

Contrastive analysis of code-switching from English into Spanish in *West Side Story*

Análisis contrastivo del cambio de código del inglés al español en *West Side Story*

Natàlia Server Benetó

The Ohio State University

serverbeneto.1@osu.edu

Abstract: *This investigation takes a discursive perspective in a contrastive analysis of Spanish in the original West Side Story film (Jerome Robbins and Robert Wise, 1961) and its recent remake (Steven Spielberg, 2021). The focus of analysis is the use(s) of Spanish by the Puerto Rican characters in both films, in the presence and absence of non-Spanish speakers. Several contextual situations are taken into account, such as in-group conversations and musical dialogues. This contributes to the research on film discourse by analyzing the use of Spanish in two critically acclaimed movies. The contrastive analyses show that Spanish is more spoken in the 2021 movie, combining emblematic code-switching, mostly present in the 1961 West Side Story, with conversational and musically performative Spanish, which did not appear in the original film.*

Keywords: cinematic discourse; prefabricated orality; Spanish in film; code switching; fictional discourse analysis

Resumen: *Esta investigación analiza discursiva y contrastivamente el español en la película original West Side Story (Jerome Robbins y Robert Wise, 1961) y su reciente remasterización (Steven Spielberg, 2021). El análisis se centra en los usos del español por parte de los personajes puertorriqueños en ambas películas en presencia y ausencia de no-hispanohablantes. Se tienen en cuenta varias situaciones contextuales, como las conversaciones en grupo y los diálogos musicales. Se contribuye así a la investigación sobre el discurso cinematográfico al analizar el uso del español en dos películas aclamadas por la crítica. Los análisis contrastivos muestran que el español se usa más en la película del 2021, combinando el cambio de código emblemático, presente sobre todo en West Side Story (1961), con el español conversacional y musicalmente performativo, que no aparecía en la película original.*

Palabras clave: discurso cinematográfico; oralidad prefabricada; español en el cine; cambio de código; análisis del discurso ficticio

1. Introduction

There has been a growing interest in studying the so-called *cinematic discourse*, *film discourse* or *language in film* defined as the “conversations held by fictional characters and happens to be captured under such epithets such as «scripted», «constructed» or «prefabricated» dialogue” (Dynel, 2011, p. 43). This is an area of research in and of itself, in which the language(s) used by

characters, their styles, dialects, and features can be analyzed discursively. With this in mind, this investigation applies a cinematic discourse perspective to the movie *West Side Story* (Jerome Robbins and Robert Wise, 1961) and its recent remake (Steven Spielberg, 2021) to carry out a contrastive, qualitative analysis of their uses of Spanish. Despite the interest in studying and problematizing the original picture of *West Side Story*, no research has focused solemnly on its treatment of the linguistic repertoires of its characters. As for the new version, there are no current, published investigations that have analyzed it in any form. The main goal of this investigation is to analyze the presence of Spanish in both the 1961 and the 2021 versions of *West Side Story* from a contrastive perspective by paying attention to the particular contexts and aims of its employment through code-switching theorization.

2. Language in film

A film is a multimodal text “which combine[s] and integrate[s] the meaning-making resources of more than one semiotic modality [...] in order to produce a text-specific meaning” (Thibault, 2000, p. 311). The words spoken by the characters and the way they navigate their repertoires may be just one of the many features used to provide a cohesive nature to the product. In this line, the goal here is to contrastively analyze how Spanish is used, when, where and with whom in order to provide an understanding of this site of sociolinguistic meaning and discursive creation for that specific linguistic community in film.

Within linguistics the terms *cinematic discourse* or *film discourse* when focusing on the linguistic uses of the characters, which “pinpoint a contextualized approach to film as a site of sociolinguistic representation” (Androutsopoulos, 2012, p. 140). These investigations are situated outside the scope of formal studies on film, as they only consider *linguistic* language for analysis. The production and crafting of a cinematic piece is a complex, multimodal, layered work, in which linguistic repertoires, if present at all, are just another piece of the machinery.

Unless improvised, the words spoken in films have been written by somebody and then learned by the cast. The functional variety of language in scripts is what Gregory and Carroll (1978) classified as “written to be spoken as if not written” (p. 42): in the script, writers craft those lines to *fake* orality, with the aim of sounding natural when performed on the screen. Therefore, while those linguistic manifestations may be *naturalized*, they are not *natural* nor *spontaneous*. This also calls for a distinction between *conversational mode* and *orality*. As Valdeón points out, “[orality] can be defined as an umbrella term to refer to any manifestations of language in its spoken form” (2011, p. 222). The former term refers to any kind of speech that is designed as a conversation, oral or written, “attempts to imitate the conversational variety of language” (Valdeón, *ibid.*). Consequently, dialogues in films project the illusion of orality

inserted in a conversational mode, all within a framework of naturalizing the interactions.

