

## MOCK SPANISH: IF YOU'RE ILLEGAL, HEAD SOUTH AMIGO!.

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Jane Hill's concept of Mock Spanish refers to the introduction of Spanish material into English monolingual discourse with a hidden negative, primarily stereotypical, codification of Spanish speaking ethnic groups – especially Mexicans. Mock Spanish speakers are supposed to be mainly members of the white American elite.

Through Mock Spanish, the Spanish speaking community has become subject of indirect mockery. *If you're an illegal, head south, amigo!* is a legend found among supporters of law modifications that exclude illegal immigrants from social benefits. Thus, the Spanish word for friend, i.e. *amigo*, gains such a negative connotation, that the meaning becomes everything but friend. Some other Mock Spanish examples are *Banana Republic*, *el presidente*, and the adjective *macho*. This type of semantically corrupted Spanish material is frequently used in English public discourse, like movies, newspapers, magazines, political slogans, etc.

The objective of this contribution is to introduce the notion of Mock Spanish into the Mexican ELT context in order to analyze the possible consequences of this negative concept in the English teaching field. This reflection takes place as a confrontation with the non-trivial issue of deciding whether Mock Spanish should be treated in an English class, in an ELT-training course or in a university subject.

To solve this matter we need to consider two widely accepted propositions. On the one side, attitudes towards the culture affect the language learning process. On the other side, we know that the best medicine against discrimination is being aware of it. The disjunctive matter is to decide on the midpoint. This will be scrutinized in this presentation.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

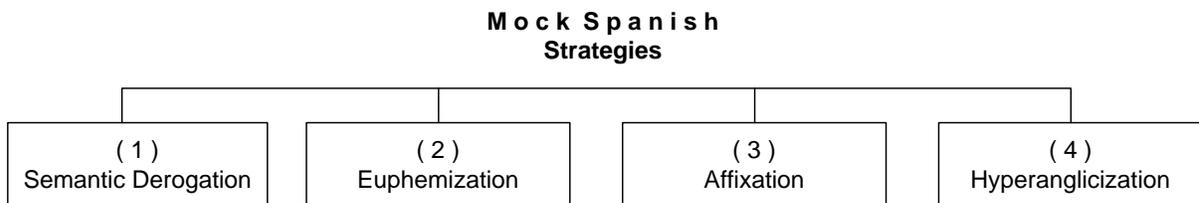
### 1.1 Defining Mock Spanish<sup>1</sup>

The first statement of this article is to assert that the strict separation of Mock Spanish from Spanish is *de rigueur*. Spanglish, Caló, Border Spanish, and other varieties of the kind exhibit a rich and creatively used register of English loans, notwithstanding they have a basic Spanish structure. In contrast, Mock Spanish:

is a narrow, constipated little register of insults that doesn't really offer much potential for play or originality. The loan material in Mock Spanish is ludicrous and exaggeratedly mispronounced. This is in sharp contrast to the extravagant anglicisms of Cholos, or the rich play with the two languages found in Chicano authors or performers like Guillermo Gómez Peña. (Hill, 1995a, p. 205, fn. 14)

According to the American anthropologist Jane Hill (1995a, 1995b, 2008), Mock Spanish is a type of register that includes linguistically adulterated Spanish material into monolingual English discourse with the function of acquiring a ridiculing effect of the Spanish language and its users. Mock Spanish is especially used by Anglos in the United States, whereby the hidden pejorative meaning can be used as “light talk [...] to reproduce the subordinate identity of Mexican-Americans” (Hill, 1995a, p.198). The ridiculing effect of Mock Spanish could be solely mocking, or it could include an obscene or insulting nuance, which is implicitly transmitted through mimicry of stereotyped aspects of Spanish speaking people.

Hill (1995b, para. 12-36) has discovered four linguistic techniques<sup>2</sup> that aid to expressing the hidden ridiculing effect of Mock Spanish.



