

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q76 The spread of English in Puerto Rico makes me feel more connected to the US mainland

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q77 I want to feel more connctected to the US mainland

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q78 Being able to speak English well has nothing to do with what socioeconomic class you belong to

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q79 The importance of English in Puerto Rico is overrated

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q80 If it wasn't for my education, I would not want to learn English

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q81 In Puerto Rico speaking English is more useful than speaking Spanish

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q82 I can't imagine a life without English

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q83 Speaking English is a sign of being a global citizen

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q84 Where do you use English?(You can choose several options)

- At school or in my studies
- In my free time
- At my work
- Other
- I do not use English

Q85 For what reason do you use English?(You can choose several options)

- To communicate with people
- To learn it better
- For the fun of it
- For searching information
- In leisure activities
- To talk with friends
- Because I have to
- To feel part of a group

- It is necessary if you want a good job
- It is necessary if you want a good education
- Other

Q86 When I speak English I feel...(You can choose several options)

- More clever
- Related to the US mainland
- More like an outsider
- Like a different person than when I speak Spanish
- More capable of handling things
- Like a global citizen
- Uncomfortable
- None of the above

Q87 When a Puerto Rican does not speak English well, it is possible that he or she...(You can choose several options)

- Is from a high socioeconomic background
- Has attended private education
- Is lacking in motivation
- Was a good student
- Does not need it for its education or career
- Wants to remain its Spanish identity
- Has attended proper education
- Thinks English is not valuable
- Grew up on the mainland

Q88 When a Puerto Rican speaks English better than Spanish, it is possible that he or she.. (You can choose several options)

- Has attended proper education
- Was a good student
- Is from a high socioeconomic background
- Is lacking in talent
- Is motivated to get a good career
- Feels less connected to his Latin american identity
- Has attended public education
- Thinks Spanish is not valuable
- Grew up on the mainland

Q89 When Puerto Ricans do not speak English well I feel...(You can choose several options)

- Related to them
- Better than them
- At ease
- Sorry for them
- The need to teach them
- Irritated
- None of the above

Q90 When Puerto Ricans speak English well I feel ...(You can choose several options)

- Inferior to hem
- Related to them
- Uncomfortable
- Inspired by them
- At ease
- Irritated
- That they are showing off
- None of the above

Q91 How often do you mix or switch between Spanish and English while speaking or writing a sentence?

- Often
- Occasionally
- Rarely
- Never

Q92 What is the reason that you mix them? (You can choose several options)

- Otherwise I would not be understood
- Finding another suitable expression is difficult
- I use professional or terminology
- The people I interact with do the same
- It is a good way to create an effect
- I do not even notice that I am doing it
- That is how we speak in Puerto Rico
- I want people to know I speak both languages



Q93 With who do you feel comfortable mixing languages? (You can choose several options)

- Parents
- Relatives
- Friends
- Partner
- Fellow hobbyists
- Classmates
- Colleagues
- My boss
- My teachers
- None of the above

Q94 Mixing languages shows proficiency in two languages

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q95 Mixing languages is socially accepted at universities

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q96 Mixing English and Spanish can do damage to someone's Spanish proficiency

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q97 Mixing English and Spanish can do damage to someone's English proficiency

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q98 I would not mind if my teacher would mix languages

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q99 People who went to private schools are more likely to mix languages

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q100 People mix languages to show they are part of a high socioeconomic group

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Please indicate how strongly you (dis)agree with the following statements. Respond to each statement, giving your initial reaction, please answer all items.

Q101 In the future the importance of speaking English in Puerto Rico will have increased

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q102 In the future speaking English will become more important than speaking Spanish in Puerto Rico

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q103 In the future it will be very unlikely to find a Puerto Rican who does not speak English

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q104 In the future Spanish will not be the official language of Puerto Rico anymore

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q105 The importance of speaking Spanish in Puerto Rico will have diminished

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q106 In the future English will be the official language of Puerto Rico

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q107 In the future universities in Puerto Rico will become less accessible for students from lower socioeconomic classes

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q108 It is likely that in the future all courses from Public Universities in Puerto Rico will be taught in English

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q109 It is likely that in the future all courses from Public Universities in Puerto Rico will be taught in Spanish

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q110 It is likely that in the future all courses at Private Universities in Puerto Rico will be taught in English

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q111 It is likely that in the future all courses at Private Universities in Puerto Rico will be taught in Spanish

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q112 In the future English will be more visible in the Puerto Rican culture

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q113 I would like to pursue a career in which English plays a role

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q114 I don't think my English skills will play a huge role in my future career

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q115 I will educate my future kids in only English

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q116 I will educate my future kids in only Spanish

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- No opinion

Q117 Is there any additional information you like to provide?

Q118 Would you like to receive information about participating in an interview about these topics for a small compensation? (Please note that you can remain anonymous).

- Yes
- No

Q119 What is your e-mail address?

## Appendix A2 Spanish version of the online Qualtrics questionnaire

Q1 ¿Cuál es su sexo?

- Hombre
- Mujer

Q2 ¿Cuál es su año de nacimiento?

- 1987
- 1988
- 1989
- 1990
- 1991
- 1992
- 1993
- 1994
- 1995
- 1996
- 1997
- 1998
- 1999
- 2000
- 2001
- 2002
- Otro año

Q3 ¿En que universidad estúdia?

- American University of Puerto Rico
- Ana G. Méndez University System
- Metropolitan University
- Metropolitan University at Aguadilla
- Metropolitan University at Bayamon
- Metropolitan University at Jayuya
- Metropolitan University at San Juan
- Universidad del Este
- Eastern University at Cabo Rojo
- Eastern University at Carolina
- Eastern University at Manati
- Eastern University at Santa Isabel
- Eastern University at Utuado
- Eastern University at Yauco
- University of Turabo
- University of Turabo at Barceloneta
- University of Turabo at Cayey
- University of Turabo at Gurabo
- University of Turabo at Isabela
- University of Turabo at Naguabo
- University of Turabo at Ponce
- University of Turabo at Yabucoa
- Antillean Adventist University
- Atlantic University College
- Bayamon Central University
- Biblical and Pentecostal College of Puerto Rico
- Caribbean University
- Caribbean University at Bayamon
- Caribbean University at Carolina
- Caribbean University at Ponce
- Caribbean University at Vega Baja
- Carlos Albizu University, San Juan Campus
- Center for Advanced Studies on Puerto Rico and the Caribbean
- Central University of the Caribbean
- Conservatory of Music of Puerto Rico
- Eugenio María de Hostos School of Law
- Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico
- Herbert Fletcher University
- Interamerican University of Puerto Rico
- Interamerican University of Puerto Rico at Aguadilla
- Interamerican University of Puerto Rico at Arecibo
- Interamerican University of Puerto Rico at Barranquitas
- Interamerican University of Puerto Rico at Bayamón
- Interamerican University of Puerto Rico at Fajardo
- Interamerican University of Puerto Rico at Guayama

- Interamerican University of Puerto Rico at Ponce
- Interamerican University of Puerto Rico at San Germán
- Interamerican University of Puerto Rico, Metropolitan Campus
- Interamerican University of Puerto Rico, School of Aviation
- Interamerican University of Puerto Rico School of Law
- Interamerican University of Puerto Rico, School of Optometry
- National University College
- Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico
- Ponce School of Medicine
- Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico
- Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez
- Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico School of Law
- San Juan Bautista School of Medicine
- Escuela de Artes Plásticas y Diseño de Puerto Rico
- University of Phoenix
- University of Puerto Rico
- University of Puerto Rico at Aguadilla
- University of Puerto Rico at Arecibo
- University of Puerto Rico at Bayamón
- University of Puerto Rico at Carolina
- University of Puerto Rico at Cayey
- University of Puerto Rico at Humacao
- University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez
- University of Puerto Rico at Ponce
- University of Puerto Rico at Rio Piedras
- University of Puerto Rico at Utuado
- University of Puerto Rico, Medical Sciences Campus
- University of the Sacred Heart

Q4 ¿Ha vivido en los Estados Unidos continentales?

- Sí
- No



Q5 ¿Adónde vivía a esta edad?

	los Estados Unidos continentales	Puerto Rico	Otro país	Aún no he llegado a esta edad
1 año	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
25 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
27 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
28 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
29 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
30 años	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

LOS IDIOMAS EN SU VIDA Las siguientes preguntas van sobre sus habilidades del inglés y/o del español

Q6 ¿Cómo diría que son las habilidades del inglés en general de sus padres (o tutor)?

	Ninguno	Principiante	Intermedio	Profesional	Nativo
Padre	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Madre	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q7 ¿Cómo diría que son las habilidades del español en general de sus padres (o tutor)?

	Ninguno	Principiante	Intermedio	Profesional	Nativo
Padre	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Madre	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q8 ¿Se considera un hablante del inglés?

- Sí
- No

Q9 ¿Cómo evalúa sus habilidades en inglés?

	Principiante	Intermedio	Profesional	Nativo
Hablar	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Entender	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Escribir	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q10 ¿Cómo piensa sobre sus habilidades del inglés en general?

- Avergonzado
- Neutral
- Satisfecho
- Orgullosa

Q11 ¿Se considera un hablador del español?

- Sí
- No

Q12 ¿Cómo evalúa sus habilidades en español?

	Principiante	Intermedio	Profesional	Nativo
Hablar	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Entender	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Escribir	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q13 ¿Cómo piensa sobre sus habilidades del español en general?

- Avergonzado
- Neutral
- Satisfecho
- Orgullosa

Q14 ¿Se considera un hablador del inglés como del español?

- Sí
- No

Q15 ¿Cuál idioma aprendió como el primero?

- Inglés
- Español
- Inglés y español al mismo tiempo

Q16 ¿Qué factores han contribuido a su habilidad de hablar ambos idiomas?(Puede elegir varias respuestas)

- Padres
- Otros familiares
- Relación
- Vivir en el extranjero
- Educación
- Trabajo
- Metas futuras de trabajo
- Metas futuras de educación
- Amigos
- Aficiones
- Viajar
- Otros factores

EDUCACIÓN Las siguientes preguntas van sobre las escuelas que ha atendido y la universidad dónde está estudiando ahora

Q17 ¿Ha atendido una escuela o universidad privada en Puerto Rico?

- Sí
- No

Q18 ¿Ha atendido una escuela primaria privada?

- Sí
- No

Q19 ¿En cuál idioma se daban las clases?

- Inglés
- Español
- Ambos

Q20 ¿Qué factores han contribuido a la decisión de elegir una escuela primaria privada? (Puede elegir varias respuestas)

- Gastos más bajos
- Cerca de mi casa
- Mis amigos iban ahí
- Mis familiares iban ahí
- La buena reputación de la escuela
- La calidad de la educación
- Las clases se daban en español
- Las clases se daban en inglés
- Un buen programa de inglés
- Razones religiosas
- Otra razón

Q21 ¿Habría preferido atender una escuela primaria pública?

- Sí
- No

Q22 ¿Porqué habría preferido atender una escuela primaria pública?(Puede elegir varias respuestas)

- Gastos más bajos
- Más cerca de mi casa
- Mis amigos iban ahí
- Mis familiares iban ahí
- La buena reputación
- La calidad de la educación
- Las clases se daban en inglés
- Las clases se daban en español
- Razones religiosas
- Un buen programa de inglés
- Otra razón

Q23 ¿Ha atendido en una escuela secundaria (junior) privada?

- Sí
- No

Q24 ¿En cuál idioma se daban las clases?

- Inglés
- Español
- Ambos

Q25 ¿Qué factores han contribuido a la decisión de elegir una escuela secundaria (junior) privada? (Puede elegir varias respuestas)

- Gastos más bajos
- Cerca de mi casa
- Mis amigos iban ahí
- Mis familiares iban ahí
- La buena reputación de la escuela
- La calidad de la educación
- Las clases se daban en español
- Las clases se daban en inglés
- Un buen programa de inglés
- Razones religiosas
- Otra razón

Q26 ¿Habría preferido atender una escuela secundaria (junior) pública?

- Sí
- No

Q27 ¿Porqué habría preferido atender una escuela secundaria (junior) pública?(Puede elegir varias respuestas)

- Gastos más bajos
- Más cerca de mi casa
- Mis amigos iban ahí
- Mis familiares iban ahí
- La buena reputación
- La calidad de la educación
- Las clases se daban en inglés
- Las clases se daban en español
- Razones religiosas
- Un buen programa de inglés
- Otra razón

Q28 ¿Ha atendido una escuela secundaria privada?

- Sí
- No

Q29 ¿En cuál idioma se daban las clases?

- Inglés
- Español
- Ambos

Q30 ¿Qué factores han contribuido a la decisión de elegir una escuela secundaria privada? (Puede elegir varias respuestas)

- Gastos más bajos
- Cerca de mi casa
- Mis amigos iban ahí
- Mis familiares iban ahí
- La buena reputación de la escuela
- La calidad de la educación
- Las clases se daban en español
- Las clases se daban en inglés
- Un buen programa de inglés
- Razones religiosas
- Otra razón

Q31 ¿Habría preferido atender una escuela secundaria pública?

- Sí
- No

Q32 ¿Porqué habría preferido atender una escuela secundaria pública?(Puede elegir varias respuestas)

- Gastos más bajos
- Más cerca de mi casa
- Mis amigos iban ahí
- Mis familiares iban ahí
- La buena reputación
- La calidad de la educación
- Las clases se daban en inglés
- Las clases se daban en español
- Razones religiosas
- Un buen programa de inglés
- Otra razón

Q33 ¿Está atendiendo en una universidad privada?

- Sí
- No

Q34 ¿En cuál idioma se dan las clases?

- Inglés
- Español
- Ambos

Q35 ¿Qué factores han contribuido a la decisión de elegir una universidad privada? (Puede elegir varias respuestas)

- Gastos más bajos
- Cerca de mi casa
- Mis amigos iban ahí
- Mis familiares iban ahí
- La buena reputación de la escuela
- La calidad de la educación
- Las clases se dan en español
- Las clases se dan en inglés
- Un buen programa de inglés
- Las normas del inglés eran más bajas que en las universidades públicas
- Las normas del español eran más bajas que en las universidades públicas
- Las normas del inglés eran más altas que en las universidades públicas
- Las normas del español eran más altas que en las universidades públicas
- Razones religiosas
- Otra razón

Q36 ¿Habría preferido atender una universidad pública?

- Sí
- No

Q37 ¿Porqué habría preferido atender una universidad pública?(Puede elegir varias respuestas)

- Gastos más bajos
- Más cerca de mi casa
- Mis amigos iban ahí
- Mis familiares iban ahí
- La buena reputación
- La calidad de la educación
- Las clases se dan en inglés
- Las clases se dan en español
- Las normas del inglés más bajas
- Las normas del inglés más altas
- Las normas del español más bajas
- Las normas del español más altas
- Razones religiosas
- Un buen programa de inglés
- Otra razón

Q38 ¿Ha atendido una escuela o universidad pública en Puerto Rico?

- Sí
- No



Q39 ¿Ha atendido una escuela primaria pública?

- Sí
- No

Q40 ¿En cuál idioma se daban las clases?

- Inglés
- Español
- Ambos

Q41 ¿Qué factores han contribuido a la decisión de elegir una escuela primaria pública? (Puede elegir varias respuestas)

- Gastos más bajos
- Cerca de mi casa
- Mis amigos iban ahí
- Mis familiares iban ahí
- La buena reputación de la escuela
- La calidad de la educación
- Las clases se daban en español
- Las clases se daban en inglés
- Un buen programa de inglés
- Razones religiosas
- Otra razón

Q42 ¿Habría preferido atender una escuela primaria privada?

- Sí
- No

Q43 ¿Porqué habría preferido atender una escuela primaria privada?(Puede elegir varias respuestas)

- Gastos más bajos
- Más cerca de mi casa
- Mis amigos iban ahí
- Mis familiares iban ahí
- La buena reputación
- La calidad de la educación
- Las clases se daban en inglés
- Las clases se daban en español
- Razones religiosas
- Un buen programa de inglés
- Otra razón

Q44 ¿Ha atendido en una escuela secundaria (junior) pública?

- Sí
- No

Q45 ¿En cuál idioma se daban las clases?

- Inglés
- Español
- Ambos

Q46 ¿Qué factores han contribuido a la decisión de elegir una escuela secundaria (junior) pública? (Puede elegir varias respuestas)

- Gastos más bajos
- Cerca de mi casa
- Mis amigos iban ahí
- Mis familiares iban ahí
- La buena reputación de la escuela
- La calidad de la educación
- Las clases se daban en español
- Las clases se daban en inglés
- Un buen programa de inglés
- Razones religiosas
- Otra razón

Q47 ¿Habría preferido atender una escuela secundaria (junior) privada?

- Sí
- No

Q48 ¿Porqué habría preferido atender una escuela secundaria (junior) privada?(Puede elegir varias respuestas)

- Gastos más bajos
- Más cerca de mi casa
- Mis amigos iban ahí
- Mis familiares iban ahí
- La buena reputación
- La calidad de la educación
- Las clases se daban en inglés
- Las clases se daban en español
- Razones religiosas
- Un buen programa de inglés
- Otra razón

Q49 ¿Ha atendido una escuela secundaria pública?

- Sí
- No

Q50 ¿En cuál idioma se daban las clases?

- Inglés
- Español
- Ambos

Q51 ¿Qué factores han contribuido a la decisión de elegir una escuela secundaria pública?  
(Puede elegir varias respuestas)

- Gastos más bajos
- Cerca de mi casa
- Mis amigos iban ahí
- Mis familiares iban ahí
- La buena reputación de la escuela
- La calidad de la educación
- Las clases se daban en español
- Las clases se daban en inglés
- Un buen programa de inglés
- Razones religiosas
- Otra razón

Q52 ¿Habría preferido atender una escuela secundaria privada?

- Sí
- No

Q53 ¿Porqué habría preferido atender una escuela secundaria privada?(Puede elegir varias respuestas)

- Gastos más bajos
- Más cerca de mi casa
- Mis amigos iban ahí
- Mis familiares iban ahí
- La buena reputación
- La calidad de la educación
- Las clases se daban en inglés
- Las clases se daban en español
- Razones religiosas
- Un buen programa de inglés
- Otra razón

Q54 ¿Está atendiendo en una universidad pública?

- Sí
- No

Q55 ¿En cuál idioma se dan las clases?

- Inglés
- Español
- Ambos

Q56 ¿Qué factores han contribuido a la decisión de elegir una universidad pública? (Puede elegir varias respuestas)

- Gastos más bajos
- Cerca de mi casa
- Mis amigos iban ahí
- Mis familiares iban ahí
- La buena reputación de la escuela
- La calidad de la educación
- Las clases se dan en español
- Las clases se dan en inglés
- Un buen programa de inglés
- Las normas del inglés eran más bajas que en las universidades privadas
- Las normas del español eran más bajas que en las universidades privadas
- Las normas del inglés eran más altas que en las universidades privadas
- Las normas del español eran más altas que en las universidades privadas
- Razones religiosas
- Otra razón

Q57 ¿Habría preferido atender una universidad privada?

- Sí
- No

Q58 ¿Porqué habría preferido atender una universidad privada?(Puede elegir varias respuestas)

- Gastos más bajos
- Más cerca de mi casa
- Mis amigos iban ahí
- Mis familiares iban ahí
- La buena reputación
- La calidad de la educación
- Las clases se dan en inglés
- Las clases se dan en español
- Las normas del inglés más bajas
- Las normas del inglés más altas
- Las normas del español más bajas
- Las normas del español más altas
- Razones religiosas
- Un buen programa de inglés
- Otra razón

Por favor indique como (no) esta de acuerdo con las declaraciones. Conteste a cada declaración, dando su primer pensamiento. Por favor responda a todo lo nombrado.

Q59 Los normas del inglés en las univerisades públicas en Puerto Rico son demasiado altas

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q60 Los normas del inglés en las univerisades privadas en Puerto Rico son demasiado altas

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q61 Las normas del español en las universidades públicas en Puerto Rico son demasiado altas

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q62 Las normas del español en las universidades privadas en Puerto Rico son demasiado altas

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q63 Los estudiantes que estudian en las universidades públicas en Puerto Rico hablan mejor inglés que los estudiantes que estudian en las universidades privadas

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q64 El nivel alto del inglés, inspira y estimula a los estudiantes de hacer lo mejor que pueden en la escuela

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q65 El nivel alto del inglés en las universidades son injustas para los estudiantes que vienen de las escuelas públicas

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

IDENTIDAD Y CULTURALas siguientes preguntas van sobre la función del inglés y del español en la identidad del puertorriqueño, la cultura de Puerto Rico y la conexión con los Estados Unidos continentales

Por favor indique como (no) esta de acuerdo con las declaraciones. Conteste a cada declaración, dando su primer pensamiento. Por favor responda a todo lo nombrado.

Q66 La difusión del inglés es una amenaza para mi identidad

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q67 La difusión del inglés enriqueze mi identidad

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q68 Me siento más yo mismo cuando hablo en español que cuando hablo en inglés

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q69 Me siento más yo mismo cuando hablo en inglés que cuando hablo en español

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q70 No se puede permitir de llamarse un Puertorriqueño sí no habla inglés

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q71 No se puede permitir de llamarse un Puertorriqueño sí no habla español

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q72 La difusión del inglés en Puerto Rico es una amenaza para el idioma español

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q73 La difusión del inglés en Puerto Rico es una amenaza para la cultura puertorriqueña

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q74 La difusión del inglés en Puerto Rico hace sentirme menos conectado con la sociedad latinoamericana

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q75 La difusión del inglés en Puerto Rico hace sentirme menos conectado con la sociedad caribeña

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión



Q76 La difusión del inglés en Puerto Rico hace sentirme más conectado con los Estados Unidos continentales

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q77 Quiero sentirme más conectado con los Estados Unidos continentales

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q78 Ser capaz de hablar bien inglés no tiene nada que ver con la clase socioeconómica a la que pertenece

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q79 La importancia del inglés en Puerto Rico es sobrevalorado

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q80 Si no fuera por mis estudios, no aprendería el inglés

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q81 En Puerto Rico hablar inglés es más útil que hablar español

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q82 No me puedo imaginar una vida sin el inglés

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q83 Hablar inglés es un signo de ser un ciudadano global

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

UTILIZACIÓN DEL INGLÉS Las siguientes preguntas van sobre su uso del inglés, el uso del inglés por otras personas y como piensa sobre esto.

Q84 ¿Dónde utiliza el inglés?(Puede elegir varias respuestas)

- En la escuela o en la universidad
- En mi tiempo libre
- En mi trabajo
- Otra situación
- No utilizo el inglés

Q85 ¿Por qué razones utiliza el inglés?(Puede elegir varias respuestas)

- Comunicar con otra gente
- Aprenderlo mejor
- Porque me gusta
- Para buscar información
- En actividades de ocio
- Hablar con mis amigos
- Tengo que hacerlo
- Para sentirme parte de un grupo
- Es necesario si quieres encontrar un buen trabajo
- Es necesario si quieres tener una buena educación
- Otra razón

Q86 Cuando hablo inglés, me siento..(Puede elegir varias respuestas)

- Más inteligente
- Conectado con los Estados Unidos continentales
- Como un extraño
- Diferente que cuando hablo español
- Más capaz de manejar las cosas
- Como un ciudadano global
- Incómodo
- Nada de esto

Q87 Cuando un Puertorriqueño no habla bien inglés, es posible que...(puede elegir varias respuestas)

- Tiene un alto nivel socioeconómico
- Ha atendido una escuela of universidad privada
- Carece de motivación
- Era un buen estudiante
- No lo necesita el inglés para su estudio of carrera
- Quiere mantener su identidad española
- Ha atendido una buena educación
- Piensa que el inglés no tiene valor
- Se crió en los Estados Unidos continentales

Q88 Cuando un Puertorriqueño habla inglés mejor que español, es posible que...(Puede elegir varias respuestas)

- Ha atendido una buena educación
- Era un buen estudiante
- Tiene un alto nivel socioeconómico
- Le falta talento
- Está motivado para obtener una buena carrera
- Se siente menos conectado con su identidad latinoamericana
- Ha atendido en una escuela o universidad pública
- Piensa que el español no tiene valor
- Se crió en los Estados Unidos continentales

Q89 Cuando un Puertorriqueño no habla bien inglés, me..(Puede elegir varias respuestas)

- Siento relacionado con él
- Siento mejor que él
- Siento agusto
- Lo siento por él
- Me viene la necesidad de enseñarle
- Da lástima
- Nada de esto

Q90 Cuando un Puertorriqueño habla bien inglés me..(Puede elegir varias respuestas)

- Siento inferior a él
- Siento relacionado con él
- Siento incómodo
- Siento inspirado por él
- Siento agusto
- Irrito
- Está presumiendo
- Nada de esto

CODE-SWITCHING Las siguientes preguntas van sobre code-switching, que significa mezclar el español con el inglés cuando se habla o se escribe

Q91 ¿Con qué frecuencia mezcla el español y el inglés cuando habla o escribe?

- A menudo
- A veces
- Casi nunca
- Nunca

Q92 ¿Porqué mezcla el inglés y el español?(Puede elegir varias respuestas)

- No me entenderan los demás
- Encontrar otra expresión adecuada es difícil
- Uso terminología profesional
- Las personas con las que hablo hacen lo mismo
- Es una buena manera de crear un efecto
- Ni siquiera me doy cuenta que lo estoy haciendo
- Así es como hablamos en Puerto Rico
- Quiero que la gente sepa que hablo ambos idiomas

Q93 ¿Con quién te sientes cómodo mezclando idiomas?(Puede elegir varias respuestas)

- Padres
- Familiares
- Amigos
- Pareja
- Compañeros aficionados
- Compañeros de clase
- Colegas
- El jefe
- Los profesores
- Nadie

Por favor indique como (no) esta de acuerdo con las declaraciones. Conteste a cada declaración, dando su primer pensamiento. Por favor responda a todo lo nombrado.

Q94 La mezcla de idiomas muestra competencia en dos idiomas

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q95 La mezcla de lenguas es socialmente aceptada en las universidades

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q96 Mezclando inglés y español puede dañar las habilidades del español de alguien

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q97 Mezclar el inglés y el español puede dañar las habilidades del inglés de alguien

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q98 No me importaría si mi profesor mezclaría los idiomas

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q99 Para las personas que asistieron las escuelas privadas es más probable que mezclen los idiomas

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q100 La gente mezcla idiomas para mostrar que pertenece a un grupo socioeconómico alto

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

EL FUTURO DEL INGLÉS Y DEL ESPAÑOL Las siguientes preguntas van sobre declaraciones sobre la función que el español y el inglés tendrán en el futuro de Puerto Rico (en >15 años) en general y para usted personalmente

Por favor indique como (no) esta de acuerdo con las declaraciones. Conteste a cada declaración, dando su primer pensamiento. Por favor responda a todo lo nombrado.

