42 Lexical Retrieval and Acculturation in Generation Z Mexicans

Yvette D Jesus[1,2], Krissy E Smith[3,2], Krithika Sivaramakrishnan[1,2], Reymundo Cervantes[3,2], Tara L Victor[3], Brittany Heuchert[1,2], Dorthy Schmidt[1,2], Diana Palacios[4,2], Chelsea McElwee[5], David J Hardy[6], Enrique Lopez[2], Alberto L Fernandez[7], Daniel W Lopez Hernandez[2,8]
[1]California State University, Fresno, Fresno, CA, USA. [2]The Lundquist Institute, Torrance, CA, USA. [3]California State University, Dominguez Hills, Carson, CA, USA. [4]Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico, Mexico City, Mexico City, Mexico. [5]University of California, Riverside, Riverside, CA, USA. [6]Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, CA, USA. [7]Catholic University of Córdoba, Sede Centro, Cordoba, Argentina. [8]University of California San Diego Health, San Diego, CA, USA

Objective: The Cordoba Naming Test (CNT) is a 30-item lexical retrieval task that was developed to be administered in multiple languages. Research shows that self-identifying Mexicans residing in Mexico outperform self-identifying Mexicans that reside in the United States on the CNT. Studies indicate that the process of acculturation can influence cognitive performance. Previous studies demonstrated that Generation Z individuals (i.e., people born between 1997 and 2012) have underperformed on the CNT compared to Generation Y individuals (i.e., people born between 1981 and 1996). To our knowledge, no study has examined the influence of acculturation on Generation Z Mexicans' CNT performance. We expected Mexicans residing in Mexico (MRM) to outperform Mexicans residing in the United States on the CNT and to report higher acculturation traits. We also predicted that acculturation would correlate with CNT performance.
Participants and Methods: The present study sample consisted of 285 Generation Z psychologically and neurologically healthy Mexicans with a mean age of 20.32 (SD = 1.60). Participants were divided into three groups: MRM, Mexicans residing in the United States, and Mexican-Americans residing in the United States (MARUS). All participants completed the CNT and acculturation measure in Spanish. Acculturation traits were measured by the Abbreviated Multidimensional Acculturation Scale (AMAS). ANCOVAs were used to evaluate differences in the CNT and AMAS (i.e., Spanish language, Latino competency, Latino identity). Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to evaluate the relationship between acculturation on CNT performance.
Results: MRM outperformed the Mexicans residing in the United States and MARUS on the CNT, $p = .000$, $\eta p^2 = .49$. The MRM group reported better Spanish language abilities compared to Mexicans residing in the United States and the MARUS groups, $p = .000$, $\eta p^2 = .10$. Additionally, MRM reported better Latino competency than the MARUS group, $p = .000$, $\eta p^2 = .08$. Pearson's correlation coefficient revealed that the MARUS's Spanish language abilities impacted CNT performance, $p = .000$, $r = .48$. In addition, we found that Latino competency correlated with CNT performance, p's $< .05$, r's $= .20-.47$, in both the MRM and Mexicans residing in the United States groups. Latino identity did not significantly correlate with CNT performance in any group.
Conclusions: Results confirmed that MRM individuals perform better on the CNT than Mexicans residing in the United States and MARUS. Additionally, we found that several acculturation traits correlated with Mexican groups' CNT performance. Our research indicates that while all Generation Z individuals of Mexican heritage feel strongly connected to their Latino identity regardless of where they live, MARUS feel less competent in Spanish and Latinx culture than MRM and Mexicans residing in the United States. Future work should further explore these differences for better insight into how acculturative factors influence lexical retrieval performance. Future work with bigger sample sizes can additionally examine CNT performance and acculturation in Generation Z first-generation and non-first-generation Mexicans (e.g., second-generation, third-generation) residing in the United States.