**Table 1.** *Mock Spanish strategies according to Hill (1995b)*

Table (1) depicts Mock Spanish characteristic strategies. In the first instance, we have the strategy of semantic derogation. This strategy refers to a type of incorporation of Spanish loans into English, in which the word form is faithfully adopted, but the semantic value disadvantageously modified. Through this technique, the Spanish loans acquire an either denotational or connotational negative meaning. If the Spanish term has a neutral or positive sense, the loan will be negative. But in case the Spanish words already have a negative meaning, the Mock Spanish expression results in an affront. A good example is the current internationally used word *macho*, whose original Spanish neutral meaning was the male counterpart of the she-animal, as still present in the DRAE<sup>3</sup>:

( 1 ) *Animal del sexo masculino*

'Animal of the masculine sex'

However, under the entry *machismo*, and without including any etymological origin, the *DRAE* gives the following definition:

( 2 ) *Actitud de prepotencia de los varones respecto de las mujeres*

'Arrogant attitude of men towards women'

Since *macho* originally referred only to animals (specific meaning) and to the male counterpart of the she-part (neutral meaning), as still shown in the *DRAE*-definition, this term has suffered semantic motion and pejoration of an originally specific, neutral Spanish term. Currently, the term *macho*, meaning excessive masculinity, has not only been regressively borrowed in Spanish, but it is under international circulation, as shown in (3):

( 3 ) English: *He's a macho*

Spanish: *Es un macho*

German: *Der ist ein Macho*

French: *C'est un macho*

Hill's second Mock Spanish strategy is euphemism. From the Greek roots *eu* 'good/well' and *pheme* 'speech/speaking', *euphemia* means 'well-speaking'. Generally speaking, euphemism refers

to the substitution of offensive words by, at least in appearance, neutral terms. In relation to Mock Spanish, euphemism refers to the use of Spanish translations to substitute obscene English expressions in order to introduce the term into a type of register, in which the English word would otherwise be forbidden. The Mock Spanish euphemism introduces a humorous or pejorative connotation. Some examples of the jocular use of euphemisms in Mock Spanish are the following:

( 4 ) Spanish *mierda* for English *shit*

Spanish *caca de toro* for English *bull shit*

The name that Hill gives to the third strategy of Mock Spanish is affixation<sup>4</sup>. According to Hill (1995b), affixation refers to the morphological marking of English lexemes with Spanish morphemes. Frequent examples of the Mock Spanish strategy of affixation are the following frames:

( 5 ) *el...-o* as in the phrase *el cheap-o*

- *o* as in the nouns *town-o, village-o*

The use of this frame frequently results in a totally inadequate use of Spanish grammar. Through the use of ungrammatical constructions, the Mock Spanish phrases automatically gain semantic pejoration.

Hill's (1995b) fourth strategy is called hyperanglicization. This strategy refers to the intentional mispronunciation of Spanish words or phrases by using an exaggerated English accent. As it happens with the technique of affixation, this tactic provides the Mock Spanish word or phrase with a negative meaning. Hill's (1995b, para. 12-14) interpretation is that the exaggerated pronunciation endows the Spanish material with a high degree of absurdity because the language is not in the position of being respected with correct grammar. Mock Spanish level of violation of Spanish norms can vary, being the highest degree the accumulation of the four strategies in one single expression.

In Hill's terms, Mock Spanish can be found in visual imagery and in oral or written discourse. The illustrations accompanying the written Mock Spanish discourse are highly negative stereotypical images of Mexicans. In such way, the written discourse helps to make the negative connotation of Mock Spanish more evident. Mock Spanish is widely used in films or TV-shows.