Q101 En el futuro la importancia de hablar inglés en Puerto Rico habrá aumentado

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q102 En el futuro hablar inglés será más importante que hablar español en Puerto Rico

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q103 En el futuro será muy improbable encontrar un puertorriqueño que no hable inglés

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q104 En el futuro el español ya no será el idioma oficial de Puerto Rico

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q105 La importancia de hablar español en Puerto Rico será disminuida

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q106 En el futuro el inglés será el idioma oficial de Puerto Rico

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q107 En el futuro, las universidades en Puerto Rico serán menos accesibles para los estudiantes de clases socioeconómicas más bajas

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q108 Es probable que en el futuro todos los cursos de las Universidades públicas en Puerto Rico se darán en inglés

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q109 Es probable que en el futuro todos los cursos de las Universidades públicas de Puerto Rico se darán en español

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q110 Es probable que en el futuro todos los cursos en las universidades privadas en Puerto Rico se darán en inglés

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión



Q111 Es probable que en el futuro todos los cursos en las universidades privadas en Puerto Rico se darán en español

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q112 En el futuro el inglés será más visto en la cultura puertorriqueña

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q113 Me gustaría seguir una carrera en la que el inglés tenga una función

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q114 No creo que mis habilidades en inglés tengan una función importante en mi futura carrera

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q115 Educaré a mis futuros hijos solamente en inglés

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q116 Educaré a mis futuros hijos solamente en español

- Muy en desacuerdo
- Desacuerdo
- Acuerdo
- Muy en acuerdo
- Sin opinión

Q117 ¿Aún tiene algo más que quisiera decirnos?

Q118 ¿Quisiera recibir información sobre participar en una entrevista sobre estos temas en cambio de una pequeña recompensa?(Sepa que puede hacerlo de modo anónimo)

- Sí
- No

Q119 ¿Cuál es su correo electrónico?

## **Appendix B Form of consent**

Dear participant,

Thank you for your interest in our study that will contribute to achieve a better understanding of the attitudes from University students towards the role of English in Puerto Rico. We aim to do this by a survey and follow-up interviews.

### **Procedure**

The interview will take between 30 and 60 minutes. During this interview the following topics will be discussed: your background, education, thoughts and preferences considering languages, the present and future language and cultural situation in Puerto Rico and mixing English and Spanish while speaking or writing.

### **Reimbursement**

As a sign of our appreciation for your contribution to our research, you will receive \$5,00 in cash.

### **Voluntary participation**

Participation in this study is voluntary and discretionary. This means that you can decide to withdraw at any time, without providing a reason. If you decide to withdraw, this will have no consequences for your reimbursement.

### **Participant confidentiality**

All information collected with regard to this study will be treated strictly confidentially and will only be used for research purposes. The data will not be accessible to unauthorized people. If you wish, you can remain anonymous by using another first and last name.

### **Contact**

If you have any comments, questions or suggestions, you can contact Alissia de Vries (a.de.vries.8@umail.leidenuniv.nl).

### **Complaints**

Should you find that you have been incorrectly or insufficiently informed about participation in this study, or if you have any complaints about the way this study was performed or the way you have been treated as a participant, it is recommended that you discuss this with the experimenter of the study. If you do not wish to do so, or in case that does not resolve the issue, you can also file a complaint with the coordinator of this study Dr. M.C. Parafita Couto ([m.parafita.couto@hum.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:m.parafita.couto@hum.leidenuniv.nl)).

## **Appendix C List of interview questions**

### **BACKGROUND**

Can you tell me something about where you were born, where you grew up and in what household?

What is your mothers and fathers first language?

What language was spoken in your household?

Was that different from your friends? How?

How do you feel about having English/Spanish as your first language?/In what way do you think growing up bilingual has defined you?

When was the first time you got in touch with the English language? (tv, pop culture)

Which language did you prefer using when you were younger? Why?

What language do you prefer using now? Why?

Would you like to educate your future kids in the same way your parents did (/rather bilingual)?

### **ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL**

At a certain point in life your parents had to decide what school you were going to. What were the factors that played a role in this decision?

Have you only attended public or private schools or both?

How did you feel about their decision to let you attend public/private schools, looking back on that period of time?

What languages were part of the everyday class situation? (Language of instruction, language you spoke with your classmates, the books, exams, presentations?)

- elementary school
- junior high school
- high school

(Was it hard to constantly switch between English and Spanish?)

How did you feel about this? Would you have rather had a mixed/Spanish/English setting?

What do you think would have happened to your language proficiency if you had attended public/private instead of public/private education?

Do you think it could have had an influence on other skills besides your languages?

Did you have friends/family members that attended public/private instead of public/private schools?

Did you felt like there was a big difference between their form of education and yours? What differences?

Do you think you would want your future kids to attend public or private education (elementary, junior high school, high school – not university)?

Do you think that in the future English/Spanish will play a bigger role in public/private schools?

## UNIVERSITY

Then it was time to choose what University you wanted to attend, did your parents let you decide this by yourself/did they made the final decision?

Why a public University? Did you also looked at private Universities ?

Why didn't you choose to attend a private University?

Why UPR?

What were your thoughts about the admission requirements? (English/ Spanish too high/low, why?)

What do you think about the idea that the level of English could prevent students from attending a public University?

How different were the admission requirements different from other Universities you were interested in?

What does the classroom setting looks like in terms of language? (language of instruction, language of used literature, exams, presentation, language you speak with your classmates?)

Is it hard to constantly switch between English and Spanish?

What language do you prefer to be instructed in?

How do you feel about the (big/small) role English plays in your study?

And how about the role of Spanish?

How would you feel about doing a study completely in Spanish, with no English admission requirements, courses, literature, instruction etc. at all?

What if you would have attended a private University, how would that make a difference on your daily life and/or skills?

What factors do you think could play a role in students NOT wanting to attend a public University in Puerto Rico?

Are you content with your/your parents' decision to attend UPRM?

What things would you like to change?( in class, the study material, the languages, the admission requirements, the overall campus?)

Would you advice high school students to attend a private or public University?

Do you think that in the future English/Spanish will play a more important role in public Universities?

## US MAINLAND

Have you ever thought about attending a university on the US mainland?

Are you planning to do an exchange/internship or even move to the US mainland at a certain point in your life? (For what reason?)

Speaking of the US mainland, what do you think would happen to Puerto Rico, in terms of the languages, if it would become a state?

And in terms of the culture?(norms, values, social behavior, food, music, trends, media)

Keeping that in mind, would you like for Puerto Rico to become a state?

Would you like for Puerto Rico to become a completely independent island?

What do you think would happen to Puerto Rico, in terms of the spoken languages and culture then?

Where do you see or feel the influence from the US mainland's culture the most?

Do you think this influence will become more or less present (or the same) if Puerto Rico remains unincorporated territory of the USA? Why?

How would you feel when the influence of the US mainland's culture would become more/less present?

#### LANGUAGE SITUATION IN PUERTO RICO

Looking at the present situation, how would you describe this unique situation that Puerto Rico has in terms of the language, to someone who is completely unfamiliar with the island?

And in terms of culture?

What would happen to the Puerto Rican culture if the Spanish language would disappear?

In what settings is English the most present? (areas, groups, tv, literature, young people)

#### PREJUDICES AND THOUGHTS

Do you feel like another person when you speak in another language? (ability to express yourself, comfortable, more related to a certain group?)

Do you think any Puerto Rican should speak both English and Spanish fluently?

What about any Puerto Rican that attends higher education?

What factors do you think play a role in when a Puerto Rican does not speak English well? (something to do with area, group, form of education, intelligence, future goals?)

For what reasons would Puerto Ricans not want to speak English?

In what situations is it more appropriate to speak in Spanish?

In what situations is it more appropriate to speak in English?

How important is the mixture of English and Spanish in your life?

How do you keep the balance?

## CODE-SWITCHING

In your opinion, what kind of people code-switch? (everyone, just elite, just people who have attended private education, who have lived on the US mainland?)

How do you feel when you are having a conversation with somebody and that person starts to code-switch? (Can it become annoying, inappropriate, too much at some point?)

What do you think about the idea that how often somebody code-switches has to do with them attending public or private education in the past?

What do you think about the idea that people who code-switch are part of a higher socioeconomic group or elite?

What do you think code-switching says about somebody's knowledge of the languages he's mixing?

How suitable is code-switching in higher education or a formal career setting?

How hard is it for you not to code-switch?

Do you also engage in code-switching while writing? Either on paper or online? Or is it just a spoken thing?

What are the rules in code-switching?

How do you feel when you code-switch?

Does it make you feel that you are balancing between two cultures or identities?

## PREFERENCE

How would it make you feel if you were asked to not use either English or Spanish anymore for the rest of your life?

What language would you keep?

How would it change you as a person, your identity?

How would it change your goals for the future?

## Appendix D Transcripts



Participant number: 1

Name: Carlos

Date: 21/06/2017

Duration: 1:21:43

---

Can you tell me something about where you were born and in what household you grew up?

I was born in San Juan, but I was raised on the east coast. From first until sixth grade I got to school in **el campo**, From seventh grade until twelve grade I got to another school. I like **el campo** better than the bigger cities, but I wouldn't change studying in Mayagüez for anything.

Are your parents both Puerto Rican?

My dad was born in New York, Long Island and he lived there until he was 5.

Did he also spoke English with you?

Not commonly. As a kid I didn't ask my father Are you American? Well, we're all American.. But I didn't ask him Are you from the US? When I was a little bit older, I found out that he's a very proud Puerto Rican from New York. Later in life when I started speaking English, we started to get comfortable about the idea of speaking both languages.

Do you think it was a conscious choice of him to not educate you in English?

It's the normal Puerto Rican way of education your kids. They learn English in school, or from social media, television. But it's not normal to speak to their children in English, it's not very common.

Looking back at it would you have liked to be raised bilingual?

I guess I would. There's not much difference, because later in life I started speaking English. In my household I am the most bilingual from all my brothers and sisters. Sometimes I have trouble managing both languages. Sometimes I speak to my father in both, because I am just so comfortable with him, but with other people I do not speak English because I am not comfortable.

When was the first time you got in touch with English, was it through television?

We had local television, we did not had cable until I was nine. After that I started speaking more freely to friends in middle school. Here we have different social groups in the schools. There is a social group that speaks English, they are the weird kids that always speak English and I was part of that when I was in middle school and in High school.

Would you like to educate your kids bilingual?

Definitely. I think the education is so imperial in teaching English right now, that it would not be a decision of mine. But I would love to. I have little cousins from 8 and 12 years old and when I talk to them in English, they cannot completely respond to me in English, but they do understand me. Imagine the generation after this.

Have you been to public or private schools?

All public schools. I also almost got into a bilingual school, a public one, but I wanted to stay with my friends.

What factors played a role in your parents letting you attend public schools?

My mom was a teacher in the public school system. I think that is one of the reasons why they would have wanted me to go to a public school. I was not really fond of private schools either. The ambiance is really different from a public school.

Can you define this ambiance?

First of all, the ability of being in a private school, you have to be privileged to be able to pay for a private school in Puerto Rico. It's not that hard, because if you're in the **clase media**, you can pay for it, you can work for it. But I believe in the public school system.

What languages were part of your everyday classrooms situation at the public schools?

Completely Spanish, except for the English class where some professors obligated you to speak only in English.

How do you feel about that? And do you maybe regret not attending that bilingual school?

I actually did. The friends who did go to the bilingual school, got other privileged opportunities that I did not had. Because of that, I kind of did, but right now I don't. I would have been different and things would not have happened that I loved that they happened at my high school period.

So would you liked it more if your everyday classroom situation was a little bit more of a mixture of English and Spanish?

I would. I only spoke English with the English speaking friends. It's not bad, it was not like "I speak English, I feel oppressed" at all. It just was a different connection with them, because I was able to do things that I couldn't do with other friends, or that wouldn't understand me or be more picky.

Can you tell me something about how that group started?

I think it has always been there. I got into this group of friends, that my brother also had been a part of, they were just cool for me. They were called the hot tub time machine family, it's a movie, it was a weird inside joke, I didn't understand it at the time. When I got into 10th grade some of them had not graduated yet because they were in 12th grade. I just naturally got into the group. Later some of them graduated and the new generation came and they called it the rockers corner, because most of them liked English music, which was not popular.

Maybe that has been a compensation for your Spanish classroom situation, because a big part of your school life was still in English, talking with your friends and classmates.

I think it was, yeah.

Is there also a difference in the form of education or level between private and public schools?

Yes definitely. It's all about the money. When you're spending money, you want a compensation, so you want a generous and less bendable education. When you have to pay \$100, you better have a good education, and if your kids didn't liked something, they would tell you and you would go to the principal. I think that's the reason why private schools are more of higher quality. Private schools have a more privileged education.

Would you like for your kids to attend public or private schools?

I have a big problem with privilege. I am not a non-privileged person, but I don't like to use the privilege over others. For example, I don't think it's fair that people cannot have a private education without the high costs. I would love that public education would be as good as private education, but I don't like the idea of me having to pay for it. I seriously believe in the public school system, I think it's doing better and there have been a lot of changes already.

What kind of changes?

For example, if you did not pass 3 of the exams, which are Spanish, English, Science and Math exams, you would get placed into pre-basic or basic. If most of the students pass, the school was doing a good job. Those exams are rough, a process of a whole week. It was not fair for the students to see it as whether the school was working or not. They changed it into **las pruebas Meta**, which was practically the same, only the standards were different. Also, if you pass, you could go directly to the university. It's bringing a more positive **resultado**. Also the number of students going to university is higher than in the past.

Do you also think the role of the languages in the classrooms may change?

I think they would still fully be in Spanish. English was made as a first language, so we have 2 first languages, which is not the reality of how it is taught in Puerto Rico. Culturally we speak more Spanish than English. But English is not a second language, it's a first language. We're still in the process of becoming a full bilingual education system. I don't know if we will ever become that, unless we would become a State. But up until now I don't think it will happen. It's a little bit sad, but I am also happy that our main language is not being lost. I think that most people who speak English, are very non-Spanish speakers. They replace Spanish with English. They have this idea of English supremacy over Spanish, which is not the idea behind making our country bilingual. It's about having them at the same respect and level. If that change would come, Spanish would slowly be lost, which wouldn't be a good **resultado**.

So it may happen if Puerto Rico becomes a State?

Yes it could happen but I don't think Puerto Rico will become a State. Not yet, or maybe never. I like the idea of independence and not being in the screwed up middle that we are now. "We are and we are not", I don't want to be in that middle, it's not fair for us. It's not giving us **los derechos** that we deserve as human beings. Right now we don't have a complete plan about how we could survive as an independent country. So I guess the best idea for now is to become a State but I don't think the US would take us. I don't like the territorial idea. Some of us live in the poor category. In their eyes maybe 46% of Puerto Rico could be poor, but we're not living in a third world poorness. The way other countries see us, as a territorial or colonial State, is very demeaning and that's not how we are.

What do you think would happen to Puerto Rico, in terms of the language, if it would become a fully independent island? Would English survive?

I don't think so. Our whole communication system is based on the US communication system. We don't have a big local communication system. If we would completely be Spanish spoken, because we don't have any English channels or programs at all that are from here. The television factor, communication factor would be gone, which was the reason how I learned English. They would still teach English in school, people will also still be using social media and that would also compensate the lack of the television and radio. That's a hard question because we did not have these factors ten years ago.. I forgot about social media for a second.. I don't think English would fade away completely, it has imprinted in us so much, in our way of living. Even though we speak Spanish, our social media is in English, which is a huge part of this generation that's coming.

Keeping that in mind, would you still like fully independence?

If we don't have a concrete way of surviving we should not, and we don't have that. Right now, no. The main factor is economical, for the languages it would be collateral damage, because we already speak English. If we would become independent, it's not like I would stop speaking English. There are people that think "Oh you speak English and you believe in independence, what's wrong with that" It has nothing to do with my social views, economical views and the way I would like Puerto Rico to be. I did not vote for statehood, because I don't think they would take us. Maybe it's a little pride that doesn't let me admit that statehood right now is one of the best options.

I would also like to talk to you about your current school situation. Did your parents let you decide what university you were going to attend or was it your own decision?

It was completely my own decision. My parents told me "learn what you love, do what you love and money would come", money is collateral, it's not the reason why you're working. Since I was in third grade I wanted to study economy in Mayagüez. I still love what I am studying and this is the only place where you can study economy in Puerto Rico.

Did you also check out other universities?

No I knew I was going to get admitted, because my GPA was a lot more than what was required, which was 2.85 I think, and I had 3.21. I wanted to be in the public university system and I was not looking at other universities.

What were your thoughts on the Spanish and English admission requirements?

There were not much. You have the college board tests of Spanish, English, Science and Math and those results get summed up. And your GPA which plays a bigger role. That decides whether you get in to the university or not. My college board scores was not so high, but I had a good GPA that compensated it. It was very easy to get into this university, for me at least.

So you agree with the requirements?

I think the English requirements should be higher. There is a Basic English class here that teaches English to students who already got Basic English in their High School. I don't think it would be needed for the new generation. Basic English will not be as common as it is right now. It's an extremely easy class.

Do you think they should skip the Basic level?

I think that when you want to apply for a university, you should already have a Basic level of English. There are some people that don't even know what a verb is. The requirements should be a little higher because it's a big part of our education and a lot of professors only speak English, for example my professor from Sri Lanka, and we did not know that when we came here. But the English is only a part of the total exam, you can compensate with the other exams. And if you feel like you don't know enough English, you can learn it. That may have been a problem for the past or present generation, but the new generation will not have this problem, I think. But I am giving you the perspective from somebody from the east side, with also the Metro area in him, and we are very bilingual. I also have a friend that does not speak English and can barely understand it. He had to take classes here to learn English. Now, he does understand it, but he does not speak it and is very shy about it. He took the Basic class and did not even do the exam. The Basic class is so Basic, that it does not even count how well you do on the speaking part, it counts how much time you speak. He couldn't take the exam, so he asked me to do it. The exam is a 800 points exam, but since it is Basic it's 400, if you get over, you get bonus points. I gave him a 635. Later

on his brother did the same exam. It was so easy for him because they did not expect much from him. If they are not going to make the standard higher, at least make the standards in here higher. If you can already get into the university, into the Basic classes, they should really make you speak English.

So, you also have professors that teach you in English? Like the Sri Lankan?

Right now I do not, everything is in Spanish this semester. Other semesters I had professors that only speak English.

What is the language of your books and exams?

It depends on the class. If you have a professor that teaches you in English, you will have an English book. However, there are some professors that teach you in Spanish but give you English books

Is it hard when you have that mixture?

For some people it is, for me it is not that hard. Some words are very similar or you just know them.

How would you say the mixture is set up? Is it 50/50?

I had 6 professors in of my 3 years studying here that taught in English and that gave us an English book. It would say it's 20 English/80 Spanish, depending on your Bachelor's. If you're an engineer student there are a lot of teachers that only speak English and also more literature in English.

Would you like for English to play a bigger role?

I would like for it to be more broad, because I would love them to be at the same level. I would be more comfortable. When I don't know a word in Spanish and say it in English and not have to worry about what somebody is thinking about me. Other people think that if you speak English you have this supremacy over them, because they have this idea of the English language being supreme. In my case it's not the way to visualize it. So I would like to have more English, especially instruction. If you're going to another State or English speaking country to study your Masters, they will have a completely English system, so it would be hard. Even for me it would be hard, because it would be completely English, and that is something you would have to get used to.

But you are content with your decision to attend UPRM right?

Definitely. And I think my English instruction here is more than it would be at private universities. I have friends that study at la Inter and they told me that they have never touched an English book or that their professors don't speak to them in English.

Would you also advise students to attend public universities instead of private ones?

Definitely. It also depends on what you want to study. If you have the money to study at, for example, Universidad Sagrado Corazón, which is the elite in communications in Puerto Rico, why not, go for it. I wouldn't tell you to study at a place that wasn't as prestige as what you may want. Study the best university. It just happens that the public university system in Puerto Rico is the best university in most Bachelors. Also for engineering, if you want better resources, don't want to study 6 years and a little bit of the easier route, than you should attend Polytechnica. Still, UPRM is the best university for engineering in Puerto Rico.

Have you ever thought about attending a university on the US mainland?

Maybe an exchange for a semester, but not fully because I have my whole life over here.

So I was wondering how would you describe this unique situation that Puerto Rico has, in terms of the language, to somebody who is completely unfamiliar with Puerto Rico, who doesn't know it's US territory, who doesn't know it's a Latin American Country, who does not even know where it is on the map. How would you explain the language situation?

Puerto Rico is part of the Caribbean. We were initially colonized by Spaniards. Columbus brought the Spanish culture here, our natives were slaves and were mostly killed by them. It also brought a very unique **mezcla** of races, we had the Spaniards, the Taíno and the Africans that were already slaves. Long after came the Hispanic-American war, which the US won. By that period Puerto Rico already had independence from Spain, but since we were still a territory of them, when the war came and Spain lost, we were stolen by the US. Then came the Americanization. We already spoke Spanish, because if you mix the African languages, the Taíno languages and Spanish it makes our weird mixture of Spanish. We have a Spanish that is very unique. We have an accent and you will know if a person is a Puerto Rican from the way they speak and interact. When the US took us, they forced us to learn English. It was completely forced. Later it became less and then came del Rosario and made English a main language of Puerto Rico again. We're Hispanic because we speak Spanish, we're Latino because we're part of the Latino country chain, we're Caribbean's because we're in the Caribbean and we're also citizens of the US, because the US has authority over us and we're also American because we're part of the American country. We got the best of everything and it's very unique.

Do you think that any Puerto Rico should speak English?

I think so, you have 2 official first languages, you should be able to speak both. If you're at a higher education, that should be a part of your presentation of your skills and it simply helps you. English is such a big language, economically and socially speaking, you have so much opportunities speaking both English and Spanish. Being on such a tiny island in the Caribbean, you have big opportunities and not being able to type into that is not presentable, especially when you have attended higher education. So I think you should speak Spanish and English.

What factors do you think play a role when a Puerto Rican does not speak English?

I don't think intelligence plays a part in learning languages, it's practice, it's listening, if you want to learn it, you will learn it. I think that's one of the reasons, some people just don't want to because they have not been exposed as much. There are some cities that don't have the same exposure to English as others. Economically some cities have a higher amount of English speaking population. Where you are in Puerto Rico definitely plays a part. Also, the way your family speaks of English, but that is diminishing a lot, and more in the next generation. It's social and geographical. Economical, not completely, but it does play a part. If you don't have **suficiente** money, to be exposed to cable television or maybe have a phone with social media, that plays a huge part in learning a language.

Do you also think some Puerto Ricans do not want to learn to speak English? Perhaps of a negative attitude?

I think some to, but most not. It's not the case for this new generations, but it was for my parents' generation and my older cousins. Some people don't want to learn English because they don't want to feel part of the US, some people take that as **una cosa** for not learning the language.

How do you keep the balance between English and Spanish? Is it hard to suppress one?

Sometimes it is. I am so comfortable with switching languages. I have a problem that I sometimes speak Spanish and randomly speak English, because some words just don't come to me.

I have noticed you do this the other way around too. So it's because those words are more accessible?

Definitely. I could think of the word, translate it and say it, but instead of that I take the first one that pops up in my head. I am very comfortable with doing that with people that give me the permission to do it, for example my friends or people that I have already heard speaking in English. If I know a person does not speak English, I don't do it. That's hard for me sometimes because, I use a lot of **molestias**, I stutter. It happens a lot when I do not feel comfortable.

Is there a certain group or kind of person that switches more?

Definitely. The private schools have a lot more English speaking students. Education plays an extremely big role. If you give them the exposure and comfort to speak it, they will. If they do that a lot, it becomes a part of your language.

When you're switching do you feel like you're balancing between two cultures?

Sometimes. I read in an **artículo** that when you learn a different language, your personality will change, you have a different personality for every language. It doesn't change the essence of who you are, but it changes the way you speak or the way you portray yourself and your confidence. When I am switching, my friends can see a difference sometimes. I am still the same loud, energetic person that I am, but there's a difference and they see it and called me out on it. Maybe when I speak English, I am more serious than when I speak in Spanish. I do recognize that.

I was wondering, if you were asked not to use either English or Spanish for the rest of your life? What language would you keep?

**Español.**

Would that change you as a person, if you would have to suppress English for the rest of your life?

A lot. Because I code-switch a lot. For example, I switch very comfortable when I speak with my farther and sometimes he actually tells me "just try one language and don't switch a lot", because he knows both languages but switches a lot less than me. He speaks English or Spanish. If we're on the phone, he tells me to pick one language and it's hard for me. So it would change me a lot and I would feel suppressed.

Would it also change your goals for the future?

No, I don't think so. If I can't accomplish what I want in English, I will definitely accomplish it in Spanish. And if I can't accomplish it in any of those languages, I will learn a new language. I am very centered on what I want, and if I can achieve it one way or the other, I will look for another way to achieve it. I don't think that plays a role for me.

*Participant number: 2*

*Name: Luis*

*Date: 21/06/2017*

*Duration: 0:52:42*

---

Can you tell me something about where you were born and grew up?

I was born in Bayamón, Puerto Rico. Everyone in my family likes to speak English, almost no one speaks English. I liked it out there. My childhood was mostly in San Juan. I lived in Bayamón until recently, until I went to the university in Mayagüez.

What language was spoken in your household?

Spanish all the time. My father knows a little bit of English but it's like mine, not very fluent. But my mother doesn't know English, my brothers do know English, they learned it because of videogames, series, movies and all that. But no one in my family, other than them, know English.

What was the first time you got in touch with the English language?

In my school. I was in private schools since kindergarten, since then I got a little bit of English. After third grade, I got into the bilingual class, so most of my classes were in English. I grew up knowing English, but not speaking it as anyone in the US or anyone who can speak it fluent. All my books, movies, tv series were in English. Sometimes my father talked to me in English sometimes, so I could learn it a little bit more. Other than that, I did not see a lot of English in my daily life. I learned it by experiencing it with technology basically. Recently I went to visit my father in Texas, and I got to talk with a lot of people out there and my English got a lot more fluent, but once I got back to Puerto Rico, it just got worse. Maybe it's the practice that I need. I still like it, it's a universal language, it's pretty critical to our education, work and all that.

So your parents let you attend all private education

They wanted me to go to private school until high school, but because of our economic problem, I was in private school from kindergarten until 9th grade. After tenth-12th grade I was in a public school, and it was very good, in comparison to the private school, I think it was a lot better. It taught me a lot more of what I needed to know. I think it prepared me a lot more, than my private school could have done.

What was the difference between the private and public school in terms of the languages?

In private school I was in the bilingual grade, but still all my teachers spoke Spanish, so it was not that incredible for my education. In my public high school, the only English I was exposed to was the English class. Still, they obligated me to speak English all the time, it was a lot more practical, I could develop my English a lot more. I think my teacher did that for our future careers, because after getting our Bachelor degree, we may have to get a job in which you have to speak English. So, I do know what she had in my with that. It was very interesting, because I didn't speak much English until my public high school.