Sociolinguistically, attention has been paid to how identity is articulated in media, regarding race (Nama 2010; Barrueto 2014; McCarroll 2018; Hachenberger 2019) or sexuality (Peele 2007; Hennessee 2015; Monaghan 2016). Such type of research has also been applied to the original 1961 *West Side Story* in the culture of the Puerto Rican characters (Sandoval Sánchez 1999), the layered articulation of identity (Woller 2014) via queerness (Negrón Muntaner 2000), the ties between the visibility of color-coding and race representation (Davine 2016), or the more recent comparison of the original film to other musicals featuring Latino groups, such as *In The Heights* (Higueras Rodríguez 2021). In the process of articulating otherness, considering the multimodality of a film piece, many scholars have argued that *West Side Story* (1961) produced ethnic differences on a three-fold basis: the Jets' hairs were bleached to an artificial blonde to encode their whiteness, and the Sharks were racialized through Bernardo's brownface and "the always shifting, asinine accent employed by most Puerto Rican characters" (Negrón Muntaner, 2000, p. 91). These signifiers are mobilized in the original film to code the two social groups as clearly differentiated, and opposed, and in doing so language becomes a device to signify Puerto Rican-ness.

3. Code-switching

Code-switching is usually defined as the use of at least two languages (or varieties). Traditionally, code-switching has been studied from two perspectives: grammatical and social. The first one is concerned with the syntax of code-switching and "establishing [its] grammatical constraints and how its grammar should be characterized" (Woolard, 2006, p. 74). The second one seeks to explore how switches in language can index social meaning through choices the speaker makes in interaction. This paper will focus on the latter type.

Code-switching has been explained as "a skilled performance" (Myers Scotton, 1993, p. 74) from a social point of view is Blom and Gumperz's (1972) distinction between situational and metaphorical code-switching, later reconceptualized by Gumperz (1982) as conversational code-switching. Situational code-switching entails "changes in the participants' definition of each other's rights and obligations" (Blom and Gumperz, 1972, p. 424) triggered by a change in the situation (for instance, the degree of formality associated with the language). Metaphorical code-switching is not dependent on the speech event, but on the social relations that emerge from the languages involved, as changes occur to "social roles, without tangible changes in the outward context" (Bailey, 1999, p. 242).

Gumperz (1982) also suggested that, in stratified societies, bilinguals perceive their primary language as familiar and authentic (in-group *we code*), whereas the common language is less familiar and more foreign (out-group *they*

code). This is a metaphorical interpretation of code-switching, as it calls upon prior assumptions about the languages in interaction stemming from previous social categories. Some conversation analysts have criticized Gumperz's taxonomy on the grounds that it is too macrosocial (Auer 1984). Instead, they have defended a locally situated production of meaning: not every switch in language signals social meaning and only those that refer to "structurally given social identities" (Woolard, 2006, p. 78) should be considered for analysis. Others have called attention to the Western notion of the *we/they* approach, as it does not seem to apply to every account of bilingual communities or, at least, it does not necessarily represent all bilingual societies (Stroud, 1992; Duranti 1993).

More recently, code-switching has been studied through the lenses of polylinguaging (Normann Jørgensen and Spindler Møller, 2014) "the use of linguistic features associated with different 'languages' in the same production" (p. 73). From this perspective, speakers do not speak one language but employ components of what has been conceptualized through time as part of a specific set. The parts that make up what is understood as "languages" are features that index those languages. The term was formally introduced as translanguaging by Baker (2012) and defined later on as "the deployment of a speaker's full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named (and usually national and state) languages" (Otheguy, García and Reid, 2015, p. 283). This perspective challenges traditional conceptions of languages, as polylinguaging does, but it insists on its political aspects applied to pedagogy as it "seeks to debunk traditional monolingual ideologies about languages and language teaching and learning processes" (Vallejo and Dooly, 2020, p. 7). Besides, translanguaging puts an emphasis on its application, whereas the polylinguaging framework has been normally applied to study how speakers use and exploit these indexical relations and blurry boundaries.

3. *West Side Story: 1961 and 2021*

West Side Story is a re-imagination of Shakespeare's tragedy *Romeo and Juliet*, in which two star-crossed lovers are unable to be together due to the rivalry between their families. Their prohibited love ends in tragedy, with the final death of both Juliet and Romeo. Arthur Laurents (1917-2011) adapted this literary classic to metropolitan New York in a Broadway musical first performed in 1957, titled *West Side Story*. The rivalry of the families of Tony and María relates to notions of migrations and race given their origins. In the play, there is a particular interest in showing the antagonism of the *Jets* (Polish) and the *Sharks* (Puerto Rican), two gangs that fight over the control of their neighborhood.

