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Cambiando el canal: An ethnographic study on American Latino audiences' "preferred" Spanish media outlet based on their ethnic dialect, demographic location and adolescent upbringing

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Spanish media outlet based on their ethnic dialect, demographic location and  
adolescent upbringing]

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This Project Thesis, directed and approved by the candidate's committee,  
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in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the distinction

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### **Abstract**

With the current issues revolving around the Latino community including the lack of Latino inclusivity within the media and the absence of Hispanic heritage nuances within second- and third-generation Latinos, this study looks into the reasoning behind Latinos' preferred Spanish media network. By combining qualitative and quantitative reasoning, this mixed-methodology breaks down the issues revolving around Spanish speaking households and what factors cause them to choose Univision or Telemundo.

In connection to my previous McNair research, this thesis will use previous Hispanic television research, the survey results from a ten-question survey to individual Latinos and a series of interviews with Latin men and women asking them questions about which Spanish-based network they prefer. By using these selected methods, the research will show a direct miscorrelation (and perhaps misunderstanding) on the reason Latinos pick their preferred Spanish media network. Our findings showed that many factors are taken into account when deciding which network they prefer, including what their parents prefer and whether they are a second or third-generation American Latino. The results also showed many American Latinos between the ages of 18-34 only watch Spanish-based television because their parents watch it, without thinking about how the network caters to their dialectal needs.

## Introduction

In continuation with my previous McNair research, this thesis will take a look at how the Spanish media networks Univision and Telemundo are catering to the needs of their viewers as well as whether their dialectal choices are attracting Spanish speakers. Based on various periodicals, Latinos make up more than 17.6% of the United States population as of 2015 (Pew Research Center, 2015). Of the 56.5 million accounted for, 37.1% were born in the United States and 19.4% were born in a foreign territory (Pew, 2015). Because of these staggering percentages, it is estimated that in 2060 more than 28% of the U.S. population will be of some sort of Latino descent, whether that be born in the U.S. or foreign born.

It is safe to assume that as the larger audience of Spanish speakers has caused a higher demand for Spanish-based television, the need for finding effective methods of maintaining viewership has become a fore-front conversation for many Hispanic television researchers.

As mentioned in Guajardo's previous McNair research, the dialectal needs of Latinos go beyond those of monolingual English speaking Americans. Although many American Latinos may share a similar vocabulary, certain phrases, sayings, slang and cultural diction vary among individual Spanish-speaking countries. Because of this, the previous research took a more analytical approach and investigated how Univision and Telemundo address the dialectal needs of their audience. After interviews with company news directors and connecting the dots between the company's location, background, financial stability and mission statement, the results led to a deeper question for this

particular thesis: Based on findings within the previous research, are Latinos more inclined to listen to or watch Spanish networks that cater to their dialectal needs? Does this match the previous findings? This question was developed after re-reading the results from the previous research including the responses received from the news directors of each company's affiliates. Based on their response, the original goal was to see a positive correlation between the responses received from the affiliates and the qualitative responses from the survey and personal interviews.

### **Part One: McNair Research**

To fully understand the results from this study, one must understand the previous findings. In the McNair research, the original question was: How do leading U.S. Spanish-language media companies decide on the type of dialect used to present their message to their audience? After dissecting the question further, other questions arose behind the common dialectal question: what is a dialect? Nine different Spanish dialects have been found within South America, the Caribbean, Mexico, and now the United States. Taking into account a dialects' location and present cultural forces, Spanish dialects are therefore best viewed as a regional speech or variation of a solidified language (Cotton & Sharp, 1988).

When one mentions 'dialect,' probably the first thing most people think of is a regional speech, and indeed that is one of the principal types of language variation. In many areas, it is possible for even the most linguistically naive listener to guess the origin of a speaker after he has uttered but a few words. (Cotton and Sharp, p.2)

Cotton and Sharp also make the point that within these dialects are sub-dialects that can be seen as forms of jargon or contain specific characteristics that appeal and relate to the cultures of the native speakers.