Did you had friends who did went to private high school?

I had friends who did go there, but in terms of their English in comparison to mine in that moment, I think I got a little bit more developed than them. Some of them liked the language so maybe they learned it outside of the classroom, but still I think that my public high school was a lot more developed in that area than the private school I was in. Maybe that private school



wasn't the best, it's actually one of the cheapest ones on the island. Maybe it wasn't the best education you can get here, but it was decent.

If you have kids in the future, would you like for them to attend public or private school?

I would like them to be in a private school, but not the one I went to. Out here in Puerto Rico we don't have a lot of public schools that teach us how to speak English that fluent like I learned it. My teacher was very hard on us. She integrated English also in all the other classes like chemistry, which made us a lot more fluent. Would I make my kids go to public elementary school? Most likely not. But a public high school? Yes. Because you learn a lot about life. In private school you're in a cage that you don't get out that much, you don't know about life. There are exceptions, but in private schools you don't learn a lot about life, people, getting through the different phases of teenage life. So that's what I would do, if I would stay in Puerto Rico after graduating at least.

You're thinking about leaving Puerto Rico?

Maybe. I'm in mechanical engineering, so once I get an internship, I would go and get to know some other States and places, Europe, the US, Latin-America. So if I would find a better place than Puerto Rico, maybe I'll move after I graduate. The economy is here is not the best, so I would move.

So you don't have a specific preference to go to the US? But also Europe and other parts of Latin-America are an option?

Well, right now my preference is the US because my father is out there. Comparing the US to another country, I don't know a lot about many countries, maybe in Europe a company requests a chemical engineer, I would apply and go. Maybe life will take me out there. Right now my preference is the US, not Puerto Rico.

Did your parents let you decide by yourself what university you were going to attend or did they had the last word?

They didn't force me to go anywhere or study a specific thing. I learned about engineering in my high school. I started by first year the UPR in Bayamón and after two years I moved to UPRM. They just told me that UPR was good. My first choice was a university in Iowa, but because of financial issues I couldn't go there. UPR is the best here for me and it's pretty cheap.

What does your classroom situation here looks like in terms of the language?

All my professors here speak Spanish. I don't think that has been a problem, because almost every single book is in English but translating it all to Spanish has never been a problem for us. It makes us able to fall back on Spanish all the time, so maybe for our future it will be a little bit of a problem because we don't speak a lot in English in the classroom. Some of the professors do make us do presentations in English, also the job fairs that are held here are filled with companies that present in English. It could help us a lot more if professors would make us speak English in the classroom all the time, but the switching between English and Spanish is not hard, it's part of our daily life, we're practically born in Spanish, speaking Spanish but reading or seeing everything in English. It's pretty weird sometimes, but we're used to it.

Were the English admission requirements a good representation of the level of English here?

They were decent, I don't think they were too high based on what we should know on this level. If they would be higher, not a lot would get in, but they would be lower, it would make everyone come here and that would be a chaos.

What do you think about the idea that these admission requirements could prevent students from applying here?

I would say that they would have to look further, get the English language better, because obviously after you graduate, you will get even more in touch with English than right now. It depends on how you see it. I see English as a tool to get further, read more, know more basically. But if you settle down and see it as an obstacle, you may stop learning English. I see it as a motivation, to become better, to push us in the right way.

Do you feel like your English has improved since you have attended UPR?

I think it hasn't had that much of a leap, but it did not get worse either. When I was in high school it was pretty bad, I found it hard to say hello or excuse me. But since I got here it didn't change a lot. I think it could be a little bit better. When you get in here, after getting all the requirements you need, they should force us to learn it better. At least the presentations should be in English. It would help us a lot more. After you get into the UPR, you don't see that much English, but they should force us more to help us. Perhaps if you study Spanish literature or something you don't need English that much, but for us engineers, we do.

What do you think would have happened to your English skills if you went to a private university?

I think it would have been the same. The private universities in Puerto Rico don't put that much of an effort, like some of us in UPR. Maybe it would have been a little bit worse. I think in general here in Puerto Rico, private universities are not the best at teaching English. I think UPRM has it all. Maybe it's because of my pride. UPR should put in a little bit more effort, but it's above the level of some of the private universities here.

What could reasons be for people not wanting to attend a public university?

I think it's the type of people you got to know while growing up. Maybe it's what they've heard, saw or been taught. I think most influence on where and what you want to study comes from family members. In my case, my father and mother tried to teach me all they could and motivate me. I think it's the mentality.

So I could say that you're content with the decision to attend UPRM?

I really am.

You would also advise it to other high school students to attend a public university?

Yes, at least in Puerto Rico. The public system is a lot better than private universities.

And that also has to do with the amount of English input?

Well, it may have a little bit to do with that, but I don't think it's the most important factor. For me, choosing a public university over a private university was the best decision for my English skills.

I'd like to talk to you about the connection to the US mainland. What do you think would happen to Puerto Rico, in terms of the languages, if it would become a state?

Ai. Because of the Puerto Rican pride, I don't think the primary language would change to English, because we're very proud. Maybe it official matters it would change, but none of the people would speak it all the time. We would still talk in Spanish and educate our kids in Spanish, maybe more English than what we're teaching them right now. Still and that we have

learned during our childhood. But still, there wouldn't change much. Spanish would still be spoken all the time.

Keeping that in mind, would you like for Puerto Rico to be a state?

Maybe it's in our best interest. I think it's the best decision right now, it would help our economy a lot more than being independent or staying as it is right now.

What if Puerto Rico would become a completely island, would English survive?

I think English would diminish a lot, most of us speak Spanish. Our future children wouldn't learn much English, except for words that we have adopted into our language. But in terms of the economy, it wouldn't be good for us.

Would you like that to happen?

For us to become independent, I would have liked it, but in terms of the economy it wouldn't be better. Our island would go into chaos.

So I was wondering how would you describe this unique situation that Puerto Rico has, in terms of the language, to somebody who is completely unfamiliar with Puerto Rico, who doesn't know it's US territory, who doesn't know it's a Latin American Country, who does not even know where it is on the map. How would you explain the language situation?

Our language is a combination of Spanish and English. It's very complicated. We've never learned the languages separately, it was always a combination of both. I helped us to learn both, without eliminating one or the other. We like both, although we like Spanish a little bit more, which is our main language right now. But English has become important and we have adapted it into Spanish, as in Spanglish. Maybe it sounds weird to other people, but for us it's normal, it's our daily life.

Is the switching between two languages always suitable to do? In a formal setting also?

In a formal setting it wouldn't be that good. Even though you could show that you speak both. But sticking to one language is more professional, I think. But in our daily lives, using both is just fine.

Is it hard for you to suppress the switching, right now for example?

It's really hard. I am thinking in Spanish, translating it all while speaking it. But if I would do this a lot more, it would make my English better.

I was wondering how it would make you feel if you were asked not to use either English or Spanish for the rest of your life?

It would be extremely hard. I wouldn't know what to say. There are many words that I don't know in Spanish, but I do know them in English. Maybe it's possible for a few weeks, but after that I wouldn't be able to.

But you have to and you have to choose which one you would keep?

I like Spanish a lot and I am most fluent in that language. But, I think English is more easy. The Spanish grammar is very, very hard. I would choose English, it's pretty easy to understand and every single movie that I have watched since I was young was in English, everything is in English. I like the way it sounds. Spanish sounds so sophisticated sometimes. I would choose English.

How would that change you as a person, as in your identity, if you couldn't speak Spanish anymore?

It would be so hard. I think I would change subconsciously. Maybe it would make me sound as a different person. It has a lot to do with our daily lives and work. If I HAD to, I would stick with English, it's more simple for me.

Participant number: 3

Name: Miguel

Date: 21/06/2017

Duration: 0:30:16

---

Can you tell me something about where you were born and in what household you grew up?

I was born in Ponce, Puerto Rico. I grew up in a friendly environment, most of my neighbors were elderly people, it was a pretty safe neighborhood.

Your parents are both Puerto Rican?

My father is from New York. My mother is from Puerto Rico

Were both English and Spanish spoken in your household?

Yes, but I would say I learned English first and it was more strongly enforced, maybe because of television and my father. We would mostly watch tv in English, listen to English music. Nonetheless, most of my friends around me and school was in Spanish, but I feel like English is my first language. Well, I would consider myself native in both.

Was that different from your friends?

I think it was different in the aspect of that I was better in English. Just because they knew Spanish and English less, doesn't mean that I was limited to my communication with them. I could still get a message across, regardless of the fact that they did not know English as much.

How do you feel about growing up bilingual? Has it defined you as a person?

I feel it was a great advantage, in comparison to everybody else in my society. I feel that being able to communicate in both languages is very important because in most situations, you would either find yourself having to explain to some elderly person how to get across the street in Spanish or having to explain to your relatives in New York something about Puerto Rico, but in English. It's very useful to have more than less and be limited.

What language do you prefer using now?

I prefer English, because I get a more fluent and coherent message across. But, it doesn't bother me to speak Spanish, I just feel more confident speaking English.

Do you want to raise your future kids in both English and Spanish?

Yes definitely, because of the examples I have given you.

At a certain point your parents had to decide what school you were going to attend. What factors played a role in this decision?

As far as Pre-K, it was mostly what was near in our neighborhood. I went to a private school from first grade to third grade, but from third grade to eighth grade I was home schooled. The classes were given by my mother in English. In the aspect of whether the language was a determining factor, I don't think it was a determining factor. In the school I was from first grade to third grade, their way of teaching English was not the worst, and definitely not the best in the area. But it was an okay and average level of teaching.

How do you feel about attending private instead of public schools?

In my Senior year of high school I compared myself to my friends from other private schools and public schools. I feel that the education I got from the private schools is a little bit better than the ones from the public schools, just in the aspect of that it's a smaller amount of students. Usually there are smaller amounts of students in private schools, it's easier to focus on a smaller class in comparison to a larger group of students that are probably just not really interested in going to class. Another thing was that in the public schools I would hear a lot of stories about kids cutting class, which was never ever possible to do in the private schools I attended. I believe that the education I got in a private school was better.

Did the English input also played a role on your opinion about this?

Maybe, but just because the level of English taught in private schools was a little bit better than in public schools, but not necessarily.

How did your everyday classroom situation look like?

I am going to use my 12th grade as an example. English was obviously taught in English, but there were some classes in which the class was taught in Spanish, but the textbook was in English. Other classes were mainly fully taught in Spanish. In most cases it was verbally Spanish and textbook in English and the test in English as well.

How was it to constantly switch?

It's not a very good idea to teach students that way, just because I either feel that it should be completely in Spanish or completely in English, because you can learn the terminology verbally and once you look for it in the textbook. If it's in another language it's not going to be as easy to find or relate. Certainly classes such as science and math should be taught in English, because in most situations terminology in med school or other schools would be in English. Learning the terminology in Spanish is close to useless.

Would you like your future kids to attend private or public education?

It depends on the area. If I stay in Puerto Rico, I will consider private schools, just because I went there. If I was somewhere else, I would evaluate the types of schools in my area. The name public or private would not determine. I don't want to limit it to only going to private schools, because if the public school is better than the private school, than that would be what I will decide.

Did your parents let you decide what university you were going to attend?

Most of my high school years I always wanted to stay in Puerto Rico, just for the fact that getting a Bachelor degree in Puerto Rico, in comparison to the continental US, would be a lot cheaper. As far as my parents input, they did not had a lot to do with it. Of course my father being from New York, he would have preferred me to seek other options, but he's not mad at me for staying here.

Did you also looked at other universities?

No I only applied to 1.

So you did not even think about attending a private university for example?

Not at the time, but throughout my first year of college I thought about attending a private university. Public schools rely on government funding. I feel that in a couple years the university will be limited to the amount of programs they can offer, in comparison to private schools for which the government could be crashing, like it is right now, and they would sustain themselves.

What were your thoughts on the admission requirements of the UPRM?

I thought that they were fairly acceptable because being the public school that is known for, a very good school, I feel that the GPA required for the programs was good at the time. It would prevent mediocre students and filter students going into college. I feel like the level was okay.

You're also talking about the English requirements?

Yes as far as that good, since it is expected that a Puerto Rican is not as good in English, I feel that they are a little bit too nice. I don't feel that because it is the second language here, it should be higher, but I feel like it should be taught better, just so it's not as hard here.

So the admission requirements and level here is fine, but it's more about the stages before that?

Definitely. Just because high school is easy peasy next to this. The English in high school, doesn't matter if it's public or private, you're still going to have a hard time with the classes taught here.

Do you have a lot of classes in which the language of instruction is English?

A lot of the classes are spoken in Spanish, but the presentation and textbook is in English. The same as in high school.

Would you like to see more English?

Yes in the sciences and math. As far as social studies, I don't really mind them being taught in Spanish, especially if it's about the history of Puerto Rico or something like that.

Are you content with your decision to attend UPRM?

Yes, definitely. I would not have chosen another school here but maybe if I had the change to I would have looked at other options outside of the island.

Are you planning on doing an exchange or internship?

Definitely an internship, but I am not sure when.

Speaking of the US mainland, what do you think would happen to Puerto Rico, in terms of the languages, if it would become a state?

It would depend on the president at the time, I doubt we would become a state anytime soon. But, I think both English and Spanish would be the primary language, a lot of schools and other business would have to update their requirements for the people who work there.

Would you like for Puerto Rico to become a state?

I am biased, I am neutral. I don't want to say that I don't care but I am not thinking about that. As long as the consequences do not put me in a situation where it would affect me, I would be fine with it. For independence, same case.

If it would become a completely independent island, what would you think that would happen to the English language here?

It would not survive. There would be no reason for Puerto Ricans to speak English, other than maybe business deals with other parts of the world. English would not be as taught as it is now.

So I was wondering how would you describe this unique situation that Puerto Rico has, in terms of the language, to somebody who is completely unfamiliar with Puerto Rico, who doesn't know

it's US territory, who doesn't know it's a Latin American Country, who does not even know where it is on the map. How would you explain the language situation?

If you encounter somebody who is older than 45 years old, expect them to speak Spanish. Other than that, it can vary from English speakers, to Spanish speakers, to both. Even if people don't speak English, they do a good job at understanding what you're saying if you speak English to them. I would say that it's 50% English and Spanish speakers and maybe 15% English speakers only and 35% that don't know how to speak English at all. I believe that maybe half, or a little bit less, of the population here knows how to speak English, or I would hope so. Maybe eliminating the 15% English speakers here because maybe that's not even a significant percentage.

In what setting is the English language most present?

In the more populated cities, younger people, for social groups maybe people who are more interested in arts.

Do you feel like another person when you speak in English versus Spanish?

Definitely I do. It is because of the word selection that I have in English, in comparison to Spanish. If you would translate my speech, I would not use the same words in Spanish to say what I am saying in English right now. I would not say I feel like a more sophisticated person, because I can use sophisticated words in both languages, but maybe because of the specific words I use in English speech, I feel like that I turn into somebody else.

Do you think that any Puerto Rican should be able to speak both languages?

Yes. I feel that nowadays it is very important to speak English, worldwide. So, since that anyways we are territory of the USA, it doesn't hurt if we know how to speak English. Most of us know how to speak Spanish already. There are a lot of similarities in both languages, so I don't think that there's actually a reason to not learn English.

You wouldn't know a reason for people not wanting to learn English?

People who want for Puerto Rico to be independent or elderly people would have their reasons, but that's more for cultural reasons.

How do you keep the balance between Spanish and English?

Most of my friends speak both languages. Half of my friends speak Spanglish. Remove my friends from the aspect, I speak English to my dad anyway, because it's his first language and easier to communicate.

Are you sometimes having trouble with suppressing one of the two?

I don't know why I would need to suppress one of the two. In most situations, I can speak both. But, for example, if I would have to speak fully in Spanish, I would think of the word in English first, maybe in that aspect I suppress it and translate it again. Sometimes it's easier to think of the word in one language, but you can anyway find the word for it.

What kind of people engage in this mixing of languages?

I think people who watch Netflix a lot, or tv series in English, since there's a lot of exposure to English throughout. These people, who are generally my age, would mix both languages in a single sentence.

When you're talking to somebody and he's mixing all the time, how does that make you feel?



Sometimes it annoys me. In my head I am thinking "just stick with one language". I don't understand how it is easier for the person to communicate switching between both languages.

What do you think it says about somebody's language proficiency?

They are deficient, maybe in both, but not deficient to a significant level. Maybe just in the aspect that they are not comfortable speaking a single language entirely.

What do you think about the idea that how often somebody code-switches has to do with them attending public or private education?

I would say people from private education, especially high school backwards, are more likely to code-switch. I would find my friends from public schools to be more efficient in speaking Spanish, in comparison to communicating in English.

What do you think about the idea that people who code-switch a lot are part of a higher socioeconomic group or an elite?

I would not find that to be true. It doesn't come to my mind why that would be true.

When you code-switch, does it make you feel like you're balancing between two cultures or identities?

Not really. It just makes me feel like I am having trouble to communicate. I feel like I can't get the message coherently across if I stick to one language, so I need to resort to knowing the word in the other language, just so I can get the message across.

Do you also do it while writing or is it just a spoken thing?

Yes, I tend to do it more when I write and text.

Are there rules that are attached to it or can you switch whenever you like?

It's spontaneous, but now that I think about it maybe not as spontaneous. Maybe just certain words, for example, the noun could be in Spanish but the rest of the sentence could be in English.

How do you feel about code-switching in a more formal setting, for example higher education?

In a presentation, for example, I would definitely not code-switch. I find it to be more about common speech and not professional settings. If I would try to get a job, I would not speak to the manager code-switching.

I was wondering how it would make you feel if you were asked not to use either English or Spanish for the rest of your life?

I don't know how I would feel. It depends. If I could not use Spanish for the rest of my life, that would make me feel less bad, in comparison to not using English.

So you would keep English?

Yes

Are you also making this decision with your goals for the future in mind?

Definitely

Participant number: 4

Name: Sofia

Date: 21/06/2017

Duration: 0:28:19

---

Where were you born and where did you grow up?

I was born in Mayagüez, Puerto Rico, in the same pueblo. The first years, when I was a baby, I lived in Mayagüez, in sort of an apartment, when both of my parents were living together. After we moved to San Germán which is where I have been living ever since.

And your parents are both Puerto Rican?

Yes

And do they both speak English and Spanish?

Yes

So you grew up bilingual?

Yes

What do you think of that, looking back on it?

Well I actually have a lot to thank to my mom. Because, my dad wanted me to stick strictly to Spanish, but mom always exposed me to it. So I always saw cartoons, movies, what not in English. So it helped me a lot and even than when I was, like 3,4 years old, when my parents were talking about something that they didn't wanted me to understand, they talk it in English and by the time I was 6, I understood them. I still remember that day were I was like "you know I can understand you guys, right?" And they were like... So yeah, I have a lot to thank to my mom.

Do you also have brothers or sisters?

I have three sisters from my dad's side, his first marriage and they are really fluent in English as well. One is living in Missouri, the other one in North-Carolina and the other one is still here. We're all fluent. The only one that has a heavy accent is dad. A really heavy accent. He can read and write really amazingly in English, but when you listen to it, yeah he has a heavy accent.

So was growing up bilingual different from your friends or were you all kind of in the same situation?

It was actually really different, because even though my education was in a private school, the education supposedly supposed to be better. But it was still really different and some English classes, some grades, I always helped them, I was always translating stuff for them so they could understand them. And in a way I felt really like, way more advanced than they were. In that sense it was different, I was not trying to let it get to my head, so that I thought I was better than them in a way, so I translated that feeling into helping them understand.

You have attended all private education? Elementary, Junior High and High school?

Yes, the same school.

So everything was both in English and in Spanish?

Yes

So what did the classroom situation look like in terms of language of instruction, what language did you talk with your classmates, your books?

It was mainly Spanish. The only class that had instruction in English, was the English class. The rest was in Spanish.

What do you think would have happened to your English skills, if you would have attended public schools?

Well, I probably still be fluent in English because the basis for all my bilingualism was thanks to my mom. But probably if I would have been in a public school, where the English teachers are not that fluent and not that knowledgeable, than probably I wouldn't be as fluent as I am now. Only that. Because the basis, which was the most important part, because I learned in my linguistic class that one is exposed to that second language, was the age that the little kid absorbs it all. So I could have been taught seven languages and absorb them all, but I was only taught English so. Mom made that difference, not the education *per sé*, I think

Do you want to do the same thing when you have kids in the future?

Of course, and maybe even teach them another language so they can be not bilingual, trilingual. I don't know if that's a correct word, but yeah.

What third language?

Italian or French. My boyfriend is from an Italian family so, yeah it will be Italian or French.

And what about the type of school you want your kids to attend, public, private?

Private definitely. Maybe I would put them at least 1 year in public school, because socially they can develop their skills better. I know it maybe sounds mean to say but in public schools you have your cliques, you have your bullies, you have everything. So you develop those social skills as a person, that I developed when I was here at university. Because in my private school it was really small, a really small community. There was never such a thing as bullying, such a thing as cliques, so maybe when I would have kids, I would like to expose them at least 1 year of public school. The rest would be private.

So at a certain point it was time to choose what university you would be attending. Was it all your choice or did your parents have the last word in this?

I have to say I was sort of brainwashed into it because both of my parents and my sisters graduated from here, from Colegio. So, I never had another option actually. It was always like, okay, dad always told me especially in 12th grade, the last year of high school "okay you have three options: Colegio, UPRM or CAAM", those are the 3 names of Colegio, and so yeah it was always this and nothing else.

Looking back on it now, would you maybe have wanted to attend a private university, have you ever thought of that?

I thought about attending a private university in the states, because I used to dance, I still dance a lot. And one of my teachers had other students that went to private universities in the States, that they continued studying dance. She told me about it and I actually looked it up, it was Walter University in Pennsylvania. I looked it up and it seemed amazing because I could combine dance and English, which is what I am studying now. But at the end of the day it was a lot of

money and here I am still studying one of the two things I wanted to study and I am still dancing so.

You're still combining

I am still combining them and it's nice

So you have not thought about attending a private university in Puerto Rico?

No, in Puerto Rico no.

Do you think your language skills or other skills maybe would have developed differently if you would have attended a private university, here in Puerto Rico?

Well, I am sort of biased in the fact that I am really passionate for the UPR system and I have always been told and read that this university system is far better than the private ones. And maybe that's an incorrect thought, because maybe the private schools are really good at some of the things they teach. But here, with my professors, with my colleagues English majors, we're all really fluent. And sometimes I listen to them talk and hear these new words, they may be younger than me or the same age as me, so I still think that this is the best option. Maybe if you want your major in dance for example, you can go to Sagrado Corazón. If you want a major in, I think it's computer something, there's another private university for that. But at least for English, UPR.

Can you tell me something about how your everyday classroom situation looks like here, in terms of how much English exposure you get?

A bunch. My major is English, so definitely the majority of my courses are in English, and my minors are Teacher Preparation and Comparative Literature. Comparative literature is the only one that is fully Spanish. I mean up till now. Teacher Preps, because I study my major in English, that too is in English. So most of it is in English literally. And even outside, I tend to speak English more than Spanish, or combine them.

And how do you feel about that one course being in Spanish, how is that?

It's a little tricky. Since it's reading a lot and comparing different literatures and stories and stuff. It's a bit tricky and especially in poetry, I tend to look at the English version, instead of the Spanish. And sometimes, this semester, we analyzed Baudelaire, which is in French, and I even looked it up in French to see some of the things, even though I don't know French. But I like to see it in English, because I can imagine it better, I can visualize it better. And since my vocabulary is much more bigger in English than Spanish, it's tricky to read in Spanish.

Maybe it's also because you have that and all the other courses in English, so you have to switch when you have another class?

It's switching and even when I am in those Spanish courses, if I am reading something or another colleague or professor is telling something in Spanish, I am automatically looking up some word in English. So I can internalize and actually get what they are saying.

But you are content with your decision to attend UPRM, right?

Yes

Can you think of a reason why people would not want to attend public universities?

Because the same way that I am biased into think that the system is better, they think private is the best there is. And maybe they unconsciously compare Puerto Rico's universities to the States

and they think oh, since the States, for example like Harvard, they are private. So they think "oh since Harvard is private, than the private schools must offer a better education". Maybe they are biased in the opposite ways that I am biased.

What did you think about the admission requirements for UPRM?

What are the admission requirements?

Well, the English one's especially and how you get placed into levels: basic, intermediate

Oh, beginner, intermediate, advanced? I think they are really appropriate because I entered straight to advanced courses and in my case I found that really refreshing cause I didn't have to go through the beginner and intermediate, they are really beginner level. Some of my friends entered through beginner, and they are really basic. I saw a book on the beginner courses, they are the sort of classes that I took when I was in the 11th or 12th grade of high school. So it's really basic. But then again, when someone's English is quite rusty, it really helps them.

Even though it may not be quite a good university level, it's still good that it is there?

Yes

Because otherwise, it would be unfair if they would cut that out and say "no you need at least an intermediate level"?

No, I think it's completely good. Because, for example, some of the students that enter engineering or sorts, they only need the English to read the books, at least at university, to read the books and to understand some of the professors that are English speakers. They don't have to read a lot, or analyze things like us English majors have to do. So, even if the science majors have that beginner/intermediate level of English, it's really good for them. And if they cut it out, it's going to be quite a challenge for them.

I want to talk to you about the US mainland, because you have thought about attending a university there. Are you now planning maybe to do an exchange or internship?

I thought about doing an internship and maybe getting my PhD over there. My dream is NYU, but it's a bit costly. But I know there are really good universities in the mainland that offer great curriculum in literature or in English. So that's definitely a thing I plan to research more, when I am near graduating here.

Speaking of the US mainland, what would you think would happen to Puerto Rico, in terms of the languages, if Puerto Rico would become a state?

Let's take, for example, USA per se, it's the third or fourth biggest Spanish speaking country in the world. So even though the official language is English, they still have a lot of Spanish speakers. And Puerto Rico has both. So in a way, maybe being a state we would be imposed English as an official language, but a lot of people will still be speaking Spanish and a lot of people will be speaking English with a really heavy accent or "Inglés patial, como dicemos aquí". Este, so, we would still use both languages.

Would you like for Puerto Rico to become a state?

No

For what reason?

All of the history I have read and what my mom has been telling me, because she reads a lot of history and she has told me. I took USA history as well. So I see all that has happened, all the USA

has done to their "territories turned states" and I don't like it at all. And I don't like what the USA has turned into, because when I took history of USA 1, I saw the constitution and how it came to be. The base was, they came from the UK, because they were fleeing from the tyrants king's and all that. And now, at least for me, a Puerto Rican's point of view, I see them turning into tyrants themselves and why would I want to be a part of that? Especially with the president, the vice president, all that they are doing. I prefer to work my ass off and be an independent country.