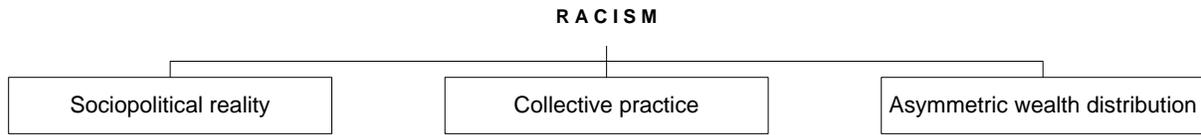
Through the strategies mentioned above, this English discourse uses a corrupted Spanish language, which according to Hill (1995a, p. 208) has the function of reproducing negative views of Spanish speakers. Mock Spanish cultivates a negative connotation of Spanish speaking people full of stereotypical images especially of Mexicans, cf. Hill (1995a, p. 204, 2008).

## 2. COVERT RACIST DISCOURSE

According to Hill (2008), Mock Spanish is a type of covert racist discourse extensively used by the white American society. The definition of racism that justifies Hill's assertion is taken from David T. Goldberg's work on this concept. The UCLA School of Public Affairs (n.d.) presents the definition of the Critical Race Theory (from now on CRT):

CRT recognizes that racism is engrained in the fabric and system of the American society. The individual racist need not exist to note that institutional racism is pervasive in the dominant culture. This is the analytical lens that CRT uses in examining existing power structures. CRT identifies that these power structures are based on white privilege and white supremacy, which perpetuates the marginalization of people of color. (para. 2)

In the scientific study of racism, it has been demonstrated that the folk belief of racism as an ideology shared by uneducated individuals with openly shown prejudice against certain races does not portrait reality accurately. This misconception has motivated the more realistic description of the Critical Race Theory, cf. Hill (2008, pp. 6-12).



**Table 2.** *Characteristics of racism according to the Critical Race Theory*

Table (2) illustrates the three key features of the CRT. The first characteristic refers to the scientific reality that the concept “race” is illusionary due to the biological fact that racial differences among humans do not exist. In view of the different treatment for the so called white-, black-, brown-, and yellow-skinned people, the CRT defines race as a sociopolitical concept. To be consistent with this guiding theme, it would be more appropriate to talk about ethnical discrimination or prejudice, instead of racism.

The second characteristic of the CRT emphasizes the collective practice of ethnical discrimination and refuses to limit this practice exclusively to some individuals. Critical theorists affirm that it is mistaken to believe that racism is a marginal practice exclusive of ignorant people. Ethnical discrimination is an extended habit among outmost educated people and members of the high class society (Hill, 2008).

The third characteristic of the CRT refers to the sociopolitical outcomes of ethnical discrimination and makes special emphasis on wealth distribution. For Hill (2008, p. 8) the manipulation of resources in favor of the dominant class is a clear expression of institutionalized racism. Institutionalized racism has considerably improved the living standards of the white elite, but has had devastating consequences for nonwhite ethnical groups.

Summarizing the CRT, we can ascertain that racism can be defined as sociopolitical ethnical discrimination embedded in American institutions being this a major source of disproportionate capital distribution. This is the sort of racism that remains among what Goldberg (1998) calls new

segregationists and which is fundamentally present in Mock Spanish. The CRT is the theoretical support to affirm that Mock Spanish is a type of covert racist discourse, cf. Hill (2008).

## 2.1. The perception of Mock Spanish by the Latin community

Jane Hill's work has motivated some debate among members of the Latin community towards the use of Mock Spanish. "Most Spanish speakers with whom I have discussed these issues concur, and in fact report that they are acutely aware of [Mock] Spanish and find it irritating and offensive" (Hill 1995a, p. 206).

By making reference to the Spanish expression *ley del embudo* (lit. 'law of the funnel', or 'one-sided argument'), Zentella (2003) criticizes the fact that, while white Americans have total freedom of misemploying Spanish material, Spanish speakers are strongly judged if their English deviates from the monolingual standard. The Latin community is "visibly constrained by rigid norms of linguistic purity, but white linguistic disorder goes unchallenged" (p. 52), and the members of the Latin community are forced "to function within the limited linguistic space allotted to [them] – no accent, no switching [...]" (p. 53). This results in Spanish speakers' support of linguistic purity with the consequence of consciously distancing themselves from their ethnic group, cf. Zentella (2003, p. 54).