The dialects and sub dialects are nearly infinite within the Spanish language when sex, age, region and ancestral history are taken into consideration. In correlation to Cotton and Sharp, dialects have also been altered throughout time. Jose Del Valle (2013) offers an example from within the Latin American region, specifically the country of Mexico. In 1518, Hernan Cortes was ordered to search and conquer the New World for the Spanish crown. After marching into Tenochtitlan, the home city to the indigenous Aztecs, Cortes encountered several cultural differences including the native tongue of Nahuatl, the “lingua franca” in the majority of Mesoamerica. After the stoning of the Aztec ruler Moctezuma II, on July 1, 1520, Cortes claimed the city for Spanish rule and, henceforth, forced Spanish customs, including Castilian Spanish, on its people. This interbreeding of the Castilian language and the Nahuatl tongue brought forth several of the types of dialects spoken in Latin America and across Mexico. This type of intermingling turned the once pure Castilian language of Spain into a breeding machine of several types of Spanish dialects and sub-dialects across the entire Latin American region and portions of the Caribbean.

As shown, the Spanish language has a long history of battles, conquests, deaths, and rebirths that has allowed it to become one of the most spoken languages in the United States and the world. As this influence spreads into the era of modern mass

media, it leads to one of the main components of the present study: the history of Spanish-language media companies within the United States and their significance.

From here, the research led us to investigate the beginnings of the two major Spanish media networks based in the United States today: Univision and Telemundo. *A Look Into Univision, Inc.*

Univision was founded in San Antonio, Texas, in 1961 under the name Spanish International Communications Corporation after Rene Anselmo purchased KWEK-TV (International Directory Of Company Histories, 2001). With the addition of the Spanish International Network, by 1968 Anselmo had established Spanish-language media stations across the west and north of the United States. SICC and SIN became a Spanish-language pioneer. After a couple of federal commissions and court hearings, SIN renamed itself Univision network in 1987. Since then, Univision has grown into one of the most watched television networks in the Hispanic community and had reached over 7.9 million viewers between the ages of 18-34 in 2017 (Corporate Univision, 2017).

However, Univision has faced many successes and downfalls as a company. A 1999 investigative story concluded:

Univision's long-term success will depend on how well it continues to balance its two audiences. . . . To hedge its bets with upscale, fully assimilated Latinos, Univision has the cable network Galavision, which carries bilingual, youth-oriented shows, but it must keep them interested in the broadcast network, as well. (Jensen & Baxter, 1999)

Thus, even at the beginning of this century, the media world was skeptical of a

massive, nationwide company that could potentially attract mass audiences of Latinos spread across the states. Today, Univision is one of, if not the, largest Spanish media companies in the U.S. and still growing, with total revenue including television, radio and digital mediums rising 11 percent in 2013-2014 (Pew Research Center, 2016a).

*A Look Into Telemundo, NBCUniversal Inc.*

Telemundo was founded in 1954 in San Juan, Puerto Rico, under Angel Ramos, owner of what was then the largest newspaper in Puerto Rico, *El Mundo*, under the original TV station WKAQ-TV. Ramos tried to keep the term “mundo” in all of his planning because of the idea of having a worldwide television program—hence the etymology of Telemundo, which means “World-TV” (Newcomb, 2014, p.2290). After establishing several stations across the nation including in Texas, New Mexico, and Florida, the network hired former Univision President Joaquin Blaya to head the company. In the following years, major rebranding began and slogans were tested for the launch of the new and improved network.

The addition of several types of shows and telenovelas really amplified the network, and its reputation began to change across the television screens of Latinos’ across America. Since then, Telemundo has pushed to catch not only the Latino audience, but also the Anglo audience by completely removing the traditional South American dramatic shows of the genre that Univision was producing and aiming instead toward a reenactment of several English shows with a Spanish twist including Spanish actors, Spanish humor and Spanish vocabulary (NBCUniversal.com).

After substantial growth the company was bought out for \$1.98 billion in 2001 under the wing of NBCUniversal studios, which owned several other networks including CNBC, USA, NBC Sports, Hulu, Fandango, Universal Studios, and Focus Features (NBCUniversal.com). After this major transaction, Bob Wright, NBC Chairman and CEO, was quoted as saying,

The vibrant Hispanic market accounts for a significant and growing share of the nation's economy and we are eager to draw on Telemundo's expertise to better serve this important audience (CNN Money, 2001).

From this purchase, Telemundo joined forces with one of the largest media enterprises in the world. Today, Telemundo owns 17 stations and reaches 100 countries in over 35 languages (NBCUniversal.com).