Four years after the Broadway release of *West Side Story*, Jerome Robbins and Robert Wise adapted the musical for the big screen. Besides some lyrical

modifications (Sandoval Sánchez, 1999), not much changed between the Broadway 1957 *West Side Story* and its 1961 Hollywood adaptation. Despite this, the multimodality of cinema facilitated the exploitation of several *race coding* mechanisms in the portrayal of the characters, as mentioned. Even though it could be argued that racial tokenization in *West Side Story* goes both ways, the racialization of the *Sharks* goes beyond changing their physical appearances and it also affects their linguistic repertoires. In the 1961 motion picture *West Side Story*, one of the most evident techniques imposed on the Puerto Rican people is that they are made to *sound* like Spanish speakers, despite the inconsistency in their accents. Contrary to the first cinematic adaptation, the 2021 version of *West Side Story* has received the most praise in the attention paid to providing a more adequate portrayal of Puerto Rican people.

While the differences between both productions do not affect the overall development of the stories, the script is partially different mostly due to the inclusion of new dialogues and the prolonged use of Spanish, which director Steven Spielberg made the choice not to subtitle or close because “it would have signaled that [Spanish speakers] weren't the intended audience” (John Jurgensen, 2021, p. 54). The most politically compromised re-imaginings in this *West Side Story* are related to linking what is happening with these particular characters to broader social realities which were not as explicitly stated as in the 1961 version.

4. Methodology

The corpus for this study is both film versions of the musical *West Side Story* from a discursive approach to their contextualized uses of Spanish. The 1961 original has a duration of 150 minutes and the most recent version is 156 minutes. Both movies have been visualized via online streaming platforms (Filmin and Netflix, respectively) and the sections with spoken Spanish were manually annotated and later classified according to the situational restraints of the code-switching. A total of 28 scenes featuring Spanish were considered, 12 (43%) from the 1961 film and 16 (57%) from the 2021 version, noting a quantitative difference between both productions. After annotation, these were classified into two groups: (a) dialogues within musical performances, and (b) fully spoken scenes. For the first group, I compared code-switching between the *Sharks* only, and in the presence of the *Jets*. Spoken scenes have been divided into emblematic code-switching and conversational code-switching.

Typology	1961	2021
<i>Musical dialogue with Jets</i>	2	2
<i>Musical dialogue without Jets</i>	3	4
<i>Emblematic code-switching</i>	7	2
<i>Conversational code-switching</i>		8
Total	12	16

Fig 1: Quantification of the uses of Spanish in both films

5. Analysis

5.1. Sharks and Jets performing

Spanish is used during fights between both groups in the opening scene and the rumble, and the *Dance at the gym* musical sequence. Here, the Puerto Ricans address each other using Spanish. Some expressions include short, exhortative tokens such as *vamos*, *vámonos* (*muchachos*), *baila*, *corre*, *ole*, or *eso*, used to support the action (dancing, fighting) or to have an effect on the addressee (give them orders). Assuming that the Anglo-Americans do not speak Spanish, it could be argued that this language is used by the Puerto Ricans as an in-group code to communicate without making it accessible to the other characters. Despite this coincidence between both films, a closer analysis shows that the 2021 *West Side Story* also includes complete sentences, not only one-word exhortations, in the same contexts. These uses of Spanish are mostly uttered by the Puerto Ricans when trying to refrain each other from fighting, as in the following examples, taken from the 2021 version during the performance of *Dance at the gym*.

- (1) Bernardo: No se metan, no se metan.
- (2) Bernardo: Déjenlo. No vale la pena.

5.2. Puerto Ricans performing

In the case of musical numbers with no Jets present, both films concur in the types of code-switching into Spanish during *A boy like that* and *America*. In the first one, sung by María and Anita after Tony murders Bernardo, Spanish is not used at any point during the performance in either version. As for *America*, Puerto Ricans use short expressions such as *baila* or *vamos*, with a similar aim to those pointed out above in both films. In spite of these similarities, the 2021 film incorporates two spoken responses by Anita in Spanish during the performance of *America*, originally non-verbal. In the remake, Anita shows her opposition verbally in Spanish, mocking her boyfriend:

- (3) Added sung lines, in Spanish, to 'America' in the 2021 film.
Bernardo: Everywhere grime in America.
Anita: *Cierto*.

Bernardo: Organized crime in America.

Anita: *Lo sé.*

Bernardo: Terrible time in America.

Anita: You forget I'm in America.

The previous cases show how Puerto Rican characters use Spanish to address each other during musical performances, whether the Jets are present or not. The extent to which they are used differs, with more complex utterances being present in the recent version.