So, not the situation were Puerto Rico is in right now, but a fully independent island?

Yes

What do you think would happen to the English language in Puerto Rico then?

It would go to second base, definitely. I would hope so that in schools they would put all their efforts into making everyone a very fluent Spanish speaker. Because, even though we are technically a Spanish speaking island, a lot of people speak it very incorrectly, including me, because I sort of adopted English as my official language. You too (refers to boyfriend). He came from a bilingual school so he always thinks in English, like me. So, if Puerto Rico would become independent, I hope that they would put all their efforts into making Spanish better for everyone. To speak it, read it, write it better. Even though globally English is one of the top languages spoken, it would still be studied, just not as intense as it is studied now.

So English will survive, but it will be less visible. In culture also?

Yes

Where do you see or feel the influence from the US mainland or the English language the most? In certain areas, groups?

For example on campus, some of the cliques, like for example the gamers, they are always speaking English and some computer nerds are always speaking English. When I compare them to English majors, we rarely speak English socially, we code-switch all the time, it's talking Spanglish, but some cliques talk it more than others. I think that is about it, if we're talking about socially.

So for me as an outsider, this language situation that you have going on in Puerto Rico is quite interesting and quite unique. So I was wondering, how would you describe this unique that Puerto Rico has, in terms of the languages, to somebody who is completely unfamiliar with the island. Who doesn't know that it's US territory, who doesn't know that it's an Latin American island, who doesn't know where it is on the map, How would you explain the language situation?

I am a bookworm, so I am going to talk it in terms of books. Imagine a dictionary, it's a dictionary that is still half written, and each chapter is from a different country. Because in Spanish we have words that we inherited from Africa, we have words that we inherited from the Tainos, so it would be divided into chapters, like for example the native, the Africans and the gringos. Because we have a lot of words that a gringolized, like in English we say "we are going to park here" , in Spanish "vamos a aparcar aquí". Then there would be, a sort of concluding chapter, which is the result of all that. In a way, it's a complete mix. If you see a map, there's Puerto Rico and there's arrows from everywhere, because since we're in the middle of the Caribbean, back in colonized times, I am sorry I like history a lot. But in colonizing times, everyone went through us. So that's why our language is weird, it's a pure mix. That's a really easy way to imagine it.

Could you explain the mixture in percentages? It's not 50/50 right?

No it's not 50/50 at all. It's far more complicated than that.

How would you explain that?

A really easy example is for example the coins. We have the quarter, we have the dime, the nickel and the penny. That's a really good example because they are different sizes, all different values, all different colors, so that's a way to say it. It would be completely unfair to say 25, 30, 15, because some areas of Puerto Rico, for example the east side, east southern, they have a lot more African inherited words, than what side. The north side has a lot more English inherited. It varies by area and by home much they were exposed to it as well. The nickels and quarters I think is a good example.

We're doing this interview in English obviously. I was wondering do you feel like another person when you're talking in English versus in Spanish?

I think it depends, because socially I can just speak Spanish because most of my circle of friends speak Spanish. But, when I am alone with some of the English speakers, then speak in English all the time. But honestly, I am always talking Spanglish. Mostly Spanish, than comes a word that I cannot translate correctly into Spanish, English. Spanish, English. So it's a mix and mostly when I am talking in English, like I am talking with you, is the same English as when I am talking with a professor and usually my tone of voice varies. I don't even know why. When I am talking English, I tend to be more high-pitched, than when I am talking Spanish.

So, you say you code-switch a lot. In your opinion, what kind of people code-switch?

Bilingual and multilingual

And then looking at people who have attended public or public education, people from certain socioeconomic groups or..?

Definitely those who have attended private. Because I have friends that all their education was from a public school and they only speak Spanish unless they completely have to say something in English, and it's not a pretty English. So, definitely private school and higher up on the social class, socioeconomic thing.

And how do you feel when you're having a conversation with somebody who is code-switching?

I feel at ease, because I feel like that person is going through the same thing that I go through every day.

And can it maybe at some point become annoying or inappropriate?

I think it's only inappropriate when, for example, you're giving a presentation in class, or when you're in an interview. When I am in an interview, I really try my hardest not to code-switch, unless the interviewer code-switches. If he or she code-switches, than it's like, okay I can do it. But definitely, when it's something professional, I really try to keep it strictly Spanish or English.

So it's more an informal thing than a formal thing for you?

Yes

Do you also engage in code-switching when you're writing or is it just a spoken thing?

Yes I do. I write poetry, and if I get the idea to do something in English, I do most of it in English, but there's always one word, that I know is in English, but it comes to my mind in Spanish, so I speak it in Spanish and I circle it, so I know I should change it and find the right one later.

How hard is it for you to suppress the code-switching?

When I am writing not so much, since it's more easily organize, because I can re-do it and whatever. Than my mind sort of goes at ease and starts thinking only in one language. When I am speaking, it's a whole different story. Because sometimes a word pops up in another language and I got to (breathes out), quickly think of the word and then say it.

When you're code-switching, does it makes you feel like you're kind of balancing between two cultures or identities?

Yes a little bit

Does it makes you feel comfortable or not?

It doesn't make me feel bad because Puerto Rico is all that. It's a whole mix, it's finding a balance, finding your identity. Because, at least in my case, I know that I am Latina, but I am so white, I don't feel white. I have friends that have darker skin tones and I may approach them in a way that they are not accustomed to because they're black. In a way it's kind of a struggle on the outside. But when I am talking, not so much.

Do you think that every Puerto Rico should speak both English and Spanish fluently?

Definitely, because it goes deeper than just speaking the language. Because, being multilingual helps your brain a lot and it helps in your writing, in your everyday living. Because by only knowing 1 language, you limit what you were able to do, what you are able to think about, how your brain is able to function. When you're bilingual or multilingual, it's like, whole different doors have opened and you can do things faster, you can do things better and yes, it will definitely help a lot of people to be bilingual.

Could you also think of reasons why people would not want to learn English, or even if they know it they would not want to speak it?

Political issues, that's the only thing that comes to mind. If they're diehard **Independendistas**, they are like "I am not going to speak English, because that represents the USA and blah blah blah" and you see me on the corner like "that's not it man". You can speak, it's better for you. I always thought that if you want to beat them at their game, you have to do it by their rules. So they are not going to speak Spanish, cause they hate Spanish. So, if you're a true heart **Independista**, you should learn both languages, so you can know what they're saying, understand them and beat them at their own game. And back to the brain, it's really good for you.

How would it make you feel if you were asked not to use either English or Spanish for the rest of your life anymore? You have to suppress one of the two forever.

I'd try to stick with English, because I like English better than Spanish. But I'd still miss Spanish, because I like speaking it on an everyday basis and it's sort of relaxing to me to go down the street and yell out "Hello" to some of my friends, cause it's not the same to say "Hey, Hi" as in **"Wepa"** it's not the same. So in that way, I would kind of miss Spanish.

Do you think it would change you as a person, your identity?

A little bit. I'd try not to, but it would, maybe change me.

So you would stick with English? Did you also choose that, looking at your goals for the future? Would you like to have career in which English plays a role?



My original plan, when I came to Colegio, was to do my English, get my major, PhD and eventually be a professor at some university. But, life happens at you find out things and now maybe I want to be a professor, maybe I want to be a writer. I don't know. But I definitely have to know English for any of my future plans.

Participant number: 5

Name: Isabel

Date: 22/06/2017

Duration: 0:32:58

---

Can you tell me something about where you were born and in what household you grew up?

I was born in Bayamón, Puerto Rico and moved to college in Mayagüez. My mom was born in Massachusetts. but she moved back to Puerto Rico when she was two.

What languages were spoken in your household?

A little bit of both but mostly Spanish. From a young age I was in touch with English through cartoons, mostly Barney, and music. Even though my mom doesn't speak English that well, she always listened to music in English, for example Pink or R&B songs. English has always been a part of my life.

Was this situation of both Spanish and English input kind of the same as other people around you or friends?

No, I spoke English by the age of 3 and I didn't see that with my classmates. Since I watched TV in English, I also talked in English. I always got reactions such as "But you're a Puerto Rican, you should speak Spanish".

Did you prefer English over Spanish

At one point in my life, yes. I felt more comfortable speaking in English because most of the things I liked were in English, so I couldn't relate to people who only listened to Spanish music or watched Spanish television. With all of my friends I spoke English, that's how we related to each other, it was because of the language.

Can I call it an English social group?

Definitely

Do you still have this preference?

Depends on the situation. If I meet a new person, I prefer to speak Spanish. But my English vocabulary is to a greater extent. If it's a professional setting, I would introduce myself in Spanish, but if they would let me speak in English, I would gladly do so.

Would you like to educate your kids in both languages?

Yes, I would probably end up with a bilingual husband

What factors played a role in your parents decision in what schools you were going to attend?

Mostly what was close to home. They were good schools Middle and high school were both private, but it wasn't because they were bilingual that they chose it. My classes were in Spanish, except for my English class, and even there we would speak Spanish.

What made you bilingual when it wasn't so much from the education than?

I always liked the language. I learned English not just from school, I was always interested in it, I don't know why I didn't had this with Spanish. I also read a lot in English and my dad was very good in English too, we would switch a lot between the languages. Sometimes I didn't know the word in Spanish or in English, or I felt it could be described better in the other language.

Do you hear that a lot, the switching?

From the people with who I hang out with, yes. We always speak bilingual. Sometimes there are people that are very afraid of speaking English, because they have an accent. But if you never speak it, you'll never get rid of it.

Do you think any Puerto Rico should speak English fluently?

I don't think they should speak it fluently, but they should at least understand it. Not because we're a colony of the United States. I think that English opens a door to another part of the world, that Spanish doesn't. Spanish is the second most spoken language in the world, which is greater than English, but still, I can probably speak with a Russian in English, but not in Spanish, they teach English in Japan, but not Spanish. I like that part of English, that I can communicate with other people without knowing their native language.

Looking back on the period of time when you attended private schools, how do you think about it?

I went to a good public elementary school, but the private middle schools was smaller and the education was better because there was only one classroom per grade, so the teachers had more time to focus on their 30 students, versus 120 students. I definitely think I learned a lot of English at my middle school, it had to do with the fact that it was a small, private school.

Would you like your future children to attend private schools?

I would, if I am capable of doing that.

Did your parents let you decide what university you were going to attend or did they had the last word?

My mom did. My dad didn't. I study mechanical engineering and UPRM is the best at engineering.

Did you or your parents every thought about attending a private university?

Maybe. We never really talked about private universities. Because of the strike, we were thinking Where else could we go? But for now, no. This is the best system.

Could you tell me something about your everyday classroom situation here, in terms of the languages?

I only have one professor that teaches in English, the rest teaches in Spanish, but the books are in English. That's hideous to say the least, because you have to learn something in English and have to translate it. This has affected my test scores.

Would you liked it if more classes were in English?

Not really, because the books are still in Spanish.

What do you think about the level of English here, keeping the admission requirements in mind?

Honestly, I thought it would be harder. I started with advanced English and I am taking English right now as an elective because it's easy for me. When I took the test back in 12th grade, I remember that we had all of these questions and we had to write an essay. I remember that my

essay was not good, it was not a proper essay and I thought I was going to fail. But when I got the score back, I ended up having a 5 out of 5. They may not be requiring as much as I thought that would, because they let you pass with a 4 or a 5. The fact that my essay was not good at all and I still got a 5 was like, okay.., I guess..

Should it be more strict?

Yes and no. Some people don't have the initiative to learn English like I do or the access like I have. If some people don't have access or a proper education it would be unfair. A lot of influence comes from the parents. If they don't teach their child English, they wouldn't. So you can't blame the child for the parents and the restrictions of the education they had.

What do you think would have happened to your English skills if you would have attended a private university?

Never thought of that. I don't think it would change, I think the classes would be similar.

You are content with attending UPRM?

Yes, definitely.

Could you think of reasons why people would not want to attend a public university?

Maybe because what they want to study is not offered, for example a forensic study is not offered at UPR.

Have you ever thought about attending a university at the US mainland?

I don't think it's necessary. Maybe an internship or **intercambio**. More for the experience than the actual education.

What do you think would happen to Puerto Rico, in terms of the languages, if it would become a State?

I think we're too stubborn to stop speaking Spanish. But English would definitely have a bigger influence, we would see more English in the classrooms.

Would you like it if Puerto Rico would become a State?

Maybe, depends on what happens. Because I don't think the culture would disappear, so, why not I guess.

Would you like for Puerto Rico to become a completely independent island?

Maybe. If we're capable, and I think we are, I wouldn't mind. Because I would still know English which, again, I didn't learn because we're part of the States, but to be able to communicate with other people. So I wouldn't mind Statehood or independence.

What do you think would happen to the English language here if Puerto Rico would become independent. For you there wouldn't change much, but for the rest of the island?

I think so, because otherwise they would have to change the curriculums of all of the schools and it just has become a part of us. Maybe the requirements for entering college would be lowered.

If it would stay as it is right now, do you think the influence from the US mainland or the English language would become more or less visible in the future?

I think it would stay the same

What do you think about that? Would you like for English to play a bigger role?

In a way, yes, just be less judged because of the whole "You're Puerto Rican, don't speak English" thing. It hasn't changed me, but it would be nice.

So I was wondering how would you describe this unique situation that Puerto Rico has, in terms of the language, to somebody who is completely unfamiliar with Puerto Rico, who doesn't know it's US territory, who doesn't know it's a Latin American Country, who does not even know where it is on the map. How would you explain the language situation?

You would have to learn some Spanish to be able to move around the island. But if you're in a touristic area and you ask a person something in English, they can answer you in English. Mostly bilingual, but leaning more toward Spanish.

So it's not 50/50, but it's more like..?

I would say 60/40

So in certain areas English is more present, is it also more visible in certain socioeconomic or elite groups?

Yes. It's nature versus nurture. Not because you're born in a certain place, you are more likely to learn English or not. But it depends on your initiative on learning. If your parents hate the US, they are not going to teach their kids English. But if you want, you should.

Do you feel like another person when you speak in English?

Yes. It's weird. I am more easy going in English and the things I like are mostly in English, so I am probably more at ease speaking about something that we have in common. For Spanish, I feel like there are a lot of rules there that I don't know, like, is this the right word? am I pronouncing this correctly?, so I am more comfortable in English.

How do you keep the balance between the two?

With my dad I can speak English, with my mom I rather not. I don't keep the balance. There isn't a day in my life on which I have not spoken in English. I have been learning it since I was 3 years old.

You told me you also switch a lot. Is that always appropriate to do?

No. In an interview, because maybe they would think I am illiterate. When you're doing an interview, meeting somebody for the first time or speaking to a professor, everywhere where you feel like you should be a little bit more professional, you shouldn't switch languages.

What about at university?

Outside the classroom, I don't mind. But speaking with a Spanish professor, I would have to rehearse what I am going to say. So, inside the classroom, it depends on the professor.

What do you think it says about somebody's language proficiency?

Being me, knowing both languages, means I am stupid in both languages. I think eventually it would cause a deficiency in the languages, unless you're striving yourself to become better, which I am not, there will be some setbacks for the languages you know.

Is it hard for you to suppress the switching?

Yes, it comes so naturally. In Puerto Rican culture we also use a lot of English words like freezer, parking, sandwich. So English is always present, even though it's subliminal.

How often does it happen when you're writing or typing?

Not as much, but every time I have to write an essay, in either language, I have to use Google Translate.

Does the switching also makes you feel like you're balancing between two cultures or identities?

Not really. I do not mix the English language with American culture. I see it as it just happens to be that the music I listen to is in English ,but I don't say oh that has to be American, because it can also be the UK. So, no.

I was wondering how it would make you feel if you were asked not to use either English or Spanish for the rest of your life?

I don't think I could do it

But you have to

I would English, because I know more of the vocabulary, I feel more comfortable speaking it, I would know more of it. It would be an easier transition for me.

Would that change you as a person, if you would have to suppress all the Spanish from your life?

Yes because it's part of where I grew up, the language of my parents and grandparents. It would feel like losing a part of me. Not saying that Spanish is a big part, but it's still a part of me.

Would it change your goals for the future?

No, I don't think so. If I get an offer to work in the US, I wouldn't mind moving there

Participant number: 6

Name: Nicole

Date: 22/06/2017

Duration: 0:32:04

---

Can you tell me something about where you were born and in what household you grew up?

I grew up in the Metropolitan area and I lived with my mom, dad and brothers. I am just in Mayagüez to study.

Your parents are both Puerto Rican?

Yes

What language was spoken in your household?

Spanish

Only Spanish?

Yes

When was the first time you got in touch with the English language?

I got in touch with it since I was 6 years old. Watching television, a lot of Cartoon Network. In the 2nd grade I got a really good English teacher, that helped. Mostly because of television.

Would you like to educate your kids in both languages?

Yes

Why?

I think it opens up doors, it makes it easier for them to find a job, to make friends. If I could find a good third language too, I would learn it them too,

What third language are you think of?

French

At a certain point in your life your parents had to decide what schools you were going to attend, what factors played a role in their decision?

The first school I went to was a private school. They preferred private schools, because of the quality of the education. I also have attended a public school because my brother attended it, but after that, they put me back in a private school.

How would you compare the two?

There was not much of a difference. The private school gave me a lot of homework, but the public schools had more activities in class. Classes were in Spanish, except for the English class. In public school, we were taught some English, but we were not instructed in English, In private school the teachers wanted us to speak English. It helped me to get better in English.

Did your parents let you decide what university you were going to attend or did they had the last word in this?

I decided it by myself.

Have you ever thought about attending private universities?

Not much. I always preferred the public system because I have always been taught that this public system was really good, better than the private ones. You get good quality education, without the costs of a private university.

Do you think there's a difference between used languages in public versus private universities?

I wouldn't know.

Can you tell me about your everyday classroom situation, in terms of the languages?

It's a mixture. My professors always speak Spanish, my textbooks are in English. There are a few students that struggle with this, so some professors translate their PowerPoint presentations and books to make it easier. I don't struggle with it, because I can translate and understand it.

Would you like the role of English in your education to be bigger?

Yes, it would help a lot. If I was instructed in English all the time if I would go to another university, it would be a struggle for me because people may talk faster. So I would like for it to play a bigger role here too.

What do you think of the level of English?

The professors show that they know English, but 10% of the students need for the professors to translate it or they wouldn't know what is going on.

Keeping that in mind, what do you think of the admission requirements?

They put me in advanced English. I would say it's pretty good and it's fair.

Are there things that you would like to change here?

The role that English plays here. If you walk through campus, you hear people socializing and they naturally speak English a lot and it plays a big role in their lives.

Do you think it will change?

It would because right now kids already speak English, so in the future the kids will speak English fulltime, all the time.

Have you ever thought about attending a university on the US mainland.

Yes I have thought about it. But the costs were the issues. But I am thinking about doing an internship on the US mainland, for the experience and the quality there that overpasses us a little bit

What do you think would happen to Puerto Rico, in terms of the languages, if it would become a state?

I don't think it would change, people would keep doing their thing and keep talking Spanish and English. Even if we were forced, people would keep doing their thing. Maybe the kids would get more English exposure in their classes and they would get more English education than I did. But I think that the parents and grandparents would still enforce Spanish.

Keeping that in mind, would you like for PR to become a state?



No. I prefer us to be an independent island. We want the benefits of being a State, but we want to keep our Olympic team. Although it would be a struggle to maintain ourselves as an independent island, with really hard work, we could do it.

What would happen to the English language in PR if it would become independent?

I think we would still speak English, because of the media. I grew up with television and learned English, it wasn't because of my parents constantly speaking it. Children would still learn the language because of the media.

Where do you see or feel the influence from the US mainland culture or English language the most?

Mostly that people that have a high socioeconomic status, they go to really good schools, they are usually bilingual so they get a good English education. Socially, if you hang out with people who speak English, you speak English too. I don't think it has a lot to do with areas. People from rural areas speak English too, as well as the Metropolitan area and the suburban's, because of the exposure from the media.

If it would stay like it is right now, what would happen to the languages in the future? Will English become more visible?

I think it would become more visible but I don't think it would make the Spanish disappear at all, because it's already planted here.

Would you like for that to happen?

Yes, it's more ways to communicate with everyone around us.

Do you switch a lot between the languages?

Yes.

Is it hard for you to suppress?

Yes because I do it really unconsciously. I speak Spanish and out of nowhere I start say a word in English.

Do you hear this switching often?

Yes

What kind of people switch?

Usually people my age. It's about the English exposure around, slang or songs.

Do you think it could have something to do with education you have attended?

No I don't think so

And being part of an elite or having a higher socioeconomic status?

No I don't think so either. It's everywhere.

How do you feel when you're talking with somebody and he's constantly switching between the two languages?

I feel understood, because that's what I usually do: I speak and I switch. I would feel more comfortable. And I feel more funny, because they would get my jokes.

Are there places where it's not appropriate or suitable to do?

Around older people or at a very formal event. If I don't know the people around me, I don't know if they would understand. I usually switch around my friends, with them I am sure that they will understand me

What about at university?

I take my chances, sometimes I do it. Mostly people here do it.

What does it say about somebody's language proficiency?

It says a lot, it says that you're more than bilingual. You're not just thinking in English but you're also switching.

So you need to be proficient in both languages to be able to switch?

I think so yes

Does it make you feel like you're kind of balancing between cultures or identities when you're switching?

No I don't think so. A language does not necessarily come with a culture. A language is universal.

So I was wondering how would you describe this unique situation that Puerto Rico has, in terms of the language, to somebody who is completely unfamiliar with Puerto Rico, who doesn't know it's US territory, who doesn't know it's a Latin American Country, who does not even know where it is on the map. How would you explain the language situation?

I would start by saying that we're an island, that's tied up to the US. We speak English but because we grew up with parents that were not so exposed to English, we grew up with Spanish. But because of the media we speak English. A mix of Spanish and English.

How is the mix set up? Is it 50/50?

Yes I would say 50/50

Do you feel like another person when you're talking in English?

No, I feel like myself.

So you feel the same ability to express yourself, the same level of comfort?

There are certain words in Spanish that have a deeper meaning than in English. English has words that you sometimes need. If you say I love you, it does not have much of a meaning, if you say **te amo**, it's like wow. Sometimes it's a switch of meaning between the languages.

How do you keep the balance between using these two?

With the switching, you're supposed to balance it.

Do you think any Puerto Rican should be able to speak both English and Spanish fluently?

I think, yes, from the millennial area till now. My parents did not grow up with a lot of English exposure. My dad speaks it, but not so well. My mom not, she did not get a lot of exposure and got a little bit of a disinterest towards it.

So a disinterest to the English language could be a reason for people not wanting to learn or speak English?

Yes, there are people my age that didn't have much of an interest when they were little and now they struggle with it. But since it's all around us, they try to learn at least the most important words. If they would show more interest or their parents had enforced it more, they would learned it better.

What factors could play a role when a Puerto Rican does not speak English well?

I would say they did not have the recourse. If they had a television and watched cartoons, they would have exposed to English. If they didn't had cable, they only watched Spanish channels. Another factor is that they didn't get the good education. There are school that do not concentrate on it. Or maybe they didn't had a good teacher. Also, the parents if they speak Spanish all the time.

I was wondering how it would make you feel if you were asked not to use either English or Spanish for the rest of your life?

Very oppressed and limited. I wouldn't know how to communicate, I would have to learn another language.

What language would you keep?

Spanish. If you speak French, Latin or Portuguese I would understand most of the words because it's similar to Spanish. English is just English. I prefer Spanish because it's more in touch with the languages around me,

So Spanish would make you feel more like a global citizen?

Yes

Would it change you as a person if you had to delete all of the English from your life?

I don't think so, but I would try to incorporate in Spanish what I felt like English was giving to me. The words that I find funnier and the fact that it makes me feel multicultural.

How would it change your goals for the future?

It will be harder to find jobs. Anywhere you go there's always going to be someone who speaks English. But if I wouldn't speak English, there are a lot of recourses, I would find something on my phone to communicate in other ways. But it would limit me in a lot of ways.

Would you like for English to play a role in your future career?

Yes definitely

And in what kind of way?

I study nursing so there are a lot of English terms, so it would help me to understand those and make the patients understand the medical terms too.

Participant number: 7

Name: Enrique

Date: 22/06/2017

Duration: 0:33:49

---

Can you tell me something about where you were born, where you grew up and in what household?

I was born in Puerto Rico, in Mayagüez specifically, in a hospital quite near here, right in town. I was from a pretty normal household, you know, working husband, stay at home-sometimes working wife and I have a sister. So a typically American household, with 2 boys, three children, working husband and a working wife.

Your parents are both Puerto Rican?

Yes, they are both born and raised in Puerto Rico, but have families that live in the United States.

What about the English skills of your parents?

Well, my mother understands English, but she has a very hard time speaking English. There used to be this type of discrimination back in the days, with Latin American people and the United States, I would call them Spicks, because they can't really articulate the words right and instead of saying "speak" they would say "I spick English" and they would talk weird. My mom is kind of like that. She can't articulate the words right and my dad understands English, can talk a little bit better, but is still not fluent-fluent in English.

Was English ever spoken in your household when you were younger?

Sometimes, not that much. Spanish was always the predominant language in the household. But, things like watching movies and tv shows, we always saw them in English and since a very early age I have been to bilingual schools, so my father and mom been dealing with my with my English classes and trying to practice with me. But it wasn't that common.

The schools you've been to were all bilingual, private schools? The elementary, Junior High and High school?

Yes

And why did your parents wanted you to attend those kind of schools?

I don't know. The first school was on a walking distance from home, so I think that was the main factor, the other school was very heavy in the English department, all classes are taught in English, except for Spanish, and I think they saw that as an advantage that they didn't have when they were growing up, seeing that their school system was mostly predominantly in Spanish, versus the things that were happening since the nineties that more and more schools started to get better English departments. So I think they saw it as an advantage and decided to start putting me in bilingual schools, from an early age.

So, you had a lot of English exposure and that has probably been part of your English improvement

Yes

What do you think would have happened to your English skills, if you would have attended public schools?

Well, I don't know. I wouldn't say that they wouldn't be as developed, because always watching tv in English, because we didn't had that fancy dish DVR that changes the languages, and having a little bit of English exposure in my house, with my dad trying to better his English and stuff, I think that I wouldn't necessarily not be as polished in English. But, I don't know really. It depends more on the student, than the system. And, I guess you still get English in public schools.

But are you content with the decision that they let you attend all private schools?

Oh yeah, I am happy. I can't really say it was an advantage or a disadvantage. It was fun, I made friends, I spoke English with them, mostly after 6th grade, we spoke mainly English with my friends. I think it was good.

When you have kids in the future, would you like them to specifically attend private schools?

I don't know. I would like them to. But it also depends where I might be living in the future, if I am still on this island, if I am abroad. It depends geographically on what they're giving. If we're still on the island, definitely private schools, cause the public schools here are great, but they are kind of lacking in the sense of a more centered approach to teaching. Since, public schools are very big, they have classes with 200 students, sometimes 300 students and they have their teachers pretty much spread out, versus private schools here that are a little more tiny, they're a little smaller and they're better for more one-on-one teaching.