From this point, the research led us to ask Univision and Telemundo what type of dialect they broadcast. Did they adhere to one ethnicity more than another or did they just “wing it” and write the script in the best way they saw fit? With the help of Dr. Beatriz Walker, professor of language and literature, a mini-script was written up with the purpose of calling affiliates from each company with the hopes of coming to a positive conclusion. The researcher called KWEX, Univision local San Antonio affiliate, where the director of news scripts, Moana Ramirez, said that Univision uses a predominantly “non-accented Spanish.” “Someone from Mexico would be able to clearly understand our news coverage,” Ramirez said. She continued, “However, someone from Spain, who predominantly speaks Castilian, would not.”

With this information, the research led to contacting Univision's public relations headquarter in Houston, Texas. A public relations officer, Adriana (who would not disclose her last name), said, "Oh, we do not have a specific dialect that we use. We speak Spanish, so that is really all I can say."

After being informed of how other Univision stations have responded to this inquiry, she said, "We have anchors and reporters from all over Latin America. Like I said, we just speak Spanish."

When asked if Univision's main target audience was the Mexican population, Adriana said, "No. We try to consider all populations. We do not have a specific dialect that we use. We only speak Spanish, but as I said before, we have anchors from all over Latin America."

With a clearer understanding of Univision's stance on its use of dialect or type of Spanish used for on-camera purposes, the research expected to see the Florida-based Telemundo, Univision's major rival, use a Caribbean Spanish and relate to a different demographic assuming that a station relied heavily on its anchors' dialectal abilities. In other words, Telemundo would use its locational advantage and seek to attract the Cuban, Puerto Rican, and Salvadorian populations. However, this does not seem to be the case.

After contacting KVDA, Telemundo's local San Antonio affiliate, a surprisingly different answer was given by the director of news scripts, Vanessa Gandara. She said that Telemundo tries to use all types of Spanish dialects from Latin America and the Caribbean rather than settling on one. In her words, "We try to use all types of dialects,

so that people in Mexico, Argentina, Puerto Rico, and even Cuba can understand our news.”

Multiple attempts made to contact NBCUniversal studios and Telemundo International studios brought no comment from either company. With the information gathered from two of the largest U.S.-owned Spanish media companies, it was evident that one seemed to appeal to a larger range of Hispanic audiences whereas the other claimed to appeal to a large range, but did not have a definite answer as to why it only appeals to one type of Spanish-speaking ethnic group on-camera.

With this information, the study continued and predicted that if in fact each company had some sort of designated dialect used to attract a specific Spanish-speaking ethnic group, the company should be seeing their desired viewers watching their programming.

In other words, if the hypothesis was correct, the research would show that more Latinos who identify as Mexicans drawn to watch Univision rather than Telemundo. In the same way, any other Hispanic group would be drawn to watch Telemundo. Because of this speculation, this thesis was chosen to take this new question to the viewers themselves.

### **Literature Review**

To understand the significance of the findings, this study must examine trends in the following areas: an overview of the second and third Hispanic population found in the United States and the recent trending pattern of viewers choosing to refrain from watching Spanish-based television and return to their Latin roots.

### *The 'Not So Latino' Population*

To begin understanding the results for this thesis, the reader first must understand who the viewers are for the Spanish media networks. Within the past decade, new Latino classes have developed, including those considered a part of the second and third generation. According to a Pew Research study, any Latino who has not migrated from a foreign country or does not have direct parents who migrated from a foreign country is considered a second-generation Latino. In the same way, if a Latino's grandparents were already born in the states, then the Latino is considered a third generation (Pew Research, 2004).

Because of this, the Latino community has shifted and has caused a divide between those who consider themselves Latino and those who qualify as Latino. In a similar study, more than 71% of Latinos believe one does not have to speak or understand Spanish to be considered a part of the Latino community (Pew Research, 2015). While this may sound like an accepting offer, the truth is quite the contrary. Throughout various social media platforms, a new concept has surfaced asking the question: What is Latino enough? What do Latinos have to do or say to be considered as a real Latino? In companies like Pero Like, a branch of the BuzzFeed channel, comedians and activists openly speak about the issues around the Latino community—one of them being what does Latino mean. In videos titled “Are you Latino Enough?”, “Does Not Speaking Spanish Make You Less Latino?”, and “When You're Not Latinx Enough”, the Pero Like team have hit the mark on what second- and third-generation Latinos contemplate every day (Buzzfeed, 2016). Pew found that while the generational gap

between any ethnic group affects the image of the minority, Latinos seem to have a negative stigma towards Latinos who do not speak or understand Spanish and those who have chosen to not share the language with their offspring (Pew Research, 2016). With 36% within the second- and third-generation class, a population shift has occurred that greatly concerns those known as first-generation Latinos – most of whom are fluent in Spanish. One of the main concerns is the diminishment of the shared Spanish language (Ojeda, 2012).