In the performance of *I feel pretty* there are substantial differences between the linguistic repertoires between both films. In the 1961 movie, it was sung by María, accompanied by the chorus of Consuelo, Rosalía and Francisca. In the recent version, there are more women in the performance, including their manager, Doña Fausta. In the original version, none of the characters use Spanish. In contrast, the 2021 version includes short phrases in the language, in line with those found in the previous contexts, to encourage María.

- (4) Provi: Miss America! A speech, *por favor!*
Provi and Merche: *¡Que hable!*
Provi and Merche: *¡María, la alcaldesa!*

Spanish is spoken in both films by Madam Lucía and Doña Fausta, the women in charge of the cleaning services at the department store in which most Puerto Rican women work in the 1961 movie and the 2021 version. In the original, Madam Lucía only appears once the musical performance is finished to tell the girls to focus and close the store. In the 2021 film, however, Doña Fausta is present throughout the performance, and she complains about María's daydreaming during the singing part as well, in the same fashion as the girls in (4).

- (5) Madam Lucía in the 1961 film.
(a) *¡Cállate! ¡Por favor, muchachas!*
(b) *Buenas noches.*
(c) *Y no se olviden de cerrar todo.*
- (6) Señora Fausta in the 2021 film, during the performance.
(a) *Ay, pobrecita. ¡Está loca!*
(b) *¡Ok, ya! ¡Hasta aquí llegó la comedia! ¡A trabajar to' el mundo!*

5.3. Emblematic code-switching amongst Puerto Ricans

So far, it has been shown that Spanish is used amongst Puerto Ricans when performing and singing to encourage each other, as well as during fights, whether Jets are present or not. The next part of the analysis focuses on spoken

instances of Spanish in both versions of *West Side Story* when there are no Anglo-Americans present. All these uses of Spanish take place in the Puerto Rican characters' private spaces, that is, their homes, workplace, or public sites that are only used by them (i.e., the *Hermanos Rivera* gym).

Firstly, there are contexts in which brief linguistic units in Spanish are inserted within larger utterances in English. These have been labeled *emblematic code-switching*, a shift in language at the level of tag words. They are present in both versions of *West Side Story* and are used to show the Hispanicness of the characters. These tokens may take the form of singular nouns (*querida, niña, muchachos*) or of formulaic, sentential phrases (*por favor, a ver*). They are ritualized and multifunctional and they could be known to a general, non-Spanish-speaker public. In the *West Side Story* context, since these Spanish units are inserted within English sentences, I argue that these switches are emblematic because they signify a “marker of ethnic identity” (Holmes, 2001, p. 35), as they demonstrate that, even though Puerto Ricans are not using Spanish to communicate dialogically, they do speak it. By adding these directives or terms of endearments, their linguistic and ethnic characteristics are shown without compromising the understanding of their whole speech.

- (7) 1961 film.
 - (a) María: *Por favor*, Anita, make the neck lower.
 - (b) Rosalía: Maybe she is dolling up for us. *Gracias, querida*.

- (8) 2021 film.
 - (a) María: *Mamita*, didn't you hear me?
 - (b) Bernardo: *Vamos*. I told you he likes him.
 - (c) Luz: *A ver*, Bernardo ain't keeping their dirty money. *¿Verdad, María?*

These cases of code-switching, even if present in both productions, are much less frequent in the 1961 version, arguably due to the fact that less Spanish is spoken overall. In spite of this difference, emblematic Spanish is mostly used throughout the original movie. Considering the overall treatment of Spanish in both films, emblematic code-switches in the original movie are more symbolic than those in the remake. I argue that the goal of *gracias, querida* or *buenas noches* in the original version is to contribute to the *ethnicization* of the characters, which goes back to the three-fold signifiers theory proposed by previous scholars in §2, in which an overt Spanish accent was used as a hint to the otherness of the Puerto Ricans. Applied to code-switching, and to the use of Spanish in general, by including short, recognizable tokens in Spanish, the ethnic identity of the Puerto Ricans is being further articulated, without actually committing to more elaborated uses of the language. In the following example from the 1961 film, Bernardo is scolding María for having danced with Tony.

The conversation is in English, even though it is only the siblings and Anita in the room. The only word spoken in Spanish is María's emblematic *sí*.

- (9) Dialogue from the 1961 film.
Bernardo: Now, I do not say these things to spoil your evening or to hear myself talk. I am here longer than you, María.
María: *Sí, Nardo.*
Bernardo: Someday, when you're an old married woman with five children, then you can tell me what to do. But right now it is the other way around. Now go to bed.
Anita: He's the old married woman.

These cases of code-switching by the Puerto Ricans to communicate with each other are also present in other dialogues with longer linguistic units. In (10), Bernardo, Anita, María, and Chino are arriving at the dance in the 1961 film. María is introduced to the rest of the Sharks by her brother. Even though this dialogue occurs within the Puerto Rican group, the main language used to communicate is English, with Spanish only employed in short expressions. Before this, while María and Chino are in the background, Anita and the other Sharks are conversing in Spanish.