Would you want your kids to attend specific bilingual education?

Yes, I want people to know more than one language.

Than it was time to decide what university you were going to attend, did your parents let you decide this for yourself, did they had the last word in it?

They let me decide for myself. They just said "Have you send out any applications? Have you brought it at any schools?" And they never intervene, they never told me where to go. They just said "Where do you want to go?" And I chose here.

Why did you choose UPR?

Because, it's close to home, it's the cheapest option and in my experience, and what I've seen with people from other universities, it is the best option for the money. And, both my father and my mother, my uncle, my aunt and a lot of my family graduated from this university. I wanted to continue the heritage, you know.

Did you ever think about attending a private university?

Yeah, every time my classes are going badly, like, I am going bad and doing bad in my courses, I am like "wow, if I was at private university, I would be acing this". But it's always jokingly.

But the level is different at private universities?

Yeah

How different?

I'd say I have not had firsthand experience, but I'd say very different. I have a friend here, I won't call names, but he took some courses for his major and he failed them here, he took them in

summer at a private university, both courses in summer knowing very well that summer courses are intensive, and he aced them both. So I'd say that there's a difference.

Can you tell me what your everyday classroom situation looks like, in terms of the languages here? So, language of instruction, the language you talk with your classmates and the language of your literature, books, presentations, exams, everything.

Well, the classes that I am taking this semester are mostly given in Spanish, but most of the literature, presentations, books and everything else is in English. So it's basically, all the classes are bilingual in a sense that you're taught in Spanish, and yet your tests and books are in English and that's pretty much it. I also had classes that were both English speaking and giving English material.

How hard is it to constantly switch between the Spanish instruction and the English literature and books?

It's not. It's just natural that you're listening to it in Spanish, you're reading the book and you see the word in English and you need to immediately translate it. Since I've had this exposure to English since a young age, both languages are basically unexchangeable, I can hear you speaking to me in English, translate it to Spanish in my brain, things like that. It's not really a challenge.

Would you like the role of English to be bigger in your study here?

I don't know. I don't think I would have liked it, because that would have meant that the professors had to be different. A lot of professors here are from abroad, but most of them are from the island, they are native Spanish speaking professors and I think that them giving their classes in English, would be a detriment to them, because it happens to me during the interview that I stammer and find the words in English, I think it would be the same for them giving the class in English, knowing it in Spanish.

What do you think of the level of English here? Is the literature hard, it is very easy?

It depends, I would say mostly on the author of the books, and the books that the professors choose. Because you can be taking a class with a book that is very specialized, that have a lot of technical terms. In that case, those books can be harder. But then there are other books that are more free flow style of writing, that's easier than the technical stuff.

And when the instruction of the class is in English, how is that level?

If the class is in English, the professor is usually taking the terms from the literature, so I think it's even easier. You're hearing firsthand the words you're going to read, it's even easier.

Taking that into consideration, and looking back at the admission requirements that you probably looked at when you applied for this university. What do you think of these admission requirements? Especially of the English?

I think that they're rather high. Because, you have to score high in both your College board test, which is college admission test to calculate your GPA and if you're taking advanced courses in English, you also have to score high in your advanced English class, those scores are summed up and that's when you're given the advice if you have to take advanced English or you can skip English all together. I think it's pretty high. I scored pretty well in my College board and I still got into intermediate English. They're pretty out there.

Do you think they can be unfair to students who didn't had a lot of exposure to English and a lot of English input during their high school period or before?

I don't think it's unfair because the system takes the scores into account and puts you in the English class that you're best suited for. For instance, if you're not proficient in English, than you're put into basic English, or you need Remedial English classes, that are very much easier than the other English classes like Intermediate and Advanced English. Because with those other classes they have conversational English classes, that is for the students to develop in speaking English and they may have reading and writing classes, getting them on to speed reading. So I think it's not unfair to have such high standards, because the people that don't do too well at these standardized tests, get taken care of with the other English classes, that help them speed up and up to the level of the other students.

Are they placed in the basic level, are they able to keep up with the level of English here?

Yeah, for what I've seen yeah. I have a friend that was actually in Basic English and he did pretty well. He told me he liked it and I've seen firsthand how they develop in English and taking a liking to it.

What language do you prefer to be instructed in?

English. But it's mostly because from first to sixth grade I was in the basically all-English school, except for the Spanish class, and that subconsciously I am more comfortable in an all-English class environment. But at least, that's me.

So you're content with the decision that you have decided to attend UPRM?

Yes I am extremely content. Great university, great Bachelors and it's great, I like it.

Any things you would like to change, like the levels, admission requirements, something in class, on campus, whatever?

I think I am pretty content with the requirements they have here, because these universities are, like I said before, kind of tougher than the private universities. With these such high admission requirements, they can take out the lower level students.. not lower level but not-as-applied students in their field. I think that's great because it pretty much perpetuates and environment of constant betterment to be ahead of your class, be at your level or above it and I wouldn't change that. The only thing I would change is the funding, Because it's pretty low on funding, but I think everything else is pretty much good.

What is wrong about the funding?

It's going down the drain. Since the new administration came, they had budget cuts because of the situation with the island. Pretty much the biggest budget cut was in this public university system and I don't know if you have noticed, but I've noticed since we've got back from the **huelga**, in some of the bathrooms, one is closed so they can save money on water and not having to put paper in that toilet stall. You can see the effects of the budget cuts, immediately.

Are there any reasons you could think of why people would not want to attend a public university?

Maybe one reason is that they have their resources to attend a private university, or they have friends at a private university. Or maybe they just say it's easier, I am going to the private university and then spring boarding on to another university in the future. But, going to this type of public university, where the education is so great and affordable, I don't really see so many cons, other than "I couldn't get in or I have friends on other universities".

Have you ever thought about attending a university on the US mainland?

Yeah, I have thought about it. Mainly because my dad took an exchange program in Milwaukee and he saw snow, and he went to fieldtrips to a brewery, he met a lot of people and he has always told me like "do it, go take classes somewhere else for a semester". And I thought about it, but in the end of the day, it's going to be more expensive in terms of the living situation versus staying in my house with my parents and drive here every day. Also that I am also done with my Bachelors and I would basically lose a semester taking elective courses, because the number of courses that are validated from the other universities are so little, that they are not really worth taking. So, I'd be basically losing a semester.

Speaking of the US mainland, what would you think would happen to Puerto Rico, in terms of the languages, if Puerto Rico would become a state?

That's a tough one, because the government, the island, congress and the US mainland government have tried before to change the official language of the island to English, but the big concentration of Spanish speaking population here, the heritage of the Spanish language, seeing that since 1493, Spanish language has been driven into our DNA basically. Many people will be unlocked to the change, as they have been when they tried to implement it. So, I think that any decision that they would make over the status of the official language of the island is up to the people and how they take it. I don't see it happening.

Would you like for Puerto Rico to become a state?

I don't know, there are pros and cons to it.

What are the pros?

I think that we have double taxation, cause we have both municipal and state taxation, which is the taxation that goes both to the government on the island, and to the government on the mainland. I think that would end being a state. We would just have the part that we put towards our statehood. We would benefit also that we would not have [las Leyes de cabotaje](#), basically we would be able to export in the free market, not have to go through the United States. Because here we have a problem that if we want to sell something outside, let's say I want to sell a product to Chine, than I have to put my product on the United State vessel, like a ship, they have to send that product to the United States to have to go through customs and insurance and all that, and then from the United States, they send it over to China. That's expensive and that's what has not allowed us to become a major proponent in exportation, because the United States takes a lot of the profit and it's hurtful. So that would be a plus, to not have that type of law and effect holding us back financially. But then there's also the cons of the people here, most of them they don't want statehood I think they might be a little uprising, kind of what we saw in the eighties with the Macheteros, and civil unrest mainly. I never really thought much about the whole situation thing, until now, but it has it's pros and cons. But I don't know, I am in defense.

If Puerto Rico would become a completely independent island, no ties with the US mainland at all, do you think the English language would survive here?

That's a tough one. I think it would survive, since we would be an independent island, we would have to start doing commerce with a lot of other countries and that English is the main language in commerce, so I would think that in that sense it would still be alive. But I think it would be the first think to be wiped out of the educational system, if we were independent. But it also depends on who's at power at the time, a lot of factors really, it's not a black and white question.

But keeping that in mind, would you like for Puerto Rico to become completely independent?



Yes, but not right now. When the island is more developed and we can actually exist independently.

So, if the situation would stay as it is right now, do you think the influence from the US mainland both in culture and in the English language, will become more present, more visible in the future? Let's say 15-20 years. Or will it stay as it is right now?

I think it would stay as it is right now. Because we have a lot of immigration and the population here every day is older and older, and the more older people in the island, remembering the old days when they just spoke Spanish and stuff, so it's a balance. I think it would just stay the same.

So for me as an outsider this language situation you have here is quite interesting. I was wondering how you would describe to somebody who is completely unfamiliar with the island, how the language situation is here? The person doesn't know that it's unincorporated territory of the USA, doesn't know it's a Latin American island, who doesn't know where it is on the map, doesn't know anything. How would you explain the language situation here?

I would just tell them, you can speak with them in English, they might understand you, you can speak to them in Spanish, and they will understand you. I think that's pretty much it. Most people here, at least, understand a few words of English, but most of them understand English more than they can speak it, from the exposure to American culture and tv, movies, things like that.

Where is English most visible? Does it have to do with areas, social groups, socioeconomic status?

I'd say areas. Because there's a township, it's called ?, and they are pushing the whole English agenda, changing street signs, instead of saying stop, and trying to basically Americanize themselves. You can see that mostly in the Metro region, San Juan, the capital city, there's a lot of Americanization going on over there.

I was wondering, do you feel like another person when you're talking in English instead of in Spanish?

No, I think I feel the same since I've been speaking English since I was small, with my friends and stuff. It's the same really.

So you have the same ability to express yourself in both languages, same level of comfort?

Same level of comfort, yes. But the same ability, not that much. I stammer a little bit more in English than in Spanish.

Do you think any Puerto Rico should speak both English and Spanish fluently?

I think that they should. Here they have been taught English since they were small, but if they can't, at least understand it. It's important to understand it at least.

What factors do you think play a role when a person does not speak English well?

I think the main factor is just the exposure. They're not as exposed. Maybe their school, they just have that one English class that they take from first to twelfth grade, that's taught in Spanish but they write in English. They don't have the English exposure in their homes, maybe they watched tv in Spanish, movies in Spanish. They are not as exposed. Because I think the exposure is a pretty big factor too.

What could reasons be that people would not want to learn or speak English?

Maybe cause they feel ashamed of their English, if they're not that fluent. Or maybe they could be like "Spanish is my main language, that is what I am going to speak, and if you don't understand me, just go away". There's also that mentality.

What do you think about that?

I think it's wrong, I think it's a pretty closed mindset, you have to be open to experimenting other things. If you know English and you're somewhere where you have to speak English and you don't speak English on principle, that's on you to be more open-minded.

How important is the mixture of Spanish and English in your life? Does the combination defines you?

I think it defines most Puerto Ricans, because we speak in Spanglish, a lot of our words are in our English variations that we try to turn into Spanish.

So, you switch a lot between in the languages in a sentence?

Yeah

What kind of people do that?

I've seen pretty much everybody do it. Because there are words, I can't tell you any right now because it just happens when you're speaking them, but there are words that we don't know how to say in Spanish and we just say it in English and add an o or a at the end, or roll a letter, make it sound Spanish. It just happens.

So you don't think it has to do with certain groups, like socioeconomic statuses, elite?

No, I have never really seen it that way, just as something that most people do here.

It can be everywhere from everyone?

Yeah

Is there any point where it can become too much, annoying or inappropriate?

The switching can become too much and inappropriate when you're doing things like presentations in classes and for your professional life, you should try to speak the language that you're speaking. It wouldn't really look to good when a person is watching you, if they're expecting to see a professional presentation. It happened to me in Spanish. We were doing a presentation at one of the people in my group forgot a word in English and he said it in Spanish, and the person was like, nope you have to say it in Spanish.

So it's not accepted in formal situations

No

What about at the university, just at campus?

At campus it's fine. It depends if what you're doing is formal, if you're just speaking with friends. Taking class, answering a question, things like that nature, that are not really that formal, it's okay. But if you're doing something formal, presenting yourself to someone, speaking to somebody that you don't know, that you're trying to make a good first impression, that's where you mostly try to nail it. If you speak Spanish, speak Spanish properly, if you speak English, speak i English completely.

What do you think the switching says about somebody's knowledge of both languages?

I don't really think it says too much, because a person could know a couple words in English, that uses constantly in Spanish, because he doesn't know the words in Spanish, or vice versa. I think it doesn't really measure a person's ability to speak or understand English.

So you could be proficient in languages and switching them, but also not really be proficient in both and still switch?

Exactly

Are there any rules when you're switching?

Not really. It's just something that happens really. You forget a word in Spanish and you just blur it out in English and most people understand you.

How often do you switch when you're writing or typing? Or is it just a spoken thing?

I think it's mainly a spoken thing. Since when somebody is speaking, they're not really thinking as much as when they're writing. And when you're writing you can think more clearly and get the word you were trying to type versus when you talking, when you start in English and whop you're along for a ride and blurred it up completely.

Does it make you feel that you're balancing between two cultures or identities when you're switching?

I never really thought of it that way. I just think that if you don't know a word, you just say it in English.

I was wondering how it would make you feel if you were asked not to use either or English or Spanish for the rest of your life anymore?

Well, I would have to learn another language, so I could continue with this interview. It would feel weird, because having a whole life speaking Spanish, knowing English and than getting thrustured into another language, and not being able to speak Spanish, which is my heritage as a Puerto Rican, and English which is what I've learned since I was small, it would be weird, it would be hard.

Which one would you pick?

I don't know. That's hard. Because Spanish is very important, but English is also very important especially in the work field. I would keep both.

You have to choose one

I keep Spanish. I can learn another language and use that.

How would it change you as a person, as your identity, when English will be taken away from you?

I think I wouldn't blur out words in English, when I am speaking Spanish. I think it would have been better if I would have taken the Basic English classes, that are easier. As a person, I think Spanish defines me more, than the English language. Because I use Spanish more often than English. I think I would be kind of the same.

So if English would be completely deleted out of your memory, how would it change your goals for the future?

My goals right now would be to get a job somewhere else, maybe to start on the island, build up some capital and move to the US and get a better job. I think it would change my goals, to maybe

stay on the island longer or look for a job in a Spanish speaking part of the world, or maybe even learn another language. The great thing about having Spanish as your base language is that you're already more proficient in the Romance languages such as Italian. It would be easier for me to learn another language and go to Europe and get a job in one of those places.

Participant number: 8

Name: Fabiola

Date: 22/06/2017

Duration: 0:26:30

---

Can you tell me something about where you were born, where you grew up and in what household?

I was born in San Germán, Puerto Rico. I grew up in Cabo Rojo, I studied there all my life and now I am studying here in Mayagüez. My family is very amazing. My previous schools, they emphasize a lot on the English education and learning English at a very young age. I think that is really good because I have this base of English which I think is amazing for my future plans.

So your parents are both Puerto Rican?

Yes

But they decided to make English also play a very big part in your everyday life?

Yes

And how did they do that?

They put me in bilingual school called Cabo Rojo Academí . In which the main language is English and the only one you have in Spanish, is the Spanish one and history. I think it was very important for my family for me to know a second language. In case of future reference, **este**, future moves, or something.

So did tv or pop culture also played a huge role in your English?

Yes, tv mostly Disney Channel when I was little and now most tv I watch is in English, like Friends, the Big Bang Theory, I watch a lot of news in English, like the weather channel or something. Most of the things that I watch are in English.

In what language would you like to educate your kids in the future?

Both. I think it is very important for children to be educated in both languages, because you may never know what job is going to need for you to speak both languages. And it's important for them too cause you can communicate with lots of people that way and I think you can express yourself better that way, because sometimes I can't pronounce my things in Spanish, and then I say it in English and then I don't know how to use the words in English and I say it in Spanish. It is like a mix of both languages.

So the English factor played a huge role in what schools you were attending?

Yes

So you attended only private schools?

Elementary, junior high and high school. I was in a private school, until the 7th grade, and in the 8th grade, I changed schools to Colegio San Augustin in Cabo Rojo. Over there the English wasn't much emphasized, than in my previous school but it was still there, it was very much of use.

That one was also a private school, right?

Yes it was a private school too

So, looking back on that period of time, what do you think would have happened to your English language proficiency, if you would have attended public schools?

Well, I wouldn't be as fluent as I am right now. I would still be watching English television, I would still speak English, but not in the same way that I speak now. I think public schools should emphasize more on English education for students because it's very important. Not only for work, but for life as it is.

Do you think that will happen in the future? That public education would emphasize English more?

Well I hope so. It's very important for them to do so, in my opinion though. I think public and private schools should educate in both languages.

When you may have kids in the future, would you like for them to also attend private schools, or does it depend on..

It depends on the circumstances that we're living in. You never know if you don't have the income to put them on private school, or if they prefer to go to a public school, it would be their choice to attend whatever school they want, but initially I would put them in a private school.

Then it was time to decide what university you were going to attend. Did your parents let you decide this by yourself or did they have the last word in it?

Yes they let me decide which university. I also sent applications to colleges in the United States, but it was very important for me to receive my education here in Puerto Rico. It is one of the best universities in the land and probably in the Caribbean, so I prefer to be here.

You prefer to be here, instead of on the US mainland?

Yes.

Have you also thought about attending private universities?

Well, I thought about attending a private university because of the strike that we had recently, I had some thoughts on changing universities. But thanks to God it all got better and I don't plan on changing universities any time soon.

What makes UPR so special, so good?

Well, the education, the way.. I don't know how to say it in English, can I say it in Spanish?'

You can say it in Spanish, it's fine.

**El fundamento que tiene, la universidad, es la manera que los profesores enseñan.** They are not just reading from a powerpoint, they know the stuff, they teach you everything. **También, este..** they are very pro-student, at least mine have been very pro-student. **Y ese lo que me trage aquí.** This is what brought me here, the education.

So can you tell me something about your everyday classroom situation, in terms of the language. What is the language of instruction, what language do you talk with your classmates, what's the language of the literature, books, presentations?

In presentations, usually, it's in Spanish. Probably the only class that everything is in English, is English. But all my biology class and my chemistry class, the books are in English. And my professor, they don't mind if I write some things in English, because since the book is in English,

I aim to remember it in English. But the class is in Spanish. Usually between class I talk English and Spanish with my friends, it's kind of a mixture between both languages.

How hard is it to constantly switch between these two languages?

It's not hard at all, since I've been talking both of them since I was little, it's fluent for me. It's like second nature for me to understand both of them. I could be talking right now and I would say a word in Spanish, but then go right back to English.

Would you've liked if the role of English would have been bigger in your study? For example more classes that are taught in English?

Well, yeah. It would be nice, because not all people here are fluent in both languages and as I said before, it's really important for them to know both languages in case of further studies or job opportunities. So I think it's better for the university to apply English more in other classes.

What do you think about the admission requirements? And that you're placed in a class like basic, intermediate, advanced, based on your English skills?

Well, I think that's really good because, if you're not that good at English, you can't be expected to be in an advanced class without having the complete knowledge, it's best if you start from, like, little to, like, a lot, **como que**, personally, **yo no quisiera tomar una clase enseñado en inglés, yo prefiero entrar de lo básico, para sí aprender, poco a poco.**

You also took the basic?

No I went to intermediate, I didn't took the advanced test.

What do you think of the level of English when classes are taught in English and the literature is in English? What is the level like? Is it hard to understand?

For me it isn't. I think it's very good, **no es tan difícil para mí.** And if I even have a little doubt, I just talk to the professor or I just put it on Google translate.

So when people do struggle with English, it's still do-able for them? It's still understandable?

It's understandable and also, if they have doubts, they can always talk to professors or other people that are better in the language, or more fluent. I don't think people mind explaining things in English to other people.

What do you think would have happened to your English skills, or maybe other skills, if you would have attended a private university?

I think it would be the same. It wouldn't change, because I've talked both languages all my life, so it would still be the same for me. And I think even private schools still have English books and classes, the language is pretty fluent over there so, it wouldn't be a problem.

What could reasons be for people to specifically not wanting to attend a public university? But they would prefer a private university?

I don't know actually. Maybe they have some specific programs that are helpful for them and their future career, like this college specializes in that field of studies, and the public school didn't. I think that's one of the reasons though.

And otherwise, attending a public university is something you would advise to..

To everybody. I would advise any type of university to anybody, as long as they get an education. Since it's a right for people. But it's up to them to choose where they want to study.

You keep on saying that it's very important for people to know both languages for their future careers and education. What do you think reasons could be why people would not want to learn English?

I don't know. It's kind of ignorant of me but I think if they use English, they'll forget Spanish or something and they just want to keep their main language with them forever.

What factors could play a role when a Puerto Rican does not speak English well?

Probably if it's a job interview and the person doesn't speak English, but doesn't speak it that well. It's less favorable for them to give him the job. I case of my aunt right now, she is working with a skiing company, the people who.. **la gente es americana** and they have to talk English for tourists and everything. And they almost didn't gave her the job because she didn't know how to speak English that well, so that's one of the things that you can lose the job over.

Do you know the reason why your aunt doesn't speak English well?

Yes because when she was younger, they didn't implement the language very much, in the household. It wasn't that important for them to learn it, in that time. Now, since, almost everything revolves around America, it's.. **América quiere traer más oportunidades, en Puerto Rico o otros lugares, es imporante para ellos tener gente que puede hablar los dos idiomas, sí se puede entender mejor y para buscar negocios y más oportunidades de trabajo.** That's about it.

So now it's changing because the US mainland is, like, implementing it more?

Yeah. English brings a lot of work opportunities and here in Puerto Rico, and in other places for that matter. Like I said before, it's really important for people to know both languages, well if they want, because you never know.

So, speaking of the US mainland, what do you think would happen to Puerto Rico, in terms of the languages, if it would become a state?

I think it would stay the same, I don't think it would be a problem with the different languages. In the United States you have people from different countries, you have Chinese people, speaking Chinese in different parts, you have Indian people, you have Arabic people, and it doesn't affect them, they still keep talking their main languages, so I don't think it would be a problem if Puerto Rico becomes a state, that Spanish would be lost.

So would the role of English become bigger?

I think yes, because if Puerto Rico do become a state, laws will be different, schools will be with different requirements and the English will be more present.

Would you like for that to happen?

No, I don't know. It's really debatable, it's a controversial topic. But, in terms of education, I think it would be good, but in terms of political issues, I don't think it's really good.

So what if Puerto Rico would become a completely independent island, no ties with the US mainland anymore. Do you think English would survive here?

Well, yes considering that there are bilingual schools, in which the main language is English, I think yes it will survive. But it wouldn't be as implemented as it is right now. **No sería tan** common for people to be talking English.

So where would the language disappear the most you think?



I think if that happens, most people will be speaking Spanish everywhere and then English will be up in the metropolitan area, or right here in the west side, where the tourists are. Then there's the center of the island where most people don't really know English, that's where it will be less frequent to find English.

So, English is more visible in the "bigger" areas?

Yes

Is it also more visible in certain social groups, or people from certain socioeconomic statuses, elite groups?

I think yes. English is very present in the richer side of society and in the working society, the middle class, it's not completely, a 100%, in, but it's there. English is important for those kind of societies. Also, social groups like people that watch Anime, talk in English all the time, or the one's that study English or American literature. I think almost any group of friends has one person that talks in English, from my experience.

Why would they want to do that? Talk English all the time?

It's better for them to express themselves, I think, well for me it is. I always talk in Spanish and in English. I say something in Spanish, and then I say something in English, that's part of myself and I think it's part of everybody else who talks English to be expressing themselves in that way.

You switch between the languages in a sentence?

Yes, very much

We call that code-switching. In your opinion, what kind of people code-switch? Is it everyone? Has it to do with what kind of education you have attended, or is it everyone and everywhere?

I think not, because I have friends that come from public schools, that talk very fluently in English and their parents are from here, from Puerto Rico, and they have no American ties or something. It doesn't matter from the education or from the social phase you are.

When you're having a conversation with somebody and that person is switching all the time, how does that make you feel?

Normal. Because I understand it, because I do it too. It's for me not difficult, but maybe for some other people, it might be. But personally for me, it's not difficult.

Is it also hard to suppress it, to not do it, and just keep talking in one language?

It's very hard for me

How hard is that?

It's like a 5 out of 10, because I'm just so used to doing it every day. That when it's a serious matter, when I am doing a presentation, and then I say something in English and I think "I should be talking in Spanish all the time". Sometimes I don't know how to express myself in Spanish, and I just say it in English.

Is there a point where the switching can become annoying or inappropriate, too much?

I think no. It might be inappropriate when you're doing a presentation and you just keep saying things in English and not in Spanish, if the class is in Spanish. But I don't think it's inappropriate

So it's not appropriate to do in a more formal setting?

True. If you're talking to the president of the United States, I would try not to talk in Spanish, but sometimes it slips and it can be inappropriate.

What about on university, Is it accepted there and appropriate to switch between the languages?

I think yes, in my English class, if you don't know how to express something in English, you can say it in Spanish or vice versa. I don't think it's a problem here.

I was wondering, are there rules attached to the switching or is it, like, I just switch whenever I like, whatever word.

I don't think there are rules, People are just expressing what they know, so I don't see the problem with switching the languages.

What does it says about someone's proficiency in both languages? Do they have to be very good at speaking both? Or is it more of lacking knowledge in one of the two languages and that's why they're switching?

No, I don't think it's any of them. Sometimes you just forget the word and it comes up in English or in Spanish. I don't think it's a problem. It's not lacking knowledge or knowing lots of the language. For example, probably if somebody would be speaking French right now and then doesn't remember a word and says it in Spanish or in Italian, it would be the same for them.

Do you also switch the languages when you're writing or typing or is it just a spoken thing?

No for me it's a spoken thing. When I'm writing with me friends, I do switch a lot in the language, but when I'm writing an essay or a work for some of my class, I don't have a problem.

So you don't have a problem suppressing the switching, it's just easier for you to continue typing in one language?

Yes

When you are switching, between the two languages, does it makes you feel like you're kind of balancing between two cultures?

No, it's someone's nature to do it, well for me it is. I don't think I am balancing two cultures, because I am so Puerto Rican.

I was wondering, for me this situation Puerto Rico has in terms of the languages is quite unique and very interesting. How would you explain to somebody, who is completely unfamiliar with Puerto Rico, how the language situation is out here? The person doesn't know it's US territory, that it's a Latin American island, doesn't know where it is on the map, doesn't know anything about Puerto Rico.