### *Dip in Viewership*

Although the percentages of Latinos within the United States have risen, research studies have shown a dip in viewership of Spanish networks (Russell , 2005). While the dip does not have a specific reason, many researchers have concluded that the household members in Latino-American homes hold a strong tie to American-based versus Spanish-based television. In an article by J. Russell titled “Target Demos: Moms, Youths”, Russell found that more Spanish television networks are seeking Latinos found in the third-generation category between the ages of 18 to 34 and therefore try to bridge the gap between English and Spanish (Russell, 2005). Because of this, networks have decided to remove their concentration on the dialect used for their viewers and focus more on how to attract third-generation Latinos who would categorize themselves as American prior to mentioning their Hispanic ethnicity (Russell, 2005; Pew Research, 2017). Russell also mentions one important factor to consider when asking the thesis question – what causes Latino children, especially in the second- and third-generation category, to want to watch English-based networks rather than Spanish-based? To

quickly summarize Russell's argument, Russell believes that Hispanic households still remain in a traditional hierarchy—the father is the head of the house followed by the mother who performs all other duties including raising the children. Because of this, Russell concludes that mothers are the primary factor when deliberating which network young Latinos prefer and why other Latinos prefer to remove Spanish media networks from their daily news source. With more than 37 million Spanish-speaking homes (Pew Research, 2017), Russell concludes that,

In Hispanic television, the household-keeping mom remains the demographic of choice for networks and advertisers. But now an emerging youth market-bilingual, techno-savvy and affluent—has found a top spot on marketers' and programmers' wish lists.

While this miniscule detail cannot determine whether a young Latino prefers one network (Univision or Telemundo) from another—or whether they do not like either network—many English based-companies have decided to push their efforts and capture Latinos found in the second-and third-generation spectrum. In the article, Russell quotes Robert Rose:

‘The English-language Latin market is just now taking off, and it is going nowhere but up,’ predicted Mr. Rose, CEO of AIM Tell-A-Vision in New York.

‘The sooner stations and networks target young, U.S.-born Hispanics, the better off they will be.’

*Picking a side: Univision or Telemundo*

While Russell's argument concludes that English-based television will outrank Spanish-based networks, Michael Malone argues that it is not the intuition of household mothers that picks a network for the family to watch but the programs provided by the network that make mothers want to watch. In other words, the programs created and produced by Univision and Telemundo are what is driving mothers (and young Latinos) to pick their favorite network.

In an article titled "Good News for Telemundo", Malone explains how Telemundo's driving effort is its telenovelas. Known for bringing some of the highest-rating novelas such as *La Reina del Sur*, *Gitanas*, and *Celia*, Telemundo's driving force is making some of the best-rated drama shows for Hispanic viewers (Malone, 2010). Therefore, Malone predicts that there will always be a need for Telemundo's existence. By using real-life issues and prominent topics within the Latino community, Telemundo has struck the chord for Latina mothers to remain faithful to the network (Malone, 2010). While this is promising news for the Florida-based network, other researchers have found that Univision also has great motives for wanting to keep the ears of young Latino listeners.

In another article titled "Hispanic Marketing Report: Social Networks", Della de Lafuente writes that Univision is already taking flight in many platforms to provide a monopolization of Latino media. From producing American shows into Spanish and obtaining most of the well-known advertisers, De LaFuente explains how Univision is already known to most Latino viewers as the best network. In amount of advertising,

news content, and resources, Univision outranks Telemundo's brand. By providing quality news coverage and shows, De LaFuente explains that Telemundo is ranking second for a reason. In an article written by *The Economist*, the author writes about Univision's perfect, yet blurry picture. With many debts and a dip in viewership, many investors are wary of conducting business with Univision. Understanding Telemundo's steady incline to outmatch Univision, the author explains that Univision must define its brand even further to keep its spot on top (Economist, 2015). However, De LaFuente still has hope for Telemundo. When concluding her article, she suggests that Telemundo's weapon is control over its content. In the article, she writes,

Univision's got the monster share, but No. 2 Telemundo has its own weapon: Control of content. Unlike Univision, which gets the bulk of its programming from outside sources, Telemundo is able to include product pitches in story lines and develop content based on business opportunities. Execs from the NBC Universal unit hit the road in March to make that pitch to various clients.