- (10) Dialogue from the 1961 film.
Bernardo: María. Hey! Look what I got. María, these are some of my friends you've not met. This is Loco.
Loco: *Mucho gusto.*
María: *Encantada.*
Bernardo: Teresita. My sister María.
María: Good evening.
Bernardo: And this is Luis and Rosa.
María: *Encantada. ¡Rosalía! Ay.*
Pepe: *Oye, Nardo.*

A similar case of emblematic code-switching occurs in the 1961 film between the *America* performance and the meeting between the Jets and the Sharks. While the women are seeing the men off, they can be heard saying *buenas noches*, *cuidado*, and *adiós*. The only character who speaks a complete sentence in Spanish is Anita, played by Puerto Rican actress Rita Moreno, when she addresses Bernardo as he runs down the stairs to leave. In a similar fashion to the previous context, subtitles do not include what she says and neither does the screenplay:

- (11) *Le voy a dar un (()) que lo va a dejar cojo, eh. Immigrant!*

5.4. Conversational code-switching amongst Puerto Ricans

The last type of these uses of Spanish analyzed is conversational code-switching, “the juxtaposition of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems [...] within the same exchange” (Gumperz, 1977, p. 1). From this perspective, instead of the shift in language occurring at the lexical or noun phrase level, longer utterances are inserted within the speech, and they can become turns in themselves. In the original 1961 *West Side Story*, there are only a handful of occasions in which the characters use complete utterances in Spanish inserted in the English dialogue. There are no linguistic replies by the rest of the characters, and the use of Spanish is not continued by the other Puerto Ricans, leaving these units in isolation within the general exchange. There is no continued dialogical Spanish in the 1961 film.ç

- (12) Bernardo to the Sharks before they leave the roof after performing *America*.
Vámonos, muchachos, vámonos. Es tarde. Vámonos.

Even in this longer use, the linguistic units being used by Bernardo are factually the same to those employed isolatedly earlier, classified as emblematic code-switching, namely, *muchachos* and *vámonos*. Given this coincidence and the fact that there is no continuation of Spanish in his conversational action, this employment of Spanish is still emblematic as it draws from stereotypes of the language and does not elicit a verbal response in the language in the other characters. There are no other uses of Spanish in the 1961 film by the Puerto Ricans when there are no Jets present, which means that they do not have full interactions in the code that they all presumably have in their repertoire. In contrast, the 2021 *West Side Story* features more complex uses of Spanish in private contexts, when there are only Puerto Ricans present and they use it with each other. There is also a greater variety in their code-switching dynamics, as will become apparent in the representative excerpts chosen for this part of the analysis.

There are 4 scenes that show the dialogic implementation of Spanish by the Puerto Ricans: the first on-screen interaction between María and Anita; the conversation between the girls, Bernardo and Chino right before the dance; the dialogue between the two siblings and Anita the morning after the dance; the exchange between María and the rest of the workers during their shift, before and after they perform *I feel pretty*; María and Chino’s encounter in the alley in which he tells her that Bernardo and Tony are dead; and the meeting of the Sharks at the gym after the rumble. In the 1961 version, these scenes feature emblematic code-switching, explained above.

The first contexts include the immediate translation of what has been previously said in Spanish, into English. (13) occurs during the first interaction between María and Anita and (14) is part of a conversation between the two

girls and Bernardo during breakfast the following day. There is only one occasion in which this immediate translation takes place in a less *natural* way, as shown in (15), in which Bernardo stops himself from continuing in Spanish because Anita had previously told them to “speak English”. In the other two, the speaker includes a sentence that they then paraphrase later (13) or they answer in Spanish to something that had been said in English before (14).

- (13) María, to Anita:
Bernardo’s always mad. ¡*Necesito lipstick!* I’m too short. I need please, please, some lipstick and maybe some eyeliner! The boys think I’m a kid.
- (14) Anita, to María: Your brother has something to say to you.
Bernardo: I apologize. For behaving last night like a, like a, a
Anita: Like a gangster!
Bernardo: *Sí, como un gángster.*
María: It was embarrassing.
Anita: And he’s apologizing.
Bernardo: *Perdón.*
- (15) María: Don’t fight with the Jets. ¡*Mami estaría avergonzada!*
Bernardo: I want you to be happy. *Te quiero mucho y tengo que protegerte.*
Anita: Here! Dead man! Eat your eggs! And everyone, speak English!
María: *Yo también te quiero mucho.* But I’m here too, and I want to make a life, a home, maybe go to City College like Rosalía’s cousin Virginia. I want to be happy here!
Bernardo: *Pero Nueva York no te hace feliz.*
Anita: English!
Bernardo: *Puerto Rico, sí.*
María: That’s what you think! I’m gonna think for myself!
Bernardo: You keep away from him! *Mientras tú vivas- As long as you’re in my house.*

Secondly, there are contexts in which the utterances are said in Spanish, so the code-switching occurs between turns, rather than internally as in (13) or (15). This use becomes more evident in (16), a conversation between María and Anita as they get ready to go to the dance. During this dialogue, Spanish is used as a communicative tool at the same sentential and conversational level as English.