As a consequence, the amazing language abilities in immigrant communities are not recognized. Zentella researches Puerto Rican children in New York City's "Barrio" (East Harlem), who acquire several dialects, especially, but not exclusively, New York Puerto Rican English, African American Vernacular English and Standard English. For instance,

a bilingual eight-year-old went into the local *bodega* with two other Puerto Rican children, one English-dominant peer and a toddler who was a Spanish monolingual. The bilingual told her friend that she was going to buy chips in English, paid the *bodeguero* in Spanish, asked her friend in English why the toddler was following

them, warned the little one in Spanish to go home, and finally told her friend to leave with her in English – all in rapid-fire succession. (Zentella, 2003, p. 56)

Despite this level of creativity, Zentella (1990, pp. 86-90) points to the fact that the hybrid cultures created by the migration phenomenon very often suffer two-way discrimination. Erfurt (2003) shows how born and raised monolingual speakers with a high command of a second or third foreign language are seen as the ideal, even in the science of language, while the day-to-day use of two or more language systems is negatively connotated. In the American context, the use of languages other than Standard American English can have undesired consequences. At the workplace, some bilinguals are forbidden to speak Spanish to co-workers, but must do it to costumers. Zentella (2003) calls this situation: “hired for speaking Spanish, fired for speaking Spanish” (p. 63).

### 3. THE RELEVANCE OF MOCK SPANISH AT A SOCIAL LEVEL: A TOOL FOR NEW SEGREGATIONISTS

According to Hill (2008, pp. 6-12), there is a hidden motivation of Mock Spanish, which is to maintain the Spanish speaking minority socially excluded through white support of adverse employment, residence and educational conditions. This is a case of ethnically driven social exclusion motivated by the belief in white supremacy. Related to this, Goldberg (1998) distinguishes two types of segregation in the American society: The *old* and the *new* segregation.

The old kind of segregation refers to the open support of a favorable social exclusion practiced by whites. The old segregation type originated the still existing unequal wealth distribution that was already well established in the 60's and acted as the main moving force of the Civil Rights Movements (Goldberg, 1998, p.16). Goldberg defends the idea that the Civil Rights Movement did not stop segregation, but forced a modification of segregating techniques. As a result of the modification in performing prejudice against ethnic groups, a new type of segregation emerged.

Goldberg (1998) states that the modus operandi of new segregationists is conservative and practiced covertly. The conservatism of new segregationists applies by ignoring the fact that the disfavored situation of non-white groups is the result of historical events caused by extensive active segregation. New segregationists try to conserve the prevalent inequalities that exist among ethnic groups, as if they were the normal result of racial characteristics. Goldberg claims that new segregation is an effective strategy to maintain white supremacy, by promoting the idea that “European and Euro-American morality and culture are superior to all others” (Goldberg, 1998, p. 22). With a feeling of racial superiority, white supremacists dictate the standards.

For white supremacists the outcomes of the anti-racist atmosphere of the Civil Rights Movements, like affirmative action, voting rights, and ethnic representation are interpreted as reversed racism, i.e. racism against whites. Contrasting this view, egalitarian groups see these accomplishments as positive discrimination pursuing a minimization of interethnic inequalities and trying to avoid still persistent institutional racism. Under the Lockean libertarianist heading 'one is and gets what one can pay', the white elite defends its special rights, cf. Goldberg (1998, p. 24).

### **3.1 Mock Spanish as middling rhetoric in the public space**

Mock Spanish finds its way to serious public talk by means of what Cmiel (1991) called the *middling style*.