After interviewing Don Browne, president of Telemundo Communications Group, Browne said, "What we know is that we can no longer produce Spanish-language content that is not as good as what can be seen on U.S. television networks. People expect a variety of programming and they want diversity."

Because of this, De LaFuente concludes that a need exists for both networks and that it is important to see more Spanish-based networks arise. Contrary to what Telemundo and Univision currently produce, other networks such as Azteca America deliberately choose to remain focused on one ethnic group. In an article titled "Azteca

America’s performance of Mexicanness in the pan-Hispanic television market”, Chad Thomas Beck writes how Azteca’s mission is to promote the Mexicanness to all viewers of the program regardless of their ethnicity. Beck explains how Azteca’s efforts of maintaining the “immigrant look” have caused many Latinos to stray from Azteca. Because of this, Beck writes that companies like Azteca need to redefine themselves toward American-Latinos. By removing the prejudice and vocabulary overused to describe Latinos, Azteca could see a rise in viewership. Until then, companies such as Azteca will remain out of the running in American television consumption.

### **Methodology**

For this research project, a mixed methodology approach was selected to receive answers from various first-, second-, and third-generation American Latinos between the target ages of 18-34. After formulating questions with Dr. Doug Mendenhall, associate professor in Journalism and Mass Communications, a survey from an online survey resource, SurveyMonkey, was sent and asked willing participants a variety of questions. The questions and possible answers were the following:

<b>Questions</b>	<b>What is your Hispanic origin?</b>	<b>If you live in the United States, where did you primarily grow up?</b>	<b>Do you speak or understand Spanish?</b>	<b>Which Spanish network did you primarily grow up watching?</b>
<b>Choice A:</b>	Mexican	West ((Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Idaho, Utah, Arizona, Nevada, Washington,	Yes, I understand and can speak Spanish	Telemundo
<b>Choice B:</b>	Puerto Rican		Yes, I understand but cannot speak	Univision

		Oregon, California, Alaska, and Hawaii)	Spanish	
<b>Choice C:</b>	Cuban	Southeast (Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia, Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi and Tennessee)	No, I do not understand nor speak Spanish	Other (please specify)
<b>Choice D:</b>	Other South American country	Southwest (Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas)		
<b>Choice E:</b>	Not located in South America	I do not live in the United States (please specify)		

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Which Spanish network do you prefer?</b>	<b>If you chose Telemundo, please specify the reasons you why you prefer this network?</b>	<b>If you chose Univision, please specify the reasons why you prefer this network?</b>	<b>Would you allow your written responses to be used as qualitative examples for a Honors Thesis? Your name will not be included.</b>
<b>Choice A:</b>	Telemundo	<i>Written answers</i>	<i>Written answers</i>	Yes
<b>Choice B:</b>	Univision			No
<b>Choice C:</b>	Other			

The survey was sent through social media platforms including Facebook and Twitter, as well as via email. When sending the survey, a small post was attached which clearly stated that the survey should be taken only by Latinos because of the types of questions asked. Because of the algorithmic nature of platforms like Facebook, the survey was posted to a number of Facebook groups other than my own including the National Association of Hispanic Journalist, ACU's Hispanos Unidos, Latinas for Business and other smaller groups. Also, my survey was shared 22 times throughout the survey period. From this point, short interviews began being conducted with Latinos around my community and asked them questions on what their preferred Spanish network was and their reasoning behind it. The following questions were asked: What is your name, major, and hometown? Which do you prefer: Telemundo or Univision? Why? From these questions, the interviewee would be allowed freely answer without interruption.

After closing the survey and reviewing the results, the search for positive correlations commenced not only between the online survey and the interviews, but also between the previous McNair findings. A mixed methodology approach was taken because of the nature of the interview questions and needed numerical results from the recipients.

## **Results**

In this selection, the results will be divided into two parts in order to keep data collections separate. Results will be compared in the Discussion portion of this paper.

### *Survey Results*

Upon closing the survey, interesting results came across from the survey questions. While the number of participants was lower than expected, a positive correlation between the McNair findings and current data results began to show. As mentioned before, one of the findings in the McNair research was that specific Hispanic ethnicities found in specific areas were more prone to watch one specific network than another.

