

* The following is an excerpt from an interview conducted in July 2012, as part of the research component of a Masters of Science in Applied Linguistics from the University of Edinburgh, Scotland.

* In this transcription the participant's name is kept anonymous and is provided with a pseudonym.

* The subject was asked of her language background, opinions about the United States and Puerto Rico, as well as her general interests.

Sample Interview Data

K: Muy bien. Se acabo la parte de lectura. Treh minuto0 [laughs] Mala mia que se [laughs]

[Note: the /r/ in /lectura/ is weakened].

A: “No lo que pasa eh que yo al... no se... yo cuando... ahta cuando hablo en clase *I get really, really red and sweaty...*

[No, what happens is that whenever I... I don't know... whenever I... even when I talk in class *I get really, really red and sweaty*]

K: [laughs]

A: “O sea, voy pa' quinto año... *I really need to stop doing that...* [laughs]

[I mean I'm soon going to be a fifth-year student- *I really need to stop doing that*]

K: [laughs] Pue0, ahora eh la entre0vihta eh ma0 o menos bente minuto0... a veshe' e0' meno0 a vese0 eh ma0 dependiendo de *how talkative you are* [laughs] pero ...

[Well, now the interview will be more or less twenty minutes ... sometimes it's less, sometimes it's more, depending on *how talkative you are.*]

K: Okay, la primera parte son sei0 pregunta0 en ingle0 y la segunda parte son sei0 pregunta0 en ehpañol y la0 pregunta0 son sobre la cultura Americana, la puertorriqueña y el lenguaje ingle0 y el lenguaje [inaudible] *español*.

[Note: another r-reduction to an /l/].

A: Okay.

K: Son bien llevadera0. Okay. Empezamo0

A: [Coughs]

K: So: um what do you think about the American culture, how do you feel about it?

A: Um, well considering dat I want to stay in Porto Rico -- I'm not much of a fan. [Laughs] Umm the times I have gone there, even though the period of time has been really, really short [Pause] um I think people are kinda cold there. And so I don't like it that much because of that.

K: That's what a lot of people say.

A: [Laughs].

K: A lot of people that are interviewed – all of them say that they're cold and uh Porto Ricans are friendlier and are--

A: And they like to party a bit more [laughs]

K: [laughs]

A: *Specially at Christmas time.

K: Yeah, um, so do you think that the Porto Rican culture could learn some things about the American culture?

A: Well, they – even though they're kinda cold, they're really polite and sometimes we need to be just a little *mare-- *attentif to the people around us 'cause [sighs] a lot of times we b^hump into people step on their feet an— we just go right past them but there they take it – take the other people into consideration just a bit more.

[Note: there seems to be a consonantal reduction of /b/ into [p], or some kind of aspirated b.]

K: And some people even go as much to say that they're more punctual—

A: Oh yes [laughs] definitely [laughs] I am *defliny [definitely] one of those people that are very, very *Boricua*. I am always late [laughs]

K: Some people say that, they seem to be more responsible or something. What do you think about that? Do you think that's a stereotype, do you agree—

A: Uh -- Yes.

I think that's a stereotype because I'm *Puerorican and I'm very responsible, even though I'm late most of the time. Um, when I have to do something I do it and sometimes I do even more—I think it all depends on the person.

[Note: the /th/ here is produced as /t/; the /u/ in /do/ is often diphthongized in standard American English it's elongated. Here, it is short and tense].

K: Yeah. Yeah- I agree.

K: So, when you think of yourself, do you see yourself as an American or as a Puerto Rican?

A: Puerto Rican. Wait - I—it's - No-- It's not even on the um same land. I'm *definitely [definitely] Puerto Rican. Not American (.2) at all.

K: Why? I mean, besides that?

A: Because - the way we're raised—it's just different. You can't say—someone from New--New York, even though they're Puerto Rican, I, un-unless they were raised by Puerto Ricans, I mean, they can't really say they're Puerto Ricans in terms of culture because if they were raised by people that have Puerto Rican blood but have lived all their lives in another place, then there's not much of the culture there.

K: Yeah. I agree. It's a different culture. Maybe it has some things from the Puerto Rican culture, but it's way different.

A: Yes. We're louder. Way: louder than they are. [laughs].

K: Yeah. I agree. So, when you speak **English** are you aware that you're speaking English and you try to be really good at it? Or does it come naturally?

A: Um.. yes and no. Sometimes I am. But most of the *times I'm not even aware that I'm speaking English. Most of the time I'm just *talk'n to my friends normally... and sometimes my English is really good, and sometimes it's horrible. [Laughs]. It all depends on the day, I guess. Umm, leaving aside the speaking part- speaking part - I'm sorry - most of the time when I'm watchin' TV and listenin' to music, I'm not even aware that it's another language. I'm so used to it by now that it's just, they're speaking I understand everything - okay.

K: In that case, um, when you think of language—is there at least maybe a part of you that identifies with the English language, or do you think you identify more with the Spanish language?

A: That's a tough question. [Laughs]. Umm, for me *is just another language. It's just another way of communicating with people. It - it doesn't affect who I am or how I am, or what I like. Sure I have more alternatives in terms of watching movies because I don't have to look for a dubbed version, but I'm still going to watch everything I want to watch.

K: Yeah. So what do you think about people - like Puerto Ricans - that speak really fluent English?

A: I want to speak like that. I mean, it's an advantage. *Specially in interviews, for internships and CO-OPs, etcetera, it's an advantage and I wish that my education could've been a little better in terms of actually speaking English. Because sometimes I do get a little—well, especially when I'm nervous talking

English it gets kinda hard sometimes, but I don't think it – it really affects how they are.

K: That's good. 'Cause a lot of people, like I've met people that think that it's weird. Like, maybe you're in the mall and you see this group of people in Puerto Rico all speaking English in one corner, maybe next to Hot Topic.

A: Yeah. There's a lot of—I think there's a little bit of a stereotype. I have met people like that too, that think “oh they think they're Americans because they're speaking English” or think “oh, they're rockers – they're from the devil” just because they're speaking English. But I don't think like that. At all.

K: That's good. So, do you, would you say you're one of them, or would you say that you just don't judge people who speak fluently?

A: Umm, sometimes I speak a lot of English with my friends -- most of the time, actually. But with other friends I speak Spanish. [Laughs]. I really don't think about it at all.

K: So you think you're like half-and-half.

A: I'm both.

Yes. Fifty-fifty. [Laughs]

K: Um. Do you think speaking English as a second language will help you in the future?

A: Yes. Definitely.

K: How?

A: Because I'm studying in computer engineering and chances are I will *pobably get a job out there. Even though I want to get a job here. But, *on interviews*, the ones that I have gone to -- they start speaking um English so that I can talk English back and see how good my English is. Um, if I didn't speak any English I would be in a lot of trouble. [Laughs]

K: And, also, um, so if you're studying computer engineering- you guys programme a lot so a lot of the terminology--

A: Is in English.

K: Yeah. In C plus plus or Java or [something].

[END]

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Note: this interview was conducted as part of a larger study of university students at the University of Puerto Rico – Mayaguez. The present data was submitted as part of the dissertation component of a Masters of Science in Applied Linguistics at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland. For more information on this study and its results, feel free to email me at moralesk@tcd.ie. If you wish to include any piece of this interview in a publication or paper, please remember to credit the author when necessary.