The idea that a speaker in a democracy will eschew the high language of gentility appropriate to monarchies and strike a more popular tone, that admits the possibility of plain speaking including slang and colloquialisms. The preference for the middling style blurs the boundary between serious public discussion and light private talk, such that elements of the latter, in this case [Mock] Spanish slang, may leak into public usage. (Hill 1995a, p. 198)

According to Cmiel (1991, pp. 55-93) the arrival of democracy, massive education and a new formed middle class in the United States was accompanied with a new rhetoric. The drastic differences between “refined” and “vulgar” behavior gained linguistic subtlety. A new kind of popular oratory was introduced into public discourse as “[f]amiliarity was also expressed by very subtle forms of linguistic informality” (Cmiel 1991, p. 62). The middling style can be found in public spaces, such as daily conversations, political discourse, preaching and popular press (Cmiel, 1991, p. 60).

Hill (1995a, p. 203) describes the middling rhetoric as informal language, full of regional register, colloquial language and slang, where 'plain speaking', jargon, euphemisms and insults are often present. The introduction of jokes into serious public discourse is also a characteristic of the middling style. “Among the dominant classes of American English speakers, it is appropriate to inject a light note even into the most serious expression of public opinion. Jokes are a highly institutionalized component of public speaking, and even written opinion, as by newspaper columnists, may be punctuated by light elements including slang, with only a few expressions still widely considered off-limits in the mass media” (Hill 1995a, p. 203).

The inclusion of light talk and joking is what permits Mock Spanish to be inserted into the middling style, and this type of rhetoric is welcome in the powerful domain of public discourse. Even though public serious discourse is presumably objective and as such prohibits the use of racist discourse publicly, the middling style allows the negative stereotypes hidden in Mock Spanish to be introduced in such discourse. Taking into consideration that the public domain is a type of highly valuable immaterial resources with direct influence on the material wealth distribution, we are confronting a serious problem.

According to Habermas (1974), the public sphere is a mighty social institution that acts as the constructor of the public opinion, which has heavy influence in the decisions that are relevant to

the fate of society. The contemporary public sphere includes newspapers, magazines, radio and television and is “a sphere which mediates between society and state, in which the public organizes itself as the bearer or public opinion” (Habermas, 1974, p. 50).

Emancipating movements of ethnic groups have provoked dramatic changes in the public sphere. After civil resistance, working class-coordinated movements (e.g. the British Chartism, the French February Revolution, and the Civil Rights Movements) and the:

diffusion of press and propaganda, the public body expanded beyond the bounds of the bourgeoisie. The public body lost not only its social exclusivity: it lost in addition the coherence created by bourgeois social institutions and a relatively high standard of education. Conflicts hitherto restricted to the private sphere now intrude into the public sphere. (Habermas, 1974, p. 54)

Notwithstanding these historical changes, white supremacists have continued fighting for their exclusive influence on the public sphere. They have tried to prevent other ethnic groups from having a voice in the public sphere. In this context, Mock Spanish has been very helpful since it has become a tool to prevent non-white groups from entering the territory of the public sphere. Mock Spanish serves as a tool to open a path to promote white racism covertly so that it fits in serious public discussion. This helps to expand social segregation of non-white groups, cf. Hill (2008).

New segregationists are aware of the influence of the public sphere in documents regulating the structure of the country. One such document is the constitution. The constitution is an institutionalized written document that regulates and orders the fundamental rights of society. Among such regulations, we find human rights and wealth distribution. Thereby, changes in the constitution reflect the power of the public sphere.

According to Goldberg's new segregationist model, the most influential group in the public sphere is the white elite. In other words, white supremacists form the primary body of the public sphere, and as such they become the controllers of public opinion, and thus the constitution.

[T]he constitutions further insured the existence of a realm of private individuals assembled into a public body who as citizens transmit the needs of bourgeois society to the state, in order, ideally, to transform political into "rational" authority within the medium of this public sphere. (Habermas, 1974, p. 53)

The white elite has developed some strategies to keep the control of the public sphere. One of those is the use of Mock Spanish. The spreading of the negative image of nonwhite ethnic groups present in Mock Spanish helps this group to maintain a privileged position. For Hill (1995a, p. 198), Mock Spanish is widely used in "serious public discussion" and in "light private talk" (Hill 1995a, p. 198).