Knowing this, each response was compared to the first question: What is your Hispanic origin? Out of the 24 responses, 18 responded as being of Mexican origin. The following is a comparison of the 18 respondents toward every question asked in the survey:

#### **Question Two: Location In The United States**

<b>Choices</b>	<b>Number of recipients</b>
Midwest	1
Southwest	14

#### **Question Three: Familiarity with Spanish**

<b>Choices</b>	<b>Number of recipients</b>
Yes, I understand and speak Spanish	12
Yes, I understand Spanish (no speak)	4
No, I cannot understand or speak Spanish	2

#### **Question Four: Childhood Network**

<b>Choices</b>	<b>Number of recipients</b>
----------------	-----------------------------

Telemundo	7
Univision	9
Other	2

### **Question Five: Preferred Network**

<b>Choices</b>	<b>Number of recipients</b>
Telemundo	5
Univision	11
Other	2

The same procedure was done for the other recorded ethnicity choices. Out of the 24 responses, 3 responded as being of another South American origin other than Mexican, Cuban and Puerto Rican. The following is a comparison of the 3 respondents toward every question asked in the survey:

### **Question Two: Location In The United States**

<b>Choices</b>	<b>Number of recipients</b>
Midwest	1
West	1
Southwest	1

### **Question Three: Familiarity with Spanish**

<b>Choices</b>	<b>Number of recipients</b>
Yes, I understand and speak Spanish	2

Yes, I understand Spanish (no speak)	N/A
No, I cannot understand or speak Spanish	1

#### **Question Four: Childhood Network**

<b>Choices</b>	<b>Number of recipients</b>
Telemundo	N/A
Univision	N/A
Other	3

#### **Question Five: Preferred Network**

<b>Choices</b>	<b>Number of recipients</b>
Telemundo	N/A
Univision	1
Other	2

Lastly, out of the 24 responses, 3 responded as being part of a Latino ethnicity not found in the South America or of Mexican, Cuban, or Puerto Rican descent. The following is a comparison of the 3 respondents toward every question asked in the survey:

#### **Question Two: Location In The United States**

<b>Choices</b>	<b>Number of recipients</b>
Southwest	3

**Question Three: Familiarity with Spanish**

<b>Choices</b>	<b>Number of recipients</b>
Yes, I understand and speak Spanish	1
Yes, I understand Spanish (no speak)	2

**Question Four: Childhood Network**

<b>Choices</b>	<b>Number of recipients</b>
Telemundo	2
Univision	N/A
Other	1

**Question Five: Preferred Network**

<b>Choices</b>	<b>Number of recipients</b>
Telemundo	2
Univision	N/A
Other	1

According to the results, there were no respondents of Cuban or Puerto Rican descent. The survey also looked into the qualitative results from the final two written questions. The following are the written responses from those who identify as from a Mexican origin and prefer Telemundo.

<i>It's what was always on if we were watching Spanish programs.</i>
<i>They did outreach in the city where I grew up, San Antonio, and hosted fairs that my family attended. They are very engaged in the Latino community of SA and</i>

<i>represent my community well in their broadcast.</i>
<i>I think it has better production value and more in-depth coverage, when it comes to news.</i>
<i>Specific news and information about what's happening in those regions other than focusing on just my local area</i>
<i>It's what I grew up with.</i>
<i>My parents would watch Telemundo for the news.</i>
<i>Grew up watching it, it's familiar.</i>

The following are the written responses from those who identify as from a Mexican origin and prefer Univision.

<i>Mejores programmas</i>
<i>Better quality overall.</i>
<i>It was the channel that my mother always had it on. She loves the reporters and the way that the reported the news.</i>
<i>To me it's a little more modernized.</i>
<i>It's more relevant and I like the tv personalities</i>
<i>It's just what I grew up with in my house</i>
<i>My mother watched Univision a lot when I was growing up so that was the channel we watched.</i>
<i>It has a more variety of shows and targets all age groups.</i>

The following are the written responses from those who identify as part of a different South American origin other than Mexican, Cuban, or Puerto Rican and prefer Telemundo.

<i>I don't know</i>
---------------------

The following are the written responses from those who identify as part of a different South American origin other than Mexican, Cuban, or Puerto Rican and prefer Univision.