- (16) María: No, no, no. It looks like a shroud, it’s so big and so white. It wouldn’t look like a shroud if it was red.
Anita: *No digas esas cosas, niña. ¿Qué te pasa? Con los muertos no se juega, ¿ah?*

María: ¡Ay, este es el traje más ancho y más feo que he visto en mi vida!

Anita: Sí. Trágica. | Speak English.

María: In Gimbels there are lots of dresses that fit me.

Anita: And you don't shop in Gimbels, you clean in Gimbels.

Ahorra tus chavitos, fancypants.

Anita, cont'd: Ah, sí... | Turn around! | ¡Mira qué bella!

María: ¡Ay, Anita! ¡Me has salvado la vida! ¡Eres una santa!

In (17), Bernardo quickly switches between English and Spanish when addressing Chino, giving a sense of a fast pace and control of both codes. When looking at the particularities of the intervention, however, while the control over the repertoire is there, it can also be noticed how the character never mixes English and Spanish intrasententially.

- (17) Bernardo: Are you ready? Chino's here. | Dale, entra. | You gotta dance with her. | ¡Júralo! Pero no te vayas a echar pa'trás como—
Chino: I don't know how to dance.
Bernardo: ¡Ay! | She's bossy, she's gonna show you how. | Pero tú tienes que— ¡Coño, Buddy Boy! Lo abotonaste mal. | Don't move.
Chino: You always look out for me, you're the best friend I ever had. I owe you so much. But I just wish—
Bernardo: You're the smartest friend I ever had. María needs to meet smart guys like you.

There are also occasions in which English tokens are embedded within the Spanish discourse (*Buddy Boy*) and vice versa, as shown below. The following examples are all from the 2021 film. In (18), Chino speaks English except when he is using an adjective to describe himself, similar to Bernardo in (19). Even though these changes between the language could be considered intrasentential code-switching, since the shift in code affects very specific tokens (one word, adjective, or noun used to refer to specific people), they are better analyzed as cases of emblematic code-switching, even if they are not tokenizing as earlier examples.

- (18) Chino: María can't like a *lambeojo* who just works day and night and never stands up like her brother does.
(19) Bernardo: Bossy, como te dije, y una wiseass. *Óyeme bien*: the gringos tonight, they stare because...

The other three contexts which feature Puerto Rican characters using their repertoires in an interactional manner in the 2021 *West Side Story* are before and after the *I feel pretty* performance featuring María, Doña Fausta, and the

Puerto Rican girls, and the encounter between Chino and the Sharks after the rumble. These dialogues include conversational as well as intra-sentential code-switching. Spanish is not employed in this manner in the 1961 film at all, and in contrast to the salience of emblematic code-switching in that version, it becomes apparent through the many examples that intersentential code-switching predominates in the 2021 remake.

- (20) Luz: *Ay, nena, we're gonna get evicted. Nos van a botar como bolsa.*
Charita: *¡Así mismo! The new apartments, the Metropolitan Opera and the orchestra hall? Not for us. ¡For the gringos!*
Merche: *¡Pero claro! That's why I cashed my relocation check, inmediatamente! Antes que me lo quiten.*
Provi: Before they take it back.
Fausta: You cashed the check? I tore mine up.
Luz: Good for you!
Merce: You tore up a \$500 check! *¡La riquita!*
Fausta: Once you cash the check, *mijita*, they can evict you!
Rosalía: They can evict you, *con cheque o sin cheque.*
- (21) Quique: *¿Quién está ahí? ¿Estás bien, hermano?*
Chino: *Bien, bien, Quique. ¿Y tú?*
Quique: *Mal, muy mal. It got so bad so fast. Y Bernardo... Bernardo está muerto.*
Chucho: *Bernardo era el alma de to's nosotros. El más fuerte.*
Quique: He was a hero. I know people say that about a lot of people, *pero Bernardo.*
Chino: *Pero cayó de pendejo. Bernardo was a fool. What did he die for?*
Chucho: *Murió luchando por su dignidad, and for pride, mi hermano, orgullo puertorriqueño!*
CH: Bernardo, he died to show those gringos how tough Puerto Ricans are, *más fuerte que to' ellos.*

The previous dialogues also include cases of other types of code-switching or uses of Spanish mentioned earlier in the analysis, such as translation (*antes que me lo quiten*, 'before they take it back'), ritualized phrases (*dale*) or terms of endearment (*mi hermano, mijita*). Excerpts (20) and (21) include the largest presence of Spanish yet shown in the analysis. Out of all the dialogues in the 2021 *West Side Story*, the one exchange with the most presence of Spanish is the interaction between Valentina (played by Rita Moreno) and the Sharks after the rumble, in which the boys are running scared around the streets. As shown in (22), they barely use any English, explained by the fact in a dangerous, rushed situation, they all turn to their shared language to communicate better. It could also be argued that since this is not an important

scene plotwise, and it does not feature any of the main characters, there was no commercial *loss* in using Spanish.