Well, I would say, first of all, Puerto Rico is in the Caribbean, it's part of the US territory and we can call it a bilingual island, since there's a lot of tourism and most people know English, so i's easier to communicate and it's easier for business and educational wise, it's very common to have bilingual schools, and for people to be learning English, but not all of them.

So there's a great present of both languages, but is it 50/50?

No, it's like it would be 75% Spanish and then 25% English.

Would you like to see the English language more present in your everyday life?

Sure, it would be better if it's a 50/50. Not lose both languages and keep them always present. Like I said, I keep repeating, it's very important for people to speak both languages.

So you would like to see more English and the languages to become 50/50. What would that do to the culture? Because the Spanish language is very implemented in the culture right?

Yeah. It's not that people would stop talking in Spanish, the culture wouldn't be lost, it's just that they are learning a new language, which I think is okay, actually it's great in fact. The more you know, the better it is for people to achieve things in the working business, or everywhere in life.

I was wondering, how it would make you feel if you were asked not to use, either English or Spanish, for the rest of your life anymore?

It would hurt. I wouldn't like that at all, it would just keep talking English and Spanish.

But you cannot, you have to pick one language. Which one would you pick?

Well, that's very difficult. But I think I would pick Spanish.

And why is that?

Because it's in me, it's my culture, it's how I was raised talking. Yes I would pick Spanish, **cerrado**, I don't have to think about that.

So, than English would be taken away from you completely, how would that change you as a person, your identity?

It would change me completely. I wouldn't enjoy my favorite shows the way as I enjoy them now. I aspire to be a doctor and in medicine school almost everything is in English, I wouldn't even be understanding what's going on in there, so, it would change everything completely for me.

How would that change your goals for the future?

Completely, I would have to pick another profession. If it would be the case that I would have to pick Spanish over English, I would become a professor or something, or a biologist.

So you want English to be a part of your future career, that's what you aspire?

Not completely, but since it's there, it's something present, I still need it anyway.

You would not be content with having a career that just has Spanish?

No I wouldn't be satisfied with myself, mixing up things a little bit with both languages, so yeah it would be a problem with my future career.

Participant number: 9

Name: Vivianna

Date: 22/06/2017

Duration: 0:40:04

---

Can you tell me something about where you were born and grew up and in what household?

I grew up here in Puerto Rico, I am from Bayamón. And my household is my mom, her partner and my sister. Right now my sister is in Europe, studying abroad, and obviously I am here in Mayagüez and my mom is staying over there in Bayamón.

So, back then, what languages were spoken in your household?

In my household, Spanish and English were both very important. My mom grew up here and she was born here, but she spend many years living in the States, especially in New York. So I always had that background of speaking English and Spanish. So it was never a problem.

How important was it for her to implement English in your lives?

I don't think it was very important. I think it was something that just happened. I mean, she didn't raised us for us to only speak English or Spanish. She was always between the two languages, so it was something that my sister and I just picked up.

So how was the influence from tv or other pop culture on your English?

Im my case tv was very important. I was always watching cartoons or Disney channel. So, I started speaking English before my sister did because of that.

Would you like to educate your kids in both English and Spanish or just one?

I would like for them to learn both languages, because for me it has been beneficial to be able to speak both languages and understand them. So I would like for them to have that opportunity.

Did you had a preference back then for one of the two languages?

At the beginning I always preferred English, just because of the fact that the writing was easier. I didn't had to worry about the **acentos** and all the situations of using different words to describe something. But now that I am older, I think I like them both equally.

At a certain point in your life you parents or mom had to decide what school you were going to. What factors played a role in what school she wanted you to attend?

Until sixth grade I studied in public schools, because it was closer to home. Later after that, my sister and I went to private school. It was mainly because it was better education and also it was because it was closer to home. There was no specific reason why she decided to put us in that private school.

So you went to both public and private?

Yes

How would you compare the two?

I would say that private school gives you all the material that you need. They had the books, the computers, the teachers were not always absent, if they were absent a substitute would come. That's something that I didn't experience when I was in public school, because if a teacher was absent, they would just dismiss you or you would have a free hour. There were always problems with the books, there were not enough books for students, you have to share them. So, I don't want to say that the education was bad but we did not have sufficient materials.

So that had an influence on the quality of the education?

Yes.

And how would you compare the two, considering the languages that were spoken in the classroom and the books?

Obviously English was, I don't want to say it was deficient, but they said that they were going to speak English in the classroom, but they often spoke Spanish, they give the material in Spanish, so they didn't force the language. In terms of the books, obviously we did not had books that we could take home to read them, so we just had to copy everything that was in there, take your notebook and study from your notebook.

This was both for the private and the public school?

No, this was only for the public school. Private school, since you have to buy your own books, you could take them home. Some English teacher were speaking English, but their English was not that good. They were basically teachers that studied or worked in a bilingual institution and they used to teach other courses, that were supposed to be in English and that's why they hired them. It was not because their major was supposed to be in English.

An English teacher whose English is not very good?

It is not that it is not very good but, I could only think of one teacher that spoke English the entire class. But that was only because she was born and raised in the States. That was the only teacher that I had that was actually really good in English.

What did that do to your English proficiency?

It didn't affect me much because, since in my household speaking Spanish and English was normal, and I used to read books in English and I used to watch tv and listen to music. So for me, having such English teachers was not bad because I knew what I was doing. But I could image that for other people that didn't have the facilities or the abilities that I had, were struggling with the language.

So looking back on that period of time, would you have rather only attended private or public schools?

I don't think I would have rather only attended public or private. I think it was a good idea that I was able to attend both because I have a perspective of the differences between both educations and what they provide to my education. Also, it made me understand why sometimes people from public schools were not able to attend all the colleges or they would just rather start working and not study. It was because they would feel that their education was not enough.

And that may be also had to do with their level of English?

I don't think so. Puerto Ricans have to ability to learn English very easy. They are just afraid to speak the language. I don't think it had to do with the education.

What are they so afraid of?

Most people are afraid of speaking English because of their accent. I mean, here they say that Puerto Ricans speak English like **patial**, which means that it is really bad. They have trouble, finding the words, expressing themselves. And when you put them up with someone that is from the States, it is really hard for them to understand because in the States they speak English really fast. And even though we speak Spanish very fast, it is not the same as speaking your own language and hearing something in another language that you are not used to.

So that's why they would not feel very comfortable?

Yes it may have to do with the fact that the accent and the problem understanding certain words, they are not used to, to hear in English

What do you think about that? What would you advise them?

I would tell them not to be afraid. I mean, people from the States speak Spanish however they want and they are not afraid to talk or communicate with other people. I don't think there should be a barrier between being able to speak English. I mean, Puerto Ricans often sing songs in English whether they understand the lyrics or not. And when they are singing, they pronounce every word perfectly, because they are not afraid to. But when they are about to speak, they are conscious about what they are saying, and that's when they have that problem.

Do you think Puerto Ricans should speak both English and Spanish fluently?

I think they should because it is an advantage. Or maybe not fluently but be able to understand it. I think understanding what people are telling you is actually the key to have really good communication.

Could you think of reasons why Puerto Ricans would not even want to learn English?

I don't think there is a reason why they would not want to learn. I think all of them would like to learn the English language. I think it is not wanting to learn, it is like I said, being afraid to, or be afraid to feel like an outcast. Because if you have a certain group of friends that only speak Spanish, and you're the person that speaks English, they are going to look at you weirdly. Just as if you would have a group of friends that are between the Spanish and English and you are the only one speaking Spanish, and they say a word in English and you don't understand, you're going to feel like an outcast. So I think it has more to do with the fact of that than not wanting to learn.

And for what reasons do some Puerto Ricans do not speak English well?

I don't think there is a main reason, maybe it could be motivation or enthusiasm, not practicing it. Cause if you are not practicing it, you are not going to learn it. So it has to do with those kind of things.

At a certain point in your life it was time to decide what university you were going to attend. Did you had to decide this for yourself? Or did someone made the final decision for you?

No. My mom was always like "you should go to the States". What I study is Pre-vet, so the only university in Puerto Rico that gives it is Mayagüez, so I did not had much of an option. So, my mom was always like you should go to the states. And it was not because of the education it was more that she was afraid of the situation with the strikes, how the system works, she was concerned. But I decided to stay here because of economic reasons. Because I did not wanted to be on student debt until my Bachelor degree, I mean I wanted to be able to have a really good

economic base. And when I was able to provide for myself and able to rent an apartment and have the economic resources to be independent, that's when I would be able to go to the States and finish my PhD. So it was my decision, but I always had my mother's support.

So, apart from the economic situation, then you would have rather attended a university in the States?

Yes, I would have rather attend there, but it's because of the classes. Here they require classes that I don't need for my PhD. For example, Spanish. It's a basic class and everybody has to take it, but it's not something that they require for my schools. For example, all mathematics that I have to take here like precalculus, calculus and all those other classes are not necessary for my PhD. So it was because of the classes. I have to take so much classes here that I don't have to take there.

What if a private university would have offered your study, would you have liked to attend a private university?

I don't think I would want to attend a private university, because of the economic reasons. Here in Mayagüez you have 55\$ per credit which is really really cheap, compared to private universities that could be 100-120\$ per credit. So it's a lot of money. So if the private university was near home, and I wouldn't have that trouble of having to pay for my apartment and own bills, maybe I would consider because it was closer to home and also depending on the classes, but if not I would stay here in Mayagüez.

So, right now you are content with the decision that you have attended UPRM?

I am happy that I am here, I like the university a lot. Even though I don't agree with the system and the situations that are going on right now. I don't agree a 100%. But I think I am having a really good education and I have the facilities to take other classes that are maybe, I would not be able to take in any other college. So, honestly I don't regret the decision that I have made.

Can you tell me something about what you don't agree with in the system?

The fact that they accept so many students, compared to the students that graduate, there is not a balance. It is the double of the students that graduate. So we always have a problem with the classes. Right now, the system of trying to pick up your classes started last week on the 15th, by the 2nd day, there were no more classes available. So that means that there are a lot of people taking the classes, and people have to struggle between should I take this class, or should I take another one? make my schedule full with electives and then I'll be held back by not taking the classes that I am supposed to do, concentration classes. So that's one of the things that I don't agree with. They should consider the fact that the students that are already in the university, and also the students that they are about to accept. Because the other situation is either to wait to see if these students are already accepted or decided to study here or either going to leave. So you're going to have to wait until August, and come here, also people that are from other hometowns, have to come back and spend hours and hours trying to get on a class. And it's something that I have experienced before, because I am in second year and I had problems with selecting classes.

Could there be a reason why people would specifically not want to attend a public university?

I would say it is because of the system. I have friends from Inter, and every time they know that the UPR is about to make to selection of courses. They say "I don't understand why you study there if you know you always have a problem with your schedule". It is also something that my mom has often said to me, because I always complain about selecting courses because they're

always classes that conflict with each other and she's always "you knew this was going to happen, you know how the system works, you just have to live with it". So I think it's just because of that, because of how the system works.

Can you tell me something about your everyday classroom situation? What language of instruction is there? What language do you talk with your classmates? What language is your literature?

Classes are mostly given in Spanish, except for obviously the English courses. I have had really good professors on the English department. I have had professors, from which their presentations were in English but their language of instruction is Spanish. Or the class is in Spanish and the test in English. So I think there is a good balance between both languages, but I think it is a little bit confusing. Because if the professor gives you the material in Spanish and you know everything in Spanish, having the test in English and not knowing the words in English, you're going to get confused.

So would you rather have a greater amount of English input or Spanish input?

If the material is provided in English, the class should be entirely in English. Not mix both languages, because obviously, you're going to get confused.

What do you think of the level of English here?

It is great. Like I said, I had good English professors and all of my other professors from biology or agriculture, they have really good English base. Most of them give the class in Spanish, but when they hand in papers of investigations, recourses, when they forget a word in Spanish, they find a word very fast in English. So I think they have really good background.

Keeping that in mind, what do you think about the admission requirements? And the system of placing people in a basic or advanced class of English?

I think it's good because that way you know in what position each student is. Before they put you on those basic classes, you have to take a test. Let's say I took a test in English and depending on my grade, they put me on the English I'm supposed to take. It was either basic, intermediate or advanced. So I think that's good because that way the students have the opportunities to feel on the same level to each student.

So, it would also make it more fair to students who did not had a lot of English exposure during their high school period or before, and they would still be able to attend the university?

Yes, like I said they have basic, intermediate and advanced English. The basic English is the one everyone has to take. If you didn't take the test, you have to start from there. But if you took the test and you passed a certain evaluation to a certain grade, you are placed into the next class. I think it is fair because they both have the same opportunity to be in each class.

So, I want to talk to you about the US mainland. I was wondering what you think would happen with Puerto Rico, in terms of the language, if it would become a state?

I think people are going to have problems with the fact that everything is going to be in English. Not because they have a problem with the language, but because Spanish is already in our culture, we have been speaking Spanish for years and in Puerto Rico right now, we have more elderly people. So I think we're going to have more conflict with them, than with the younger generation.



But you do think that the situation would change so English would become more present and Spanish less?

Yes, I think English be more present than Spanish, so I think that the situation would change a lot.

So keeping that in mind, would you like for Puerto Rico to become a state?

Honestly, I don't. I think that Puerto Rico has the ability and capacity to be a great island. The only problem is they don't realize all the recourses they could use. I don't want to say that I would like to see an independent Puerto Rico, because I have never seen that. My entire life Puerto Rico has been in the ELA. So I wouldn't know how it would be, but I don't want Puerto Rico to be so dependent to the States. I would like for them to realize all the abilities and the capacities that they have.

So, what if Puerto Rico would become a completely independent island? Would English survive?

I think it would survive, the English language has had a very big impact on the island. In the aspect of jobs, they would consider you better, if you speak both languages. So I think the English would not fade away. I still think people would consider leaving the island, for their studies, because it's something that always has happened. So I think English would still remain.

So right now where do you see or feel the influence of the US mainland or the English language the most?

To be honest I don't know.

In certain areas, groups, socioeconomic levels?

I don't think it has to do with socioeconomic levels. Maybe on groups, maybe the younger generation, because they are more exposed to pop culture music, tv shows. Nowadays my generation does not watch local channels, it's something that they do not do. Maybe on different towns, maybe you could see it more in the Metropolitan area, San Juan, the touristic area, Bayamón. But it has to do with tourism, not with the economic levels.

So I was wondering how would you describe this unique situation that Puerto Rico has, in terms of the language, to somebody who is completely unfamiliar with Puerto Rico, who doesn't know it's US territory, who doesn't know it's a Latin American Country, who does not even know where it is on the map. How would you explain the language situation?

I think it would be very hard to explain. But that's our culture, that's what we do. We jump from Spanish to English to Spanish. We sing songs we don't understand, we dance to any other type of music. I would say that it's because we like to have the opportunity to be recognized. A lot of people don't know where we are on the map, and it has been a situation that I have experienced when I went to the States. They asked me where I'm from, I said I'm from Puerto Rico, and they are like "Where is that?". And I was like it's in the Caribbean. "Which part of the Caribbean?". And it's like you're supposed to know this, it's territory of the US. So I think it would be hard to explain, but that's what we do, that's who we are.

Do you feel like another person when you speak in English vs when you speak in Spanish?

No, I feel the same. Maybe it's because of the fact that in my household English was normal and implemented. Since I was little I have been watching English series or tv shows, I have been reading English books since I was 10. So I feel like me, a normal person.

So how do you keep the balance between the 2 languages?

It's really hard because my group of friends are like me, they switch from Spanish to English. So I have been in situations in which I had to give a presentation, and I forget the word in Spanish and it just pops up in my head in English. So, I would say that I use 50% Spanish, 50% English.

So also in between the same sentence, you would mix the 2 up?

I happens a lot.

Do you hear that a lot also from other people doing that?

I don't hear it as often. In my case, I can switch from Spanish to English in just 1 sentence, like 5 times. For other people, they say the entire sentence in Spanish, but one word in English. So it depends on the person.

So what kind of person does the switching? Can it be everyone? Has it to do with certain background?

I don't think everyone does it. It has to do with the fact that if in your household English was implemented, or you are in a group of friends that switches from Spanish to English, as often. It would happen to you. My boyfriend does not speak English, not because he doesn't understand or he doesn't know how, it's just because he's afraid to speak the language. But since he has been with me, since I switch a lot, it has happened to him. Not as often, but it has happened to him. So the influence of a person switching between 2 languages, is going to effect the other person.

Is there a certain point where you think the switching may become annoying or inappropriate or too much?

I don't think it would become inappropriate, I think it would become annoying. Because there are people that can't stand the English language, or they don't like the fact that they have to be conscious between the 2 languages and understand what I'm trying to say. So I think it would become very annoying.

So you're saying some people don't like the English language?

Yes

Why don't they like it?

Because they say that it's not the Puerto Rican language. If it's not Spanish, than you're not supposed to speak English. That's more for the people who want the independence for Puerto Rico, the ones that are really hardcore. But there are people that don't like the English language.

I was wondering how appropriate the switching is in a formal setting? Can you do that?

I don't think it's appropriate. In my opinion, if you're giving a presentation that is supposed to be in Spanish, you're supposed to know every word you're going to say and not forget the meaning or the point of your presentation. The same for English, in a presentation or an interview for a corporation from the States, it would be kind of weird for them to hear you say a word in Spanish. Cause they are not going to understand. So you should try to keep it to just one language.

So how hard is that for you, to just keep on talking in 1 language?

It's really hard, and it has happened to me, if I had to give a Spanish presentation and I was just standing there like "what is the word, what is the word?" and a think that a lot of Puerto Ricans do is they go like "uuuhh" or "esteee" or "pueees". It happens a lot. So that's when you know that they forgot the word, and they are trying to search for it.

When a person is switching a lot, what does that say about their language proficiency in both languages?

I don't want to say that they lack of proficiency, because I am one of the persons who switch from language to language, but I think that it has to do with that you don't know what language you like the most. So you're switching. Because sometimes a word is easier to say in one language, than in the other. So it happens a lot.

Does it also make you feel like you're kind of balancing between two cultures or identities?

I would say that maybe culture. Because I have had a really big English influence, because my mom lived in the States for many years, my grandmother was married to an American man, and she lived in Chicago for 3 years. Every summer in those 3 years, we went there. I think it's because I also have a cultural background from there.

Do you also engage in code-switching while you're writing or typing or is it just a spoken thing?

Writing too. Not for a formal paper, but if I'm texting or on social media, I would switch. I have had friends that said to me I like how you always start in Spanish but end up in English and it's not something that I do consciously.

Because it's so unconscious or spontaneous, are there no rules attached to the switching?

No, because I do it so unconsciously, it's not that I do it on purpose, it just happens, I would say that it's like I have no control over it. That makes it so hard to maintain to just one language.

I was wondering how it would make you feel if you were asked not to use either English or Spanish for the rest of your life?

I think it would be very hard, I would have to learn a 3 language than. I couldn't be the type of person that sticks to just 1 language. English and Spanish are both very important to me and they have given me so many opportunities, because I speak both. So, it's not something that I would be able to do.

What kind of opportunities has this mixture gave you?

It has helped me when I was volunteering in an animal shelter. Some people only spoke English, and other people couldn't understand them or communicate with them, and they were like is there someone that can help? And when I was in the States, when my sister was afraid to speak English, I would always translate for me. Also, it has helped me to write formal papers for internships or co-ops, for which having a strong English background was important.

If you can only keep 1 of the 2 languages, which one would you keep?

Spanish.

And why is that?

Spanish is one of the most spoken languages. In all Latino America, they all speak Spanish, in Europe, Barcelona, they speak the Castellano Spanish. So I would say Spanish, because it's a language that is more spoken and I would have more opportunities to communicate in more place in the world. Even though in Brazil they speak Portuguese, they have words from Spanish, so it would be easier it would be easier to communicate with them.

So if the English language would be completely deleted from you, would that change you as a person, your identity?

I think it would change me as a person. Because I wouldn't know how to express myself. Because it's like with el Latin, speaking a language that, I don't want to say not exist, but they would not use it anymore.

How would it change your goals for the future, if you are not able to use English anymore?

Well in my case, I wouldn't be able to continue my PhD in the States. So I would have to learn another language to communicate in the States, so it would affect my future study plans and career.

So you're aiming for a career in which English plays a part?

It's not that I am aiming for it, but it's not that I have more of an option. It's not that I can go to a vet school in Europe or any other part of the world and not be able to work in the States or Puerto Rico. It's not international approval. So I cannot go to a vet school in Europe and go to the US mainland and work there because my PhD is not valid, it's not international. So I have not much of an option, it's either the States or international approved vet schools. So I would be stuck on the US mainland, basically.

And would you like English to be part of your everyday work life? Cause you can also stay in Puerto Rico, maybe somewhere where Spanish is more prominent?

I think that I would like for my career to have the English impact. Because like I said, I switch from Spanish to English and this has been a big part of my life. So, staying here in Puerto Rico and only dealing with Spanish.. People are criticizing me because I switch and it's not professional, it would be kind of disturbing for me. So I would rather for English to have an impact on my future career.

Participant number: 10

Name: Ivana

Date: 23/06/2017

Duration: 0:56:40

---

Can you tell me something about where you were born and in what household you grew up?

I was born in Bayamón, Puerto Rico. I lived there for 6 years, so technically I grew up in Naranjito, the country side of Puerto Rico. I loved it, but there was no technology or development like there was in Bayamón. I studied in 5 different schools. Two in Bayamón, two in Naranjito and one in Corozal, which is also in the country side.

Your parents are both Puerto Rican?

Yes

What languages were spoken in your household?

Always Spanish.

When was the first time you got in touch with the English language?

Through television. But all schools in Puerto Rico teach English classes, they are good and help you to write and speak in English. But, I learned English because I had a tv and I watched almost everything in English. I don't remember at what age I first got in touch with English, but I was a child. But my parents never talked to me in English.

So you learned English because of tv?

Yes and videogames. English classes were not very efficient but they helped me.

Why were they not very efficient? What was wrong with them?

The structure of the class was very poor. It's very complicated to talk about. English classes in Puerto Rico are not optional, you're obligated to take the class. So some people don't want to learn English, but they have to. The structure of the class is like, you need to know this and it's awful. They don't really teach you how to write and talk, they give the class in Spanish. It was very difficult for those who did not know any English. When I came to University and I had a class with my old neighbor, that didn't know any English. He found out that every book was in English and he was like "oh no!". He had to translate the books and study from that. It was awful for him.

The 5 schools you went to, were they all public?

No, 4 private and 1 public.

Did you see a difference between the private and public schools?

When I was in the public school, English was very good, the teacher was good. My private schools were not that good, they were normal. You just had to pay for your education and to have a structure. It was a religious school. But in terms of the education, when I went to public school in 5th grade, it was good, all classes were good. It was an elementary school, maybe that

made the difference. At only 1 private school, the English class was in English, in the others English was given in Spanish. It doesn't make sense.

Now that you're a speaker of both, would you like to educate your kids in both languages or just Spanish like your parents did?

If I can teach them French too, and Japanese like I am learning right now, I would too. For me it's very important to know more than 1 language. It's not because the US is Puerto Rico and political stuff. It's because you can learn and expand your knowledge and culture, getting to know different people and communicate. It's fun and important.

What factors played a role in why you have attended those schools?

The first factor is that they were near my home. But when I started to become a good volleyball player, I applied for a scholarship and got in. The school was far away. I liked it, but the decision to move from school to school was because I moved from Bayamón to Naranjito and because I played volleyball.

Would you rather let you future kids attend private or public schools?

It depends, I don't judge. There are public schools here that are very, very good in science and math. You have to apply and have an interview. They are good schools. I just have to look at the program and at what they are offering for my kids. If the schools offer structure, a good education and classes, I don't mind, either would be fine.

So then it was time to choose what university you were going to attend. Did your parents let you decide this by yourself?

I was obligated to go to a public university, because we are a poor family. This is a great university, public and affordable for us. I did not had to option to choose the private over a public school.

But if you had the option, would you have liked to attend a private university?

Here in Puerto Rico, no. I love UPR a lot. I love how they make us study. It is not easy, but I compare myself to students from private universities and I can see the differences in education, even in writing and speaking. I assume there are people in private universities that have good education, even better, but from my experience, I like UPR better.

What differences did you notice when comparing?

First of all, they say classes are easier over there. They don't give a lot of work. They are such technical people. You have technical people here, but in this university you are obligated to take classes out of your concentration and that helps for your preparation as a professional. Even if I was bad at a class over here, I still had more knowledge than they had. I prefer to get a C instead of an A and know nothing.

So you think this also has to do with taking classes out of your concentration?

Yes sure. There has to be a balance, but I think you have to take classes out of your concentration because you can be a professional, but you need to know about life and society. I was first an engineer student and a lot of engineers were like "we don't need classes like psychology or philosophy because they are not part of our curriculum". And I was like, yes sure, but they are interesting and they make you think outside your bubble. So, you're knowledgeable about the things you are studying, plus, some things you are not. You are expanding your knowledge without noticing it and I think that is very important.

Can you tell me something about the classroom setting in terms of the language?

Most of the classes I have taken are in Spanish, the professors talk in Spanish. But sometimes the classes are in Spanish, the presentations are in English and the test in Spanish. And you are like "why??" . Sometimes the class is in Spanish, the presentation in Spanish and the test is in English.

How hard is it to constantly switch between these two languages?

The problem is not switching, the problem is that you study something in Spanish and they don't even use the same terms in English. You can translate, but you never know what is going to be at the test, the professor can do whatever he likes. It can be challenging. Most of the classes are in Spanish except for English and French classes.

Would you like to see more English input in your study?

Most of the books are in English, at least the science and engineer books and even the French books. I know English, but it can be difficult for some people that I know that don't know English. Maybe that is why the professors make the presentations in Spanish, so people can understand it. I don't mind, either way is fine. Just don't confuse me. If you are going to give the class in English, do it completely in English. If you do it in Spanish and the test in English, please tell us what things we need to translate so we don't have a bad grade. But I don't mind because I speak both languages very well.

What do you think about the level of English?

When the professor speaks in English, he speaks well, professionally or even native. I like it, because it's a challenge for me to learn new English words, and I love that. Again, if we talk about the people that do not know English, it is difficult. They can learn English, but it's not the same.

What do you think about the English admission requirements here?

That's awful. Why do I have to take a test to be in an advanced class? I almost got perfect in the college in English, and it's like "oh no you have to start in intermediate, because you did not take the test". So I had to take 2 years of English and it was hideous, awful. I think that people that don't know English, who start in the Basic class, that's okay. Those are easy classes. I took a class once with a friend and I thought okay this is good for you. But intermediate classes are a bit challenging for those people, because you have to write in English all the time. Sometimes they don't give the class in Spanish. It's a very basic class, but you always had to write in English. I didn't like starting in Intermediate when I knew a lot of English. I would have liked it if they would have already gave me those 6 credits and put me in Advanced.

But it does makes it more fair and open to students who do not speak English well?