Mock Spanish oscillates between light private talk and serious public discussion, which makes it a very dangerous weapon. By reaching the public sphere, the ethnical discrimination inserted in Mock Spanish is able to reach public opinion and to spread. The public sphere is "a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed. Access is guaranteed to all citizens" (Habermas, 1974, p. 49). Racist discourse is supposed to be forbidden in serious public discussion, but the covert nature of Mock Spanish enables it to reach the public sphere, cf. Hill (1995a, p. 198).

#### 4. THE CLASSROOM AS A PUBLIC SPACE

The public sphere is where education takes place, and in doing so it is the most powerful constructing area of the public opinion. Therefore, the classroom forms a part of it. Consequently, we are forced to see the language learning classroom as a public space.

The language learning classroom is a specific public space where content is transmitted through new vocabulary and language structures. By these means, a new culture full of ideologies is simultaneously learned. If English is the language being learned, we are confronted with a public sphere nearest to the Mock Spanish practice. This enables the language classroom with special relevance for the study of Mock Spanish.

Since Mock Spanish is omnipresent in the internationally dominant American mainstream media, in an English language teaching and learning context individuals are heavily exposed to this type of discourse. If we consider that charged private television with cable and the internet are being popularized, this matter gets emphasized. For this reason, it is essential that teachers and students be aware of the negative stereotypes hidden in Mock Spanish. However, since negative views about the culture of the target language inhibit learning, as the affective filter proposes, it is necessary to be very careful. This hypothesis will be briefly reviewed.

#### **4.1. The affective filter**

The awareness of Mock Spanish and its covert racist discourse can have important implications in English language learning. It is widely accepted that attitudinal factors related to the target language directly affect the effectiveness of the learning process. For example, Krashen (2009) states that “a variety of affective variables relate to the success in second language acquisition” (p. 31).

The Affective Filter hypothesis captures the relationship between affective variables and the process of second language acquisition by positing that acquirers vary with respect to the strength or level of their Affective Filters. Those whose attitudes are not optimal for second language acquisition will not only tend to seek less input, but they will also have a high or strong Affective Filter – even if they understand the message, the input will not reach the part of the brain responsible for language acquisition, or the language acquisition device. Those with attitudes more

conducive to second language acquisition will not only seek and obtain more input, they will also have a lower or weaker filter. (Krashen, 2009, p. 31)

There are three aspects that are directly connected to the shape of the affective filter: motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety.

Although the motivational aspect has been a polemical issue, it is still widely recognized that “[p]erformers with high motivation generally do better in second language acquisition” (Krashen, 2009, p. 31). In regard to self-confidence, we can state that a positive attitude towards the learner herself will positively affect the learning process. “Performers with self-confidence and a good self-image tend to do better in second language acquisition” (Krashen, 2009, p. 31).

The next point affecting the learning process is related to the psychological state of the learner, which is the anxiety level. “Low anxiety appears to be conducive to second language acquisition, whether measured as personal or classroom anxiety” (Krashen, 2009, p. 31).

The affective filter concludes that affectivity and effectiveness are strongly related to the level of success in the language learning process. “The effective language teacher is someone who can provide input and help make it comprehensible in a low anxiety situation” (Krashen, 2009, p. 31).

The negative implications in Mock Spanish would probably cause a high filter, having the consequence of hindering learning. “The Affective Filter hypothesis implies that our pedagogical goals should not only include supplying comprehensible input, but also creating a situation that encourages a low filter” (Krashen, 2009, p. 31).

## 5. LANGUAGE LEARNING AS LANGUAGE SOCIALIZATION

Now we are going to move on to language socialization to discover the importance of being aware of the negative functions hidden in Mock Spanish.