- (22) Junior: *¿Qué va a pasar ahora?*
Braulio: *Vámonos, vámonos.*
Pipo: *Vámonos, que hay policías.*
Braulio: *¡Yo no quería que esto pasara, yo no quería que esto pasara!*
Valentina: *¡Párense! Braulio, ¿qué está pasando? ¿Qué está pasando aquí?*
Braulio: *Los Jets, quisieron pelear.*
Junior: *Vamos, we gotta get out of here.*
Valentina: *¿Los Jets? ¿Quiénes estaban ahí?*
Braulio: *Come on, move.*
Junior: *Bernardo está muerto.*
Valentina: *¿Bernardo está muerto?*
Pipo: *Y Riff. También está muerto. Nos tenemos que ir, Valentina.*
Valentina: *¿Dónde está Tony? ¿Dónde estaba Tony?*
Braulio: *Él fue el que mató a Bernardo.*
Sharks: *¡La jara, la jara! ¡Vámonos! ¡Vámonos, vámonos, vamos!*

6. Conclusions

The goal of this research was to carry out a contrastive, linguistic analysis of both filmic adaptations of *West Side Story* in their uses of code-switching into Spanish. The analysis has shown that the 1961 film presented more symbolic, tokenizing uses of Spanish. This can be seen in the insertion of one-unit phrases, as well as in the avoidance of conversational Spanish beyond isolated utterances. The motivations behind these choices may be production related, considering that the movie was released in a different time for a Hollywood audience. The employment of Spanish in the 1961 *West Side Story* goes more in line with the ethnification of the characters, along with their fabricated accents, as shown in previous studies that analyzed the film from sociocultural perspectives.

In contrast, more varied and complex uses of the language have been found in the 2021 remake. It is sometimes used conversationally by the Puerto Rican characters for extended periods of time, to the point of considering them a case of polylinguaging. There are also cases of symbolic code-switching, similar to the ones found in the original film, as well as particular cases of shifts in language via translation. Even though the recent *West Side Story* is still a predominantly English-led film, the presence of Spanish is undoubtedly more significant than in the original film. As argued earlier for the 1961 production, the inclusion of a richer linguistic repertoire by the Puerto Rican characters in the remake aligns with the intent of more accurately portraying the people represented, also signified with racially-accurate casting or the presentation of larger social issues.

A significant qualitative and linguistic change has occurred between both films. While the 1961 version rarely features spoken Spanish and, when it did, it was mostly anecdotic, the 2021 remake of *West Side Story* pays closer attention to the employment of the language. In carrying out such contrastive analysis with this conclusion, the present paper contributes not only to general studies on linguistic representation but also to linguistic approaches to cinematic productions, a growing body of research in the last decade. The attention paid here to the contextual and situational uses of Spanish could be applied to other productions to show the relevance of linguistic repertoires in the crafting of a film whose goal is to represent peoples. The possibilities of analyzing *West Side Story* (2021) are not exhaustive and future investigations could look at the relationship between every character's uses of Spanish and their identity relation to Puerto Rico, the U.S., and New York. Other proposals could look at the employment of the language by the Anglo-Americans, an analysis which goes beyond the scope of this paper, but which has great potential in the search for overtly offensive employment of language(s). Further examinations would all contribute greatly to the body of literature on sociolinguistic meaning and race representations in the media.