Yes, they can learn it. There are people that don't learn it, because they don't want to. But the basic courses are very good for those people.

What do you think would have happened to your English skills if you would have attended a private university?

I don't know nothing about the languages over there. It would be the same, because I already knew English. But I have no knowledge about how it would be for people who don't know English.

But you are content with the decision to attend UPR, right?

**S1.** I want to encourage people to come to UPR. But there are university systems that, if you have the money to be able to attend them, have curriculums that are full with classes that you don't need. Here, there are classes you take to get more knowledge, but they give you classes just to fill up your curriculum. Also, structure of the buildings at private schools motivate you. Here you go to a classroom and the fan doesn't always heat you, and the floors.. everything is very ugly and sad for the eyes. I can see that if you have the money to go to a private school that can offer you classes, you can go. But I am still proud of the UPR system.

Do you think in the future English will play a bigger role in UPR?

In order to give classes at this university, you need a bachelor, master and doctorate. You will have a checkmark if it's from another country. So if you go to another country, most likely the US, you will be accustomed to English. Maybe those professors will give their classes of what they have learned in English too. I guess more classes will be given in English in the future. There already are some, but it can improve.

Speaking of the US, have you ever thought about doing an exchange, internship or maybe moving?

I study French literature and you can't do anything on this island with that Bachelor. So, I have to be open-minded and think about moving. The US is one of my options, but I would like to visit other countries. I would feel comfortable in the US, but I would like to expand my knowledge about cultures.

What do you think would happen to Puerto Rico, in terms of the languages, if it would become a state?

That's a very dangerous question. If that happens, it will be in a lot of years in the future. I think Puerto Rico will have to start speaking English. That will be one of the requirements to be a state. It will be very difficult because Puerto Rico is very proud. Spanish is very important right now, even though we speak English. But I think it's very logic to speak English, if you want to be a state of a country which first language is English.

What if it would become a completely independent island, what would happen to English?

It will survive. As I said, I don't see English how many people see it "English represents the US". No, English doesn't represent the US, it's a way to communicate with a lot of people and it's the main language to communicate in the whole world. Even though there are more countries where people speak Spanish, English is the bridge to communication in the world. I want to learn English because I want to talk to more people, I want to be able to communicate. Not because the US speaks it, but because a lot more people speak it. I want to learn another culture, more people and communicate. So, no English wouldn't die over here.

Would other people also think like this?

I don't know. Maybe, maybe not. Like I said, Puerto Ricans are very proud. At first it will be like "English is bad for everyone cause it will change your mind, like a brainwash". There will be people like that, but English would not die. That's a bad and ignorant thought.

What if Puerto Rico will stay the same, so not a state and no independence, would English become more visible in the future or will it stay the same as it is right now?

Technology and television is helping this new wave of people, the little kids. It's effecting them and they are learning even more than 2 languages nowadays, if they are exposed to their phones, Tablets and internet. I would say that more people will know English and even another language



too. But for those people that are not every exposed to the internet, it will stay the same. Staying like we are right now is very, very bad. I hope that the new generation will be exposed to English.

Where is the English language most visible or present?

I can talk hours about this. It's very difficult to define. I think the that people who are exposed to the internet, are definitely exposed to English. But, money has a lot to do with it. I have a friend that lives in one of the most richest places here in Puerto Rico. She learned English since she was little. Most richer people look for schools that emphasize on English more than Spanish. People who are rich speak more than one language. If people don't have that kind of money, the only way to learn it, is wanting to learn a language. Even if you are poor, there are ways, such as the internet and the library. But people that have more money are more exposed to more than one language.

How unfair is that?

I can say that it's unfair but when you're in that age of learning the language, you don't even think about that. You think your father is so cool because he speaks English and you want to learn it too. It's not unfair, but nowadays, at my age, I would say it's unfair because education should be free to everyone and accessible. Public and private schools, the whole education system of Puerto Rico is very deficient, horrible. I think education should be more about people, not some classes of oh I took some Spanish, English, science and math, those classes that you do not take that serious. I think you need the option to learn English, French or Italian of any other language. But here the education is very poor. If I would want to go to a school that offers these things, it would be kind of impossible, because there's a system that you have to follow. I even think that they need to give a survival class. The education is so poor. You have to learn your main language first but English has been the main language for some people, even here. What was the original question again?

Where is English language most visible?

Definitely not in school. Where I studies not. Maybe in those, **este**, prestigious schools, private schools, for rich people. They are very exposed. But not in the normal class schools.

So I was wondering how would you describe this unique situation that Puerto Rico has, in terms of the language, to somebody who is completely unfamiliar with Puerto Rico, who doesn't know it's US territory, who doesn't know it's a Latin American Country, who does not even know where it is on the map. How would you explain the language situation?

I would say our main language is definitely Spanish. Every Puerto Rican knows Spanish but we have to know English. I know more English than Spanish, it's because they have given more importance to the English language here. In high school everything is English and when you come to university and take the basic course of Spanish, you know nothing. English is everywhere. In classes, media, internet, everywhere.

So is it 50/50?

Sometimes you speak with everyone in Spanish, but everything else the essays, workplace, internet is in English. I can say that it's 60% English, 40% Spanish, for now.

And you think English will grow more right?

In the future, yes. will be exposed to the world, I want to be a translator. The main language is always English, that's the language most likely to translate. I will be more exposed to English than Spanish.

What do you think that will do to your Spanish skills?

I think that my talking would not be effected, maybe my writing. I think more in English than I do in Spanish.

Do you feel like another person when you talk in another language?

Yes. My voice changes a lot when I speak different languages. My vocabulary can expand when I switch languages, but I think I know more words in English than in Spanish, because I read in English all the time. I don't read in Spanish at all, only Facebook posts. I also always write in English, so maybe that's why I am better at English.

Do you think any Puerto Rican should speak both languages fluently?

No I don't think so. Do you know when people talk with an accent? I love that. It's because the person can talk more than one language and for me that's beautiful. It's not easy to speak more than one language. I don't think it should be fluently, if you have the capacity to speak with another person, that's enough. Fluently is just a stereotype that people give to a language. It sounds beautiful when it's fluent, but it's not the purpose of the language. The purpose of a language is being able to communicate with another person and that's all you need.

Could you think of reasons why people would not want to speak or learn in English?

Well, it can be because of a lot of things. They can be proud, but most of the people that speak English, prefer to speak it and even criticize the Spanish. But they would probably think that it's not important, that's the problem. They see it like "Oh my god the US will have the power over us if we learn English". I have family members that are from the red team. You have the blues, reds and the independents. The red ones are the ones that want to stay as we are, those people are the people that criticize the English language the most.

Even more than the ones that want independence?

Even more. It's a very difficult thing. They are fans of that ideology and they are not fighting against the English but against the blues. The blues are trying to make Puerto Rico speak only English. That's what they are attacking. The independent people, the green ones, they are not in favor of not knowing English. If they want to make Puerto Rico independent, the political people have to know more than one language and English.

I also wanted to talk to you about code-switching. Do you do that often?

Yes, didn't you notice? Sometimes when I speak in English, I have to speak in Spanish too. And when I speak in Spanish I have to remember myself not to say words in English. It's confusing because I sometimes even talk in Japanese, because I know the word in Japanese. It's difficult but it's fun, I like it.

In your opinion, what kind of people do this mixing, could it be everyone?

I think mostly people who speak Spanish but were more exposed to English.

Would that be higher socioeconomic groups?

Not necessarily. You have people here in the university that always speak English, their main language is Spanish, but they are mostly exposed to English. The thing about economy is that,

here in university you are receiving an education after high school, so it's different. In school days, the people who had more money knew more English. But here at the university, even if you don't have money you're being exposed to English, learn it and talk both.

Is there a point where the switching can become too much, annoying or inappropriate?

When giving a presentation in a class. It's not annoying but try not to do it in a presentation.

So in class it's less appropriate?

In class it doesn't matter. Well, it matters if it's an English class and if you speak Spanish. I had a professor that got very mad because I tried to explain something in Spanish. And she was like "you can't do that, this is an English class". And I thought dude, this is an intermediate class, you know that we speak English and you speak Spanish, it shouldn't be a lot of a problem. But, when you give a professional presentation, you have to do it in the language that they ask.

So in a more formal setting it's less appropriate?

If you're being judged by a professor, yes. But if you're with a lot of people that you know are bilingual, switching wouldn't be a problem. If you speak Spanish and say a word in English, it isn't a big problem as when you speak English and say a Spanish word. I don't know why but it's a big issue when you mix Spanish with English, it's different.

What does it say about somebody's language proficiency?

It can be both. You can be very knowledgeable in both languages and just know the word in the other language. But there are also times that the word doesn't exist in one of the languages, so you try to explain it in English. But it can also be a lack of knowledge. It can be both, but it's more likely that people have a lot of knowledge in both languages.

Does the switching also feel like you're mixing between two identities or cultures?

Having two languages definitely helps you with your culture. But, I don't see a problem about that. It's not that when I speak English I have another culture, it's like, if I already know English and Spanish it helps in my culture. It's not like I switch from one culture to another.

I was wondering how it would make you feel if you were asked not to use either English or Spanish for the rest of your life?

I don't care. It's literally what's happening to me right now, because I am learning French and Japanese. I wouldn't mind if Spanish and English would go away, I would have another way to communicate.

But you can keep one, would you keep Spanish or English?

This will kill my pride as a Puerto Rican, but English.

How would it change you as a person if the Spanish will be taken away completely?

I would say my culture would go away. Half of me would go away. Because if you enrich yourself with a lot of cultures, it will become one culture for you, as a single person. So if you would take Spanish away, you would take a lot of my culture and experience and even my memories.

How would it change your goals for the future?

It would change a lot. If I want to be a translator, it would affect a lot on my work, personal life and professional life. Everything.

Participant number: 11

Name: Jonathan

Date: 23/06/2017

Duration: 0:55:59

---

Can you tell me something about where you were born and grew up and in what household?

I grew up in the mountain region here, the poorest part. I grew up with my grandmother most of the time, on a farm. So I had not a contemporary childhood, I had a childhood like my parents had. So even today, my Spanish is a little different than my friends'. And I speak faster also.

Your Spanish is different?

Yes, a little bit. Not too much but it's noticeable.

Other than that, my parents were educated, I also went to, **este**, private schools when I was little until I went to high school, then I went to public school. And after that, it was a pretty nice childhood I think. I had to eat, I had fun and broke bones and I had fun.

So what languages were spoken in your household?

Spanish 99% of the time. My father is an ex-military so he spoke English. But when I was little my parents wanted me to learn English, but they focused on Spanish. So everything like DVD's, movies, everything they had that was in Spanish. Then when I arrived in middle school, everything turned English. The program, and such, everything turned English.

So what do you think about that looking back on it? Would you have liked to have more English input when you were younger?

I think no because, **este**, because cable television I had constant contact with English. And when we were in the car, my father put Bon Jovi and Van Halen and that sort of music, because he is a military guy, so that's why he heard. But no, I think it was fine. I didn't have any complaints or whatsoever about it. In the English aspect about it, I think in writing. Because I only heard it, I never wrote it when I was a child. I started writing it a lot in Middle School. Probably should have started the writing a little younger.

So now that you're a speaker of both English and Spanish, if you may have kids in the future, would you like to educate them in both or one of the two?

I have aspirations to live in Quebec. So French would be the primary language. But if I would stay in the United States, I have to teach them Spanish I think, but depends in the mainland of the region. I am not going to confuse my kids. As a Puerto Rican maybe just to understand Spanish, that would be enough for me.

So your parents let you attend both private and public education, so why did they choose to do that?

When I went to public school, partly because the private school that I was attending was not really that good. And I didn't fit in maybe, I don't know. I didn't like the experience. I was in 4 schools in 4 different municipalities here, I jumped a lot. Currently 4 years, is the longest I stayed in one single place in my life. So the last school I did not like so I said I want to go to public

school. My friends were going there so I want to go. And the public school where I went was actually pretty good, reputation wise. So, **este**, other than that there was the financial issue that my father got laid off, so then there was that option. They told me that I could stay in private school, but I said no. I am not going to do that to you.

And in terms of the quality of the education, private school was?

Where I was, I did not grasp, I was in a different team between schools. Every school has, in my opinion, a different type of teaching. And it does not depend entirely on the teacher. The way I was taught at the last private school, it was very different from what I was accustomed to. And it was not as labor intensive, I think. I am not a procrastinator, I don't know. So didn't give me a lot of work so I didn't have to study as much and that hurt me a lot, but when I went to public school, believing it would be easier, I found that the public school that I attended, gave me a lot of work. It was not what I expected, at all. There were some classes that I didn't do anything. Like the English class in public school, I didn't do anything, for three years nothing. Spanish was another game. In private school they focus a lot on English, they make you read a lot of English, write all essays in English. In public school in Puerto Rico it is not the case, English falls behind, and Spanish you read a lot, a lot of books and it's really intense. That's the main thing that I found in the difference between the language and the way it has been taught.

So again if you may have kids in the future, would you like them to attend public or private education?

I think both like me, I don't know. It depends. Because here in Puerto Rico, I would like, like I had, private and then public. Not public since the beginning. In other countries with a better public system, maybe yes. Public, yes sure why not?

In terms of your English skills, what do you think would have happened if you had only attended private schools? Or only public schools?

If I only attended private schools, my English would be better than Spanish, I think.

Better than Spanish even?

Better than my Spanish. I have friends that stayed in the private schools that I attended. Many friends because I attended a lot of private schools. If they buy a book, they would prefer to buy it in English most times. You go to a public school, they say "nooo, give me the book in Spanish". That was the case with me, every person is different. But in general, that is the main thing that I grasp on to. Not including the bilingual schools. Because if you go to a bilingual school, you're Spanish is really really low and your English is really good.

At a certain point it was time to choose what University you wanted to attend. Did your parents let you decide this by yourself or did they have the last word?

They told me, if you were a shoemaker, then be the best god damn shoe maker you can be. But they told me you can go study anything you want, be good at it. And try to be the best you can be at that field. But they wanted me to study engineering of course. At the end that's what I decided.

So, why engineering at this public university?

In Puerto Rico this is the best engineering school. If you can't go here, you have to go to San Juan, where the reputation of the school is not as great and the price is really, really high.

That's a private University?

Yes, private

Except for the costs, would you have liked to attend a private university?

No, I would not like to study at a private university

Why not?

The public University here is better than private universities. The private universities, we call them here the last hope, the resort, the red cross you can say "come here, you can come here". That's the point of view we have of private universities here. If you can get to the public university, you're smart, you can get along, that's the view here in Puerto Rico.

What makes this difference between them?

I have friends in private universities and when I see a test, it's easy, it's way easier for them. There's a private university here where you don't have to take the SAT's, college board, you don't have to take them. They accept you without the college board even. Here you need to have a 3.0 or better in high school. So they have a lot lower standard, because they need to get a high percentage of students in the University. Here is that not the case. My friend took calculus, I already had calculus so I helped him. I made his exam, his exam was easy. If he took a calculus exam here, he would die, it's an F. Also I had a friend who came from a private University to here, he had A's for all math's in the private university. He got here, he got an 8%, that's a record, poor kid. But yeah, it's not the same. The level of difficulty is not the same, in my opinion at least.

Can you tell me something about your classroom situation here in terms of the language. So what is the language of instruction, what language do you talk with you classmates, what's the language of your literature, books, presentations?

When you enter your specific field the books all turn English. What happens here a lot of times is that the class is in Spanish, but the presentations, the information and the exam are in English. All the time, that's really common here. There are very few classes that are completely in Spanish. Most of the classes you need both languages.

Why do you need both?

You need both because the presentation is in English, if you don't know English you can't study the presentation, even though the class is given in Spanish. The exam is in English, if you don't know understand English, you cannot make the exam. Sometimes the professor will translate the writing for you, it happens. You can you it.

How hard is to constantly switch between English and Spanish?

The code-switching is a second nature, you become really accustomed to it. In my example at least. I speak Spanish all day, I read French all day and I hear English all day. So I can code-switch fairly easy, it comes like a second nature.

So you can easily listen to the Spanish instruction of the teacher and go back and study the English literature?

Yes, it comes as a second nature, you become accustomed to it. If you have **este**. I think television is a really great factor in your English development. Not so much of a socioeconomic stamp. I have a friend, a really poor friend. He has 1 pair of shoes and had the same pair of shoes for 4 years. He's really poor. And I think he speaks better English than me. Because he got into the internet and learned. English is really accessible here to people. I you want to learn English, you can reach English and learn it and especially here, in a professional, kind of, environment it's really necessary to learn English.

But if it's so accessible, why do you think still a lot of people don't speak English well in Puerto Rico?

It's a generational issue. In the 1950s, the economy of Puerto Rico started to go from agriculture to manufactory. So, my grandparents, for example, worked in a PandP(?) , **tandure**, all his life when he reached 30, the manufactory came along. There's a really long leap between the generations. There's a leap that's enormous, because my generation can speak English, my parents, my mother speaks broken English, my father does not. Because my father went to military and learned English, but when he arrived at the US, he didn't know a single word of English. When he was in the lunchroom he said "same", because he couldn't order anything. He just said "'same" just to get whatever the other was eating. It's a big leap in generations in English. And further along in the generation, the English becomes better and better spoken. But, my grandmother understands English, but cannot speak it at all. She does not like to speak English, she feels like she's betraying a sense of her identity of herself by speaking English. Kind of ironic, cause she has family in the US and she lived in New York for a while but, yeah that's her perspective of things.

Do you think this idea that your grandmother has, younger people may also have?

Maybe a little. I do not include myself in that statement. But I think that there's people identify themselves as that way. That "why speak in English, you should speak in Spanish". But it's becoming more accepted to speak English in the University. When I was younger, if you speak English, people made fun of you. "You gringo". It's the term here, maybe you've heard it. Yeah, sorry for Puerto Ricans. But they made fun of you. If you listened to rock music, you could listen to it but not sing it, because if you sang it, people made fun of you. Now it's not the case. English is very accepted now and you can speak English and sing it. But it still exist. Where I come from, the mountain region, the influence is stronger. People speak Spanish all the time, and English is not as common as the Metropolitan area or here in the west. It's a difference.

What do you think about it? Should English play more of a bigger role?

In my opinion, no. English is so accessible. I think we should protect the Spanish a little bit. Everything is in Spanish but English is accessible and people understand it. In Puerto Rico people may not even speak English, especially older generations, younger yeah they will speak English, 70% maybe 80%. Older generations will not speak it mostly, but they will understand it, but English.. I don't think so that English should be so enforced. We're a colony of the US and in the beginning of the colonization they imposed English, and it didn't work. So I think the imposing of English would be contradictory, it did not work in the past, it will not work now. And, people speak English because they want to, because they need to and because they like to and Spanish will always be spoken here. I don't think in 200 years people will speak English only.

And in your study specifically, would you like the role of English to become bigger? More instruction in English for example.

I receive instruction in English here constantly. I have many classes in English, many engineering classes in English. I have professors that are from Nigeria, they speak broken English. I had a Greek professor only spoke English and Greek. So it's a professor with a British style of English. I love the British English, it's easier for me to understand than American English, I don't know why. I have no problem with instruction, because I receive instruction constantly in English here. In public school, given the aspects of younger generations, the most common thing is an

English class, but taught in Spanish. It's really contradicting, There's an English exercise on the board, this is really common it has happened to me many times, "hagan de la 1 de 10, recuerda los verbos, las reglas" That is really common, all the instructions are in Spanish, the English is been taught in Spanish which I think is really contradicting. And it happens here a lot and these older generations are the teachers, now less but when I was in school, these older generations were the teachers so their English was not as proficient as ours. Many times I spoke a better English than my teacher, that happened a lot.

So looking at the level of English here and then looking at the admission requirements and the system that you get placed in one of the classes: basis, intermediate, advanced. What do you think about that?

The level of English here is not as high as the requirements of Spanish. The Spanish is high, compared to English. Many people, that don't even know a lot of English can get into intermediate English, but Spanish, in the College Board part, is harder, a lot harder and to get into intermediate Spanish is a challenge. So your Spanish proficiency is really really enforced here. I think people think you'll know English eventually. We're constant in contact with English, he's going to learn it eventually. He has to. Spanish is protected I feel, by the constitution, by the University and by public standards. With English it's like "you'll learn it", English will come.

Do you think that should change? The admission requirements and that the level of English should go up?

I think yes. I think it should be a little harder, the English part of the analysis. In one way, English is easier to us cause in Spanish you have cases and accents and a lot of special rules, so writing English is easier. But I think that the requirements should be higher because constantly we get students that are more proficient in English and the tests are becoming a little outdated by the generation that are coming now to study here.

If the requirements go up, and the admission requirements for English go up, what would that do for the people that did not had the chance to get a great level of English? That would mean that they would not be accepted at this University, right?

They will be accepted because there are different levels. My friend doesn't speak a word of English, it's funny, we make fun of him. He thought that chicken was the drumstick, I remember cause we made fun of him. He got into basic English here, he didn't spoke a word of English when he came here. Because his parents protected him, they didn't wanted him to learn English at all. When we got here, he got to basic English and he learned English. Now he speaks English because he learned it at the University and friends telling him to listen to music in English, to learn English and watch Netflix in English instead of Spanish, which sounds nasty, it's horrible. I don't think it will be a problem to get into here because the requirements will be high, yes, but if you don't know English, you can learn here. You can go to basic English here, it will take longer, but you will learn English.

And will that basic level of English that you can get here be enough to understand the instructions in the classrooms?

No, you have to take what you learn in the class and go learn more yourself. You have to be in contact more. If you take only the classes here, no. A language is learned by rehearsal right? You have to emerge yourself in English to learn English. If you only take 1 hour, 3 hours a week of English, you will not learn English.

It's really up to you, if you're motivated enough?



Yes, it's up to the person if you want to learn English, you can learn English. If you don't want to learn English, you can easily not learn English because everything here is in Spanish.

Yes. Are you content with the decision to attend UPR?

Yes, sure. It's a lot harder than I thought it would be, but yeah I like it here, it's cool.

What's so hard about it?

Professors here have free range, here it's called **libertad de cátedra**. The professor can make the course as he see fit, the only requirements that are made upon the professor are to the extends given here and you cannot fail all the class, some have to pass. It's like, there are other rules, but the main rules are that. I had a professor, that 55% reaches F anywhere in the world, here it was a D, 55, sorry 45 was D, 55 was C and B was 80+. So C was the norm, everyone got a C there. Professors here have free range to do the class as they see fit. And well professors here want you to learn the hard way, I think, or they just want to fail you so you can take their courses and they have a job, I don't know. But that is what happens here a lot. I had a professor that I had to deliver a special essay every Friday, I had to go to his class 8 hours because the class was 2 hours and then he has special class that was not mandatory, but you had to attend because if you do not attend there was no way you could pass the class. And here, because of the free range of the professors, I think it's really hard. Especially in engineering. Every department has its difficulties. If you tell me that I have to read a book, make a special analysis, I would say hell no, give me math. But the professors have free range and they can make the classes as hard as they want and they make it as hard as they want, I think to keep to the high standard of the University, that it currently has.

Do you think English or Spanish will play a more prominent role in the studies here in the future, in the classrooms?

I think it will stay the same. Maybe more classes will be taught in English and not in Spanish, that could happen. But other than that, it would stay the same. The class would stay in English but the professors would speak in Spanish, I think that would not change. But the material of the class will stay majorly in English.

What do you think would have happened to your English skills if you would have attended a private University?

I think they would not be as good as today. Private Universities focus more on Spanish, I think. Here, a public University, ironically, English is like the norm here. A lot of classes are English. But in a private University, at least for 2 of my friends, all their classes are in Spanish and every material is in Spanish and the books are in Spanish. They don't have the code-switching that we have to do here, they don't have it as much. It depends on the person, but given the University, I don't think it improves as much as here in a public University.

Have you also ever thought about attending a University on the US mainland or going on an exchange or an internship?

I am going on an exchange to Colorado in the fall. Other than that I wanted to go to Florida, Orlando Central University because of the strike. I considered to change because I wanted to finish. Other than that, I wanted to go to Canada also, to Université du Québec. Other than that, no because Universities are really expensive in the US. A semester in the US is same as the costs of my career here. So no I didn't consider as much to study there. Even though I have family in Florida, Texas and New Jersey. But I want to stay here, study here and then go.

Speaking of the US mainland, what do you think would happen to Puerto Rico, in terms of the language, if it would become a state?

The only example that pops up in my mind is the example of Hawaii. The native language of Hawaii has died slowly over the years. But I think it's not that much as becoming a state, because they enforce English like they tried to do here, but here it did not work, there it worked a little bit better. But if Puerto Rico becomes a state, I would totally think that for example, the traffic signs would be in English and Spanish. Right now they are all in Spanish. I would think that that would be a factor that maybe the street signs would change, the enforcement of English would be higher. Because if we become a state, maybe tourism will rise even more. People in the tourist area speak English but the necessity in non-tourist area will be bigger. I think English will have a more influential role here, if we would become a state.

Keeping that in mind, would you like for Puerto Rico to become a state?

No. Not at all.

Why?

I don't know. If you ask me, where are you from? What is your country? I would say I'm Puerto Rican, I'm from Puerto Rico. I would think that a little piece of me would die if I say I am Puerto Rican I'm from the US. It would be terrible for me to say. My father supports statehood fully, 100%. We have political discussions, they're fun. But in my case I don't want Puerto Rico to become a state. It would be better for Puerto Rico in many ways but I think in the social and cultural aspects, which are often overlooked, it will have a big impact on our culture and identity. We will lose the national team, our flag will not fly alone, there will be another star in a sea of stars. The integration into the US, people don't give such a "peep" thought about the social, cultural aspects of things because well, Spanish is the main language here, we don't eat hamburgers and hotdogs, no we eat rice, rice is law. That would change here if we would become a state. But to be independent is also scary, given the history of corruption of the government here, so it's a state of yes and no, but if you look at the economic aspects of things, it would be better to become a state. If we give social and cultural things a bigger way, it will be better if we become independent. We would have a say in many things because, here we have a rulebook and we have to follow the rulebook to the T, that's what happens here. It's a question of what you value most in the whole aspect.

So if Puerto Rico would become a completely independent island, do you think the English language will survive?

That's a good question. And I think the answer would be, it would decrease rapidly. Because we're not a commonwealth, fancy word for colony. Here we have influence of English constantly, public television here is not as good and doesn't have a lot of program. I give a lot of importance to the media, because that's what the people have contact with, that's what people see and hear and feel. And here, the media shows they are bad, they are boring, the only thing that is good are Tuesdays at 9, it's a comedy show Raymond y sus amigos. It's the only thing that is good here, in my opinion. If we lose that, if we become an independent island, the influence would not be so expected and people would start to look inward to the culture and the things that we have lost because there's a lot of things that have been lost here cultural wise. Especially the 6th of January. It's THE day here. It's the day of Three Kings, in Spain they have it also. And here we have THE day, and 2 days after we have to start school and work, in the past it was like 2 week and then you have to go back to work. To accommodate the American standard and the

American way and the federal laws, the Puerto Rican culture and the Puerto Rican identity has lost a little in many aspects. Including the food, there are people here why do not eat typical Puerto Rican food as much. I have a friend who does not eat Puerto Rican food at all. He has been living here his whole live. That has an impact. If we would become independent, people would start looking inward and I think Spanish, because it is our main language, has always been, it'll become a bigger and important role because Spanish will be carried to by the customs and traditions that have been pushed aside by the commonwealth status.