Language has a Janus face: It is a symbolic system to convey meaning, and it has a tool-like property used for the socialization process. According to Ochs (1990), “[a] basic tenet of language socialization is that language must be studied not only as a symbolic system that encodes local social and cultural structures, but also as a *tool* for establishing (i.e., maintaining creating) social and psychological realities” (p. 287f, emphasis in original). Languages have “context-bearing features” that work as indexes of situational or social relations (Silverstein, 1976). Ochs (1990, p. 288) points to the importance of such indexes because children (and students) learn sociocultural knowledge when they understand them.

In defining discourse as “a set of norms, preferences, and expectations relating language to context, which speaker-hearers draw on and modify in producing and making sense out of language in context” (Ochs, 1990, p. 289, emphasis in the original), Ochs points to the generative power of discourse with its ability of spreading or changing sociocultural knowledge.

Ochs (1990, p. 303) defends the idea that language socialization has a bidirectional impact because teachers/students, or novice/members influence each other, although asymmetry exists. Novices/students questions may change world views and social activity may impact psychological parameters

When Ochs maintains that social change can be influenced from below, she refers mainly to novices, children and students towards adults or teachers. Nevertheless, we can include in this relation the role of native and non-native English speakers of Latin ascendance towards the white American users of Mock Spanish. The informed bilinguals, native Spanish speakers or immigrants

have the capacity of changing views among white Americans. Here is where the role of the English language teacher gains special importance. This point favors the introduction of the concept of Mock Spanish into the English language learning classroom

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

Hill (1995a, 1995b, 2008) has convincingly demonstrated that the underlying negative ideology found among new segregationists has found a clever path to reach the surface unnoticed. Mock Spanish enables the white elite to practice social exclusion on non-white groups by means of a couple of linguistic strategies with sociocultural characteristics.

Mock Spanish is a very dangerous weapon because it oscillates between private and public discourse, being able to extend its racist ideology to the public opinion. The reactions of the Spanish speaking minority towards Mock Spanish supports the existence of a negative ideology hidden behind Mock Spanish.

The English language classroom in Mexico, as a public sphere, is a place where awareness can be raised so that negative views can be changed. On the one hand, the affective filter hypothesis tells us that a high filter will inhibit learning, which is implied if students are aware of their negative values in the institutionalized American society. On the other hand, language as socialization tells us that the novice and the student have the power to influence adults and teachers ideology. Since non-native English speakers of Hispanic origins have this capacity, it is necessary that they are aware of the negative implications in Mock Spanish so that they can start changing this paradigm.

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<sup>1</sup> Mock Spanish was originally introduced in the literature with the technical faux pas *Junk Spanish* (Hill, 1995a)

<sup>2</sup> The strategy of euphemism was introduced in Hill (1995a), previous work includes only the following three strategies: 1) Semantic pejoration 2) affixation and 3) hyperanglicization.

<sup>3</sup> *Diccionario de la Real Academia Española* (<http://lema.rae.es/drae/>)

<sup>4</sup> Actually, what Hill (1995b) calls the strategy of affixation does not portrait accurately the brighter dimension of grammatical violations found in the examples of Mock Spanish. Let us take the example of Mock Spanish *no problema*. The Spanish noun for *problem* has masculine gender, but ends in *-a*: *problema*. The Mock Spanish noun *problemo* uses the technique of wrong affixation because the masculine gender suffix *-o* is being generalized to a lexicalized *-a* ending. But *no problema* has an additional grammatical inadequate modification. Since Spanish does not have a shortening of the type *no problem* (cf. *no idea*, *no matter what*, etc.), the English calque of this phrase into the Mock Spanish *no problema* is a syntactic rule violation. The standard Spanish correspondence would be *no hay problema/no tenga cuidado/no se preocupe* depending on the context. Thus *no problema* cannot be reduced to a strategy of affixation because it also violates Spanish morphological and syntactic rules. The grammatical techniques used in the so called strategy of affixation should be nearly inspected in order to give this strategy a more appropriate term.