Bibliography

- ANDROUTSOPOULOS, J. (2012). Introduction: Language and society in cinematic discourse. *Multilingua*, 31, 139-154.
- AUER, P. (1984): 'On the Meaning of Conversational Code-Switching', in Auer, P. and A. di Luzio (Eds.), *Interpretative Sociolinguistics*, 87-112, Gunter Narr Verlag: Tübingen.
- BARRUETO, J. (2014). *The Hispanic Image in Hollywood, a postcolonial approach*. Peter Lang.
- BAILEY, B. (1999): 'Switching', *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, 9(1-2), 241-243.
- BLOMMAERT, J. and A. Backus (2011). Repertoires revisited: 'Knowing language' in superdiversity. *Working Papers in Urban Language and Literacies*, 67, 2-26.
- DAVINE, L. (2016). 'Could we not dye it red at least?': Color and Race in *West Side Story*. *Journal of Popular Film and Television*, 44(3), 139-149.
- DURANTI, A. (1993): 'Truth and Intentionality: Towards an Ethnographic Critique', *Cultural Anthropology*, 8(2), 214-245.
- DYNEL, M. (2011). Stranger than Fiction? A Few Methodological Notes on Linguistic Research in Film Discourse, *Brno Studies in English*, 37(1), 41-61.
- GUMPERZ, J. J. (1977). The Sociolinguistic Significance of Conversational Code-Switching, *RELC Journal*, 8(2), 1-34.
- (1982): 'Conversational codeswitching', in *Discourse strategies*, 59-99, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.
- HACHENBERGER, C. (2019). Narcos and the Promotion of an U.S. (Informal) Cultural Empire Based on Processes of Stereotyping and Comparison, *Forum for Inter-American Research*, 12(1), 43-55.
- HATZIPANAGOS, R. (2021). A Puerto Rican filmmaker on 'West Side Story': 'It's hard to think that this is still what we're talking about, The Washington Post. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2021/12/09/puerto-rican-filmmaker-west-side-story-its-hard-think-that-this-is-still-what-were-talking-about/>.
- HENNESSEE, D. (2015). Historicizing the Politics of Representation in Contemporary Queer Media, *Teaching Media Quarterly*, 3(2), 1-8.
- HOLMES, J. (2001). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics Second Edition*. Pearson Education Limited.
- JURGENSEN, J. (2021). Steven Spielberg Made 'West Side Story' Without Subtitles, Says Translating Spanish Would Be 'Disrespectful'. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/why-steven-spielbergs-west-side-story-has-plenty-of-spanish-but-no-subtitles-11639144802>.
- LAVENDER, J. (2021). Polylinguaging and bivalency in the Ecuadorian linguistic landscape An analysis of public signs in Azogues, Ecuador, *Spanish in Context*, 18(2), 161-191.

- LO, A. (1999). Codeswitching, Speech Community Membership, and the Construction of Ethnic Identity, *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 3-4, 461-479.
- MCCARROLL, M. (2018). *Unwhite: Appalachia, Race, and Film*. University of Georgia Press.
- MONAGHAN, W. (2016). *Queer Girls, Temporality and Screen Media: Not 'Just a Phrase'*. Macmillan Publishers Ltd.
- NAMA, A. (2010). *Black Space: Imagining Race in Science Fiction Film*. University of Texas Press.
- NEGRÓN MUNTANER, F. (2000). Feeling Pretty: *West Side Story* and Puerto Rican Identity, *Social Text* 63(18), 2, 83-106.
- NORMANN JORGENSEN, J. and J. SPINDLER MOLLER (2014): "Polylingualism and languaging", in Leung, C. and B. V. Street (Eds.), *The Routledge Companion to English Studies*, 67-83.
- OTHEGUY, R., O. GARCÍA and W. REID (2015): "Clarifying translanguaging and deconstructing named languages: A perspective from linguistics", *Applied Linguistic Review*, 6(3), 281-307.
- PEELE, T. (2007). *Queer Popular Culture: Literature, Media, Film, and Television*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- POPLACK, S. (1980). Sometimes I'll start a sentence in Spanish y termino en español: Toward a Typology of Code-Switching" *Linguistics*, 18(233-334), 581-618.
- RODRÍGUEZ CHIRINO, C. (2015). Estudio de la discriminación étnica y racial desde la interculturalidad en dos musicales: *West Side Story* y *Hairspray*. [Universidad Pontificia de Comillas: Undergraduate Thesis].
- SANDOVAL SÁNCHEZ, A. (1999). A Puerto Rican Reading of the America of *West Side Story*. In A. Sandoval Sánchez (Ed.) *José, Can You See? Latinos/as On and Off Broadway* (pp. 63-82). University of Wisconsin Press.
- SHAKESPEARE, W. (1597). *Romeo and Juliet*. [Play].
- SPIELBERG, S. (Director) (2021). *West Side Story* [Film]. 20th Century Studios.
- STROUD, C. (1992): 'The Problem of Intention and Meaning in Code-Switching', *Text and Talk*, 12(1), 127-155.
- VALLEJO, C. and M. DOOLY (2020): "Plurilingualism and translanguaging: emergent approaches and shared concerns. Introduction to the special issue", *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 23(1), 1-16.
- WISE, R. and ROBBINS, J. (Directors) (1961). *West Side Story* [Film]. United Artists.
- WOOLARD, K. A. (2006): 'Codeswitching', in Duranti. A. (Ed.), *A Companion to Linguistic Anthropology*, 73-94, New Jersey: Blackwell Publishing.

Received: 14/04/2023

Accepted: 24/06/2023