If it would stay as it is right now, an unincorporated territory of the US, do you think in 15 of 20 years the language situation as it is right now would stay the same, or do you think it would become more or less present?

English proficiency will be bigger. There will be lesser and less people that don't speak the language. I think that would be the biggest change. That it would be a lot harder to go to a place in Puerto Rico where they don't speak English, it would be 10 times harder in maybe 20 years. Where I come from, in the mountain area, if you go to speak English, they be like "alguien hable Inglés?!" And it happens a lot. I have to be a translator a lot of times, it happens a lot where I come from. But, that would be it I think. English would become a lot more proficient, the American culture would be bigger than it is already here. I think that would be the main thing.

Where do you see the influence from the US mainland culture or the English language the most?

Music, media, everything. How can I explain it.. give me a moment. Music, the shows, the programming. For example, if you ask me what program did I see? I would tell you the Big Bang Theory, Aeroflash, you know this really common things that are seen all around the world. But if you ask what local program do you see? Only one, Tuesday's. That's the biggest influence here from the mainland. Also, really here in the west area especially in Rincón, almost all businesses are owned by foreign not-Puerto Rican nationals. That's a pretty big influence. Because the food, they don't cook Puerto Rican food, they cook food that they grew up with. That's fine, that's part of it, I don't have a problem with it. I get tired sometimes of eating rice. But it's an influence, an many people there do not speak Spanish. You go to the restaurant or their establishment, and you're in Puerto Rico, you're Puerto Rican and you have to order in English. That's happens a lot, especially in the west area of the island and the Metropolitan area of course.

How would you describe this quite unique situation Puerto Rio has, in terms of the languages, to somebody who is completely unfamiliar with the island, who doesn't know that it's US territory, doesn't know it's a Latin American island, doesn't even know where it is on the map. How would you explain the language situation?

I would explain that you can get by with English but you have to know a little bit of Spanish also. It's a situation you can get by with Spanish, but you have to learn English. It's a situation where you need both, you can't get by with just one. Maybe 80% of the time you can get by with Spanish, but there will always be a moment where there will be English. It's a fact here you need English in some aspects. Especially in the Metropolitan, West area, you need English most definitely. That's the special situation here. If you come to the island, and you speak your native language English, fine you can come here, you can get by, but people behind your back "mira, una gringa, una gringa". But I think you can get by fine with English but it's not as easy I think in some aspects, especially certain areas. In certain areas if you speak English, you're going to have a bad time. You're not going to get by. You have to go to Google Translate like most of the time to get by. But especially in other areas, like here, maybe you have experienced it, you can get by fine. People speak English fine. But if you go where I come from, you're going to have a problem.

So how do you keep the balance between Spanish and English in your everyday life?

With Spanish I don't have a problem, I speak Spanish all the time. In reference to my English, in my classes I have to hear it, I have to read it all the time. I have constant contact with both languages. And with music, I listen to a lot of English music. Spanish also. But it's a balance that creates itself. Because you need both languages. So both language are used and both languages you have to maintain and contact with.

I would like to talk with you about code-switching, speaking both English and Spanish in one sentence. So, do you do this often?

Code-switching? Yes I do it a lot. Well, not a lot as other people but I do it. I can give you an example, "ay mira esto, que fucking brutal", you're using fucking, it's a bad word, but you use it in Spanish and it's used here a lot,. Code-switching comes naturally "Has escuchada esta nueva canción de Rock?" Sí, yes. Code-switching is used here a lot, especially with younger generations, it is more common than with the older generation. But, I don't know how to explain it, something so normal and daily to me. I use it all the time. It's really normal.

So in your opinion what kind of people code-switch? You told me the young people especially. Does it also has to do with certain areas, people who have attended either private or public education, does it has to do with socioeconomic status?

If you have studied in public schools your whole life, your English is not as good as your Spanish. If you have studied in private schools your whole life, your English is better than your Spanish, in many aspects. Socioeconomic status, if you come from a low socioeconomic standing, your English is less, a lot less, especially if you don't have internet connection. It's beautiful, the internet is beautiful. But, given the example of my friend. My friend comes from really low , his house is broken in the middle. It's like a funhouse. But he comes from really low socioeconomic standards and he speaks English fine. He had contact. He played video games, he watched Youtube, he had internet connection. But people from even lower social statuses, that are in Puerto Rico, people tend to not know, but there is. They do not speak a word of English. They know the basic, maybe they can understand a little, because of school, public school. But public school education here is not sufficient to learn and understand English fully, to the full extend.

When somebody is code-switching, it says about their proficiency that they are very good in both?

If people normally code-switch, in the ability and the fluidity of the codeswitch, you can have almost a sense of the level of how they speak English. Because, Spanish here is a given. You speak Spanish. The question here is how good can you speak English? That's the main question. The level and fluidity in code-switching and the way that you pronounce words, especially pronunciation here, can give you an indication of the level of English of the person. Here it is so common. People who do not speak a word of English, because they hear it constantly, the code-switching, they use it but they pronounce it really badly. They pronounce it like really Spanish. If you code-switching and you pronounce the word in English perfectly, you tend to speak good English. If you code-switch but you pronounce it in a very Spanish way, we still understand you, but we know you don't speak English as well.

I was wondering, how suitable or appropriate it is to switch between languages in a more formal setting?

In a formal setting you do not code-switch. You speak one language and you speak it right with a lot of churchy words. If you have an interview in English, you speak English all the time. If you have an interview in Spanish, you do not code-switch at all.

Do you also engage in code-switching while you're writing or typing or is it just a spoken thing?

No. Spoken thing. Well in my case especially. But mainly speaking. If you're writing, you're writing all in Spanish. It happens here a lot that you have to translate a thing from English to Spanish, the document, even political science in my case, the essay is in English, I had to translate it to Spanish. Even though I had to translate one language to another. In my final essay, they're not mixed, it stays Spanish or English, depending on what the professor wants.

How hard is it not to switch? To talk in just one language

In a formal setting, you constantly have to think about what you're going to say next. Right now, I am doing that. When I travel, I get adapted to English really quickly and I don't have to think when I have to say it. When I'm here, I hear Spanish all the time, so in my mind I have to translate a lot of things. Not all, but a lot of things.

Does it makes you feel like you're kind of balancing between two cultures or identities when you're switching between those two languages?

I think no, I think Puerto Ricans are so influenced by the Americans, that it has become ours. The way we speak, the way we code-switch, the way we use English words, it's the way we Puerto Ricans talk. If you go to another country in Central America, maybe people cannot understand us, you went to Spain you can understand us. The balance has become so normal that a new identity has formed out of the two. And I maintain that single identity that at the same time maintains two, that's the way I think. I cannot say I'm a full Puerto Rican Spanish guy, I am not. I cannot say that I'm a full American either because I cannot be a full American, never, Trump will get me out. But I think that I created my own identity and many people have so and many Puerto Ricans can relate to this that we have this unique Puerto Rican identity where we have the American aspect and the Spanish aspects of it, coexisting.

I was wondering how it would make you feel if you were asked not to use either English or Spanish anymore for the rest of your life?

I think I couldn't.

But you must

If I must, I don't know. It would be horrible, If I couldn't use English or Spanish I am limiting myself

What language would you keep?

Damn, I knew this was coming. English is more universal, it's spoken everywhere in the world. Now, you're from the Netherlands, I am from Puerto Rico, really distinct cultures, and I can speak to you in English, which is beautiful. I couldn't do this if I talked in Spanish, because I had to stop and talk slower and I would get frustrated. But given the importance and the range of English in the world and due to my personal aspirations, to not limit myself, I had to keep English. But if you ask me by heart, Spanish. Because I have spoken in Spanish every day, I speak Spanish and it's my main language. You have a really personal attachment to your personal language.

So you would change as a person, as in your identity, if the Spanish would be taken away from you?

If the Spanish would be taken away, yes. Some of my identity would be ripped away. Maybe not the cultural aspects. But if I cannot speak Spanish, there's part of my identity that will go away. I think the same thing goes if you take English from me. Part of me, part of my identity would be

ripped away. I couldn't listen to Jimmy Hendrix or electronic music, I couldn't listen to reggeaton all day, I would kill myself.

How would it change your goals for the future if the Spanish would be taken away from you?

Given my personal aspirations, I am taking Spanish away from me myself. I have beautiful dream that one day maybe, I don't know my couple wouldn't speak a word of Spanish and I can get mad at her, I can scream at her and she doesn't understand me. That in my mind, that would be beautiful, that would be amazing. And that's the way I would keep my Spanish. Spanish will never be taken away from me, it will always be there. Even though I wouldn't speak it daily, I will get home sick eventually and then start hitting salsa. You cannot take Spanish away from me.

Participant number: 12

Name: Bryan

Date: 25/06/2017

Duration: 0:33:46

---

Can you tell me something about where you were born and in what household you grew up?

I was born in Tampa Bay, Florida and I lived there for 3 years. I don't really remember much about the house. I know I went to visit it when I was 10, but I don't really remember much about that household. It was nice, my grandmother went to visit and take care of me and then we moved to Puerto Rico, when I was 3. And first we lived in a two-story house that got demolished by a hurricane, than we moved to another house that we rented and now we live, where we live. We have been living in this house since 2001.

What's the nationality of your parents? Are they from the USA?

No, they are both Puerto Rican. My dad was born in Mayagüez and my mother, I am pretty sure, was born in Aguadilla. So they are both Puerto Rican. I am Puerto Rican technically, I was born in the USA but I guess my nationality is Puerto Rican.

So what languages were spoken in your household?

English and Spanish but mostly Spanish. I assume that when we lived in the US, we spoke mostly English but I don't really remember that. But in my household always Spanish unless somebody from the US visits us, than we speak English a lot.

How do you feel about that? That you had both of the languages?

I feel good, diverse. I learned the languages faster than most of my friends. Because I used to watch everything in English and instead of just watching local tv, I watched tv from outside and that helped me learn a lot to speak English and understand it better. I like it, it's good to know two languages.

If you may have kids in the future, would you like to educate them bilingual too?

Yes, definitely. I would like to teach them at least Spanish and English.

At a certain point in your life your parents had to decide what `school you were going to, what factors played a role in their decision?

The first school that I studied in, it was mostly chosen because my mother went to that same school and my sister was studying at that school at the time as well. So, it was a no-brainer for them I guess, to put me in the same school that my mother studied in. Than when my sister graduated and I didn't wanted to study in that school anymore cause I didn't like it, they put me in a private school in Cabo Rojo, where we live, cause it was closer to home. That's the reason they put me in that one.

So the first school you've attended was a public school?

No, both schools were private. I have never studied at a public school.

How do you feel about only attending private schools? Are you content with that?

Yeah, I liked it. I never really knew the difference between public school and private school. But from what I have heard, public schools are less demanding and the classes are supposedly easier, it's what I have heard. And people get more help from the government than private schools. Cause public schools are completely government funded, unlike the private schools. But the private schools where I took classes, were very religious and strict and I really didn't like that a lot. Cause, I am religious but not a practitioner, and I didn't really like that they kind of forced it on you, you couldn't have a different opinion or a religion to the one that they teach there. I didn't really like that a lot.

Can you tell me something about the classroom situations in those private schools, considering the languages. What was the language of instruction, the languages you talked with your classmates and what language were your books?

Most classes were taught in Spanish even though the books were all in English. Although, some books you could find with a Spanish edition. But, classes like English, for example, were obviously in English and sometimes, depending on the teacher, the class could be in English. But that was rare, most of them were in Spanish. And when I talked with my friends, depending on who the friend was, if they knew English, then I talked a little bit of English with them, but it was also mostly Spanish. In the first school. In the second school we, although the classroom situation was the same that most classes were in Spanish, except the couple that were in English, I talked more English at the second school, than I did at the first one. Cause more people knew English at that second school.

Was it hard to switch between the two languages?

No, at least for me, it's pretty easy. Cause since I practiced them a lot, I sometimes forget a word that I have not said in a couple years or something, but it's mostly not that hard for me to switch.

And again, if you may have kids in the future, would you like them to attend specific private education or would you also let them attend public education?

Well, I would be open to maybe putting them in a public school, but I would have to do the study really well to see that it's not a bad school. But it would depend on the price and on what my wife would say. But I would not be against putting them in a public school, I would think about it.

Then it was time what university you wanted to attend, did your parents let you decide this by yourself or did they make the final decision?

They basically did. But I didn't want to move out, I didn't want to rent an apartment so it would have to be local and it was basically down to UPRM or Inter Americana. Even though there are others, but not as famously known as those two. And I obviously wanted to attend the best one, and that was UPRM. I really never even considered la Inter, it was always UPRM for me, even though my parents did give me the choice to study in whichever one I wanted.

Why didn't you want to go to Inter?

Because it's a way more expensive and the quality of teaching in the UPRM is actually much, much better than it is at la Inter. Cause la Inter Americana is considered "the easy route". It's not that it's a bad university and that if you study there you are dumb, but mostly the joke that we have in the UPRM is for example "if you study at la Inter, it's cause you couldn't get into UPRM". Although some people do study there by choice. But it was a no-brainer for me at least to study at UPRM cause it was the best and it had what I wanted, it was cheap and that's where my entire family has studied, so I didn't want to break tradition.

Are you content with how the situation is right now, you attending UPRM?



You mean the strike thing?

No just you attending UPRM in general.

It's exactly what I wanted. The classes are very interesting, I have learned a lot, a lot of great people are there as well. And I really like it a lot. And it's not impossible, there are some classes that are really, really hard, but it's not like it's impossible to pass them. I really do like it a lot.

What things would you change? About the study, the campus, the classes, whatever?

They should change how they book professors, who to hire. Cause there are some professors that are known to not pass students. It's like, in a 30 students class, maybe 2 of them pass, and not with an A. And to me, that's not a good professor and you can't blame the students, cause there's no way that 28 students could fail the class just because they are all irresponsible. So, they should change that., Cause I know of some professors that if you have class with them, most people would just tell you "don't take the class, you're going to fail" and it's not cause you're dumb, it's cause the professor intentionally makes it so that you fail the class. They should change that. They should make it easier for you to be able to put your classes in and have a better class schedule I guess. But most of the things are actually pretty fine. Those are basically the only two things I would change.

So you would advise high school students to attend a public university over a private university?

Yes definitely. Cause it depends. Most UPR's are specific at one thing, they teach a lot, but for example UPRM is the best one at engineering. So if you really want to be the best at engineering, you'd study at that one instead of studying at la Inter or another UPR. But it's also way cheaper, so it would be better for your parent's pockets if you would want to study there. I would definitely recommend it.

Can you tell me something about your classroom situation right now in terms of the language? Language of instruction, the language you use with your classmates and the language of your literature, exams, presentations?

Well, same as high school. Most, if not all, books are in English, but the classes are taught in Spanish. But the exams are also in English, in most classes. Maybe 1 or 2 they put the exam in Spanish, but most of them is in English cause what the professor wants to do is teach it to you how to do it. If it's for example something practical like numbers, and then you practice what's in the book. And if it's a literature class for example, they wil explain it to you in Spanish, but than when you're going to study it, you're going to study it in English cause that's how the book is. So technically the exam being in English, is better when the book is in English, but if the book would be in Spanish, than it would be better for the exam to be in Spanish. And that's exactly how the classes are. Classes that have books in English, the exam is in English and the classes that either don't have books, so the class is taught in Spanish, the exam is in Spanish.

How hard is it to constantly switch between these two languages?

It's not hard at all. Cause they make it pretty easy in the classrooms and they explain the material very well.

How do you think your English skills would be if you had attended a private university?

I honestly think that it could be a little bit worse. It could be the same, but depending on who I am friends with. Because I have a couple of friends at private university, that I know speak English very well. But I also know that a lot of people there don't speak English at all. If I wouldn't get to practice it a lot, I would probably get rusty and not know how to speak it as well

as I do now. Cause I speak English at least once per day where I study at right now and with the friends I have and everything. So could be the same, could be a little bit worse.

Have you ever thought about attending a university on the US mainland?

I thought about it. Because what I'm studying, that's management, there's a university in Florida that specializes in that specifically. So I thought about going there to study, but by this point in my study I just want to graduate and get a job as fast as I can. But I would also not be opposed to go study out in the US mainland, it would seem interesting.

What do you think about the level of English in your classes?

What do you mean by that?

Is the literature hard? Or when the instruction is in English is it hard to understand?

Not for me at least, I understand everything perfectly fine. But I would see how somebody that doesn't know English at all would maybe struggle. But in UPR, you take a test to see how good you are in English. And if your English is really bad, they put you in basic English classes, where you got to take 6 English classes in order to pass. If your English is fine, you take 4 classes, and if your English is above average, you only take 2 classes. So, that actually helps a lot, cause I have a couple friends that were not good at English and they took the basic classes and that actually taught them and helped them a lot, to understand better English. Maybe they can't speak it well, but they can at least understand it better now.

So the class helped them to improve their English. Was it enough to, when they have classes where the instruction is in English, are their skills high enough to understand it?

Yes, the classes that they teach there, it helps a lot with all the other classes that would be in English. Cause, most classes that are in English are English classes, English literature classes, Cause most other classes, the professors speak Spanish, unless the professor is from another country. But it helps a lot with the understanding, yes.

I'd like to talk to you a little bit about the US mainland. What do you think would happen to Puerto Rico, in terms of the languages, if it would become a state?

If it becomes a state, I'm pretty sure that, they would want us to speak way more English. People here would still speak Spanish, but, I am pretty sure the US, with the president that it has right now, would probably make us want to speak more English, so that we would feel more like an authentic state.

Keeping that in mind, would you like for Puerto Rico to become a state?

I actually think that as this point, no. Because we are too deep in our own problems, and I don't think that the US would want to help us and even if they would, they also have their own problems, so we'd just be putting our problems on top of theirs and then we'd be adapting their problems as well. So I think the best, right now at least, I wouldn't want to become a state. Even though supposedly we are, but that's still up for debate.

What do you think would happen to Puerto Rico in terms of the language, if it would become a completely independent island? Do you think English will survive?

I think it would, because one of Puerto Rico's strongest points is tourism and a lot of Americans visit Puerto Rico, so at least in the east side, that's where most people visit, English would still be a strong language. Maybe not as utilized as it is right now, but it wouldn't be lost completely cause most Americans don't speak Spanish at all, so we need to learn English if they come to

visit. But if we do become completely independent, I think that English wouldn't be as used as it is now. Cause we only really use it for tourism and if we were to visit the US mainland. But other than that, I wouldn't see a reason for people to use it here.

If it would stay as it is right now, do you think the influence from the US mainland of the English language would become bigger overtime? Let's say 15,20 years.

Yeah, I think it would become more utilized in 15 to 20 years. The way things are now at least cause I am actually seeing way more people speaking English now than they used to before. So I actually think that yeah it would become more utilized in the future if we stay how we are, or if we would become a state.

Would you like that?

Honestly yeah I would it's, like I said, I prefer speaking in English over Spanish, because it's actually an easier language, in terms of writing cause you don't have **acentos** and tildes and stuff. So, it's actually an easier language to write in and more foreigners know English than they would Spanish. And in Puerto Rico we have a different Spanish than in other places, so maybe it would be difficult for them to know it.

Do you think every Puerto Rican should speak English and Spanish fluently?

I think that they should but most adults, today at least, people in their 30s and 40s that didn't had English education, it would be understandable that they don't speak it fluently, cause they didn't have the teachings or the classes or a way to learn, but they should at least understand it. This is what I think. If they can at least understand what they are saying. So they he wouldn't be completely lost if somebody talks to him in English.

So, what factors do you think play a role when a Puerto Rican does not speak English well? Especially the younger generation.

Well, the younger generation.. The only way I can see them not knowing English is if the school they attend doesn't teach it, but most schools do teach English. I learned a lot of English from reading in English and watching tv and movies in English, English classes. So if they don't have any of that, and their parents completely hate English, I would see them not knowing English in today's age. But with all the help that they have, I would assume that they at least understand English.

And for what reasons would they not want to speak it?

I really wouldn't see any reason why they wouldn't want to speak it, unless they hate America, unless they want to be completely independent and their parents are completely independents and they put that in them. That would be the only reasoning in my mind that they wouldn't want to speak English at all, cause they don't want anything to do with America.

How would you describe this quite unique situation Puerto Rico has in terms of the language, to somebody who is completely unfamiliar with the island, who doesn't know that's unincorporated territory of the Us, who doesn't know that it's a Latin American country, who doesn't even know where it is on the map. How would you explain the language situation here?

Well, I would explain that we're a multicultural country. Cause we speak Spanish, we speak broken Spanish cause we speak much quicker than the other places and we cut out words, cut out letters, but here in Puerto Rico we understand each other. And it would be understandable that somebody that knows Spanish wouldn't know Spanish, cause it's not traditional Spanish, but I would explain that we're multicultural. We know Spanish, at least we know English and a

lot of other places here in Puerto Rico know a lot of other languages like Portuguese and French. It's just really a diverse place.

So how's the combination? Is it 50/50? English/Spanish?

No, I'd say it's more like 60/40, Spanish/English. Because, like I said, a lot of the older generation does not really speak English fluently, some of them understand it and can speak it, some of them don't even understand it. So, right now at least, I'd say 60/40, in the future I think it could be 50/50.

How important is the mixture of English and Spanish in your life?

It's very important cause, for example, when I am with my friends I speak a lot of English and Spanish at the same time, cause we like to mix words from both languages when we talk. I also only watch television and movies in English. But I write in Spanish when I am talking with my friends. In my life at least, it's very important to use both languages.

So, you're talking about using two languages in the same sentence a lot?

Yeah we do that a lot. Me at least, for example, when I talk Spanish, I actually think of the words in English first and then I translate it into Spanish. So, sometimes I am talking and if I forget how the word is translated into Spanish, I'd just say it in English. And, at least in my group of friends, everybody is going to understand what I am saying because they all understand and speak English fluently. We like to mix our words a lot when we speak.

So, outside of your group, people do that a lot, the switching?

Yeah even outside of my close group of friends, a lot of other friends that I know, also speak either English or Spanish and they sometimes mix the words as well, it's a common practice here at least with the younger generation. But if I am for example at work, where I mostly work with an older generation, I only speak in Spanish, I never speak in English, unless the client is American or I can see that they're struggling with Spanish, then I'd be like "I understand and speak English, if you would like me to speak English"

In your opinion, what kind of people do this switching, mixing? Does it have to do with what education you've attended, is it a certain socioeconomic level or could it be everyone and everywhere?

I think that the mixing of the Spanish and English in the sentences, is mostly a new practice with the younger generation, I would see them doing it more. Cause, if my group of friends does it with another group of friends, and they do it with another group of friends, then it starts becoming a common practice between everybody. I think the younger generation practice it more.

Can the switching, mixing become annoying or inappropriate at some point?

I wouldn't see a reason why it would be annoying, but I would see it as, for example, if you're doing something professional, that it would be inappropriate. Cause if, for example, you're at a job interview, unless they tell you to speak however you want, and even with that, you should only still speak one language. Unless they ask you to specifically speak both. Then I would think that it would be inappropriate in a professional setting at least. Cause in between friends it doesn't matter, but like I said in a professional setting, I would see it as inappropriate.

And at the university?

Writing emails at professors or speaking with professors in a professional manner, again, I would see it as inappropriate but if I am at the university speaking with my friends or speaking with a professor in a casual way, than I wouldn't see a problem with it either.

What do you think switching says about somebody's knowledge of the languages?

I think that if they can switch pretty easily between Spanish and English, that their pretty knowledgeable in both languages. Cause it's not easy speaking just one language and then suddenly changing it up to speak another one. So I would see it as they are pretty knowledgeable in both languages.

So is it hard for you not to switch, right now for example?

No, it wouldn't be hard, I could easily speak Spanish right now if you wanted me to.

But do you have to suppress Spanish words that may pop up in your head right now?

Sometimes, for example, I am talking and I'm like "so this word is said this way in Spanish, how do I translate it to English?" Yeah I do that sometimes. I have to suppress it while I am thinking of it, while I translate it. But since I know English pretty well, I translate it fairly quickly.

Do you also do the switching while you're writing or typing? Or is it just a spoken thing?

It's mostly a spoken thing. Like I said, when I am doing an assignment or something I never do that, it's strictly one language. But if I am writing at my friends, I could do it, but it's not like I'm writing completely Spanish and then say one word in English. I keep writing Spanish, it's like I am writing a little bit, than after a while I talk to him in English or something like that/ But it's more common to practice speaking more than writing.

When you're switching the two, does it make you feel like you're balancing between 2 cultures or identities?

For me at least, they both have a lot to do with who I am. But I would see it as I am being diverse, in between two cultures. I would see it like that yeah.

When you just speak in Spanish or English, does it make you feel like another person? When you speak in English versus in Spanish?

Yeah, I actually do. When I only speak Spanish with somebody it's because I know that they can't speak English well. So I am not completely being who I am, cause me talking in English is part of me. But since I know that they have a problem understanding it, I am not going to make the conversation hard for them. So I would speak only in Spanish.

But you'd feel like a different person when you do that?

Kind of. I mean, I would basically be more bored or it would be harder for me to make a conversation with them. It would change the essence of who I am, so I guess yeah I would feel like a different person.

How do you keep the balance between using English and Spanish? Where do you use the languages the most?

I use mostly Spanish in university, in a professional setting, unless the professor specifies language, than I would use that one, but if they don't say any language, I'm going to write it in English, cause it's easier for me. I use mostly Spanish talking with my friends. It depends on the situation, I would be in.

If you were asked to not use either English or Spanish anymore for the rest of your life, how would that make you feel?

I would find it pretty challenging, cause if, for example, I am planning on moving from Puerto Rico and never come back, than I guess I would be okay with never speaking Spanish again in my life. Cause if I, for example, move to the US mainland, I know for a fact that a lot of people have knowledge of Spanish, but all of them know English. So, I wouldn't use Spanish a lot, so I would be okay with that. I can't see that far ahead in the future so if it would be right now, it would be pretty challenging cause here in Puerto Rico most people speak Spanish, not English, so here I would have to cut out the English and that would be hard for me cause it's a part of who I am.

So for right now, you would keep Spanish?

Where I am right now, yeah, I would have to keep Spanish, more as an obligation than what I would want. Because, like I said, most people here prefer Spanish over English. So I would have to keep Spanish.