*Jorge Ramos*

The following are the written responses from those who identify as part of a different origin not found in South America or Mexican, Cuban, or Puerto Rican and prefer Telemundo. There were no responses for the Univision portion for this demographic.

*I enjoy the news*

The results were divided based off the responses to the first question about ethnicity to get a better sense of what the respondents thought.

### *Interview Results*

Although the numerical data speaks for itself, the second portion of the research included many interviews with American Latinos between the ages of 18-34 years old. Below are just a few transcribed interviews for the purpose of this thesis.

Name: Kassandra Izaguirre

Identified Origin: Mexican

Hometown: Brownsville, Texas

*“I like Telemundo more. I was looking back at the novelas I watch and literally, all of them are Telemundo novelas I watch because I would watch them with my grandma. And I know that all her sisters watch those same novelas and I would talk about those novelas with my friends and so I like Telemundo for sure. It really just depends on the household. It depends on how the kid is raised.”*

Name: Adam Andrade

Identified Origin: Mexican

Hometown: Fort Worth, Texas

*“We watched both of them, but I think we mainly watched Univision just because it looked better, the shows are better, and they seem to use words that I understand. Telemundo uses words that aren’t part of our Mexican colloquialism, I guess. I can see that from watching their shows. In my house, my dad was the one that put Univision on. I know a lot of people who are second and third generation don’t speak Spanish and I know that more amount of people that are born here don’t speak or understand Spanish. It’s just, I don’t know, I feel like people who speak and understand Spanish go to Univision. At least, we did.”*

Name: Mariana Cedillo

Identified Origin: Mexican

Hometown: McAllen, Texas

*“Definitely Univision. My parents would like that one better just because it looks better and they think the programs make more sense . I don’t really watch it, but because we watched it as kids, that’s the one I’d say I prefer Univision.”*

Name: Juan Sebastian Herrera Duran

Identified Origin: Columbian

Hometown: Cali, Colombia

*“I prefer Univision just because it looks better. My mom likes Telemundo for their shows, but since my dad doesn't speak Spanish or anything, it just kind of was up to me and what I wanted to watch.”*

Name: Lorena Hernandez

Identified Origin: Mexican

Hometown: Chicago, Illinois

*“We really only watch Telemundo for the soccer games they broadcast. If it’s during that season, we generally will just leave that channel on for everything else like news and some Spanish shows. I don’t really watch any T.V. anymore, but I could see why people like Univision more. It looks better and more American than Telemundo.”*

Name: Hector Infante

Identified Origin: Mexican

Hometown: San Antonio, Texas

*“We don’t watch either one. Maybe my mom watches Univision, but we don’t really watch anything in Spanish anymore unless we need to.”*

Name: Ramiro Flores

Identified Origin: Mexican

Hometown: Abilene, Texas

*“In my house, my parents mainly watch Univision unless like, a soccer game is on. Then, we’ll switch to whatever channel the game is on. For me, I guess I don’t really care all that much just because I don’t plan on watching it down the road.”*

Name: James Loera

Identified Origin: Mexican

Hometown: Harlingen, Texas

*“Well, like, I don’t watch either one. I mean, my parents watch Univision just because they like it better. If it’s on at home, I can understand it. I can see what their talking about, but it’s not like my favorite channel or anything.”*

Name: Sarah Gonzales

Identified Origin: Mexican

Hometown: Abilene, Texas

*“I can see why some people like one over another. Personally, I don’t really watch one from another. My dad likes Univision, but I think it’s only because that’s the only one he knows. He just likes to stick to one.”*

Name: Yoleny Palacios

Identified Origin: Mexican

Hometown: Dolores Hidalgo, Guanajuato, Mexico

*“Yeah, like I grew up in Mexico and the only thing we would watch is Univision. It was just the thing to watch first. Nobody really cared about Telemundo. Here, in Abilene, you know, the community is different. People don’t really have a preference. Granted, there’s not a lot of Mexicans in Abilene.”*

### **Discussion**

Once the data and interviews were complete, the collected information was compiled and connections with the previous McNair research and current literature began to show up. Based on the results, the research can suggest three main factors that influence why Latinos prefer one network over another: their upbringing, the aesthetic look of one network from another, and the idea of “my parents watch it, but I do not.”

Based on the written responses from the survey, primarily the recipients who identified as Mexican, it can be seen that one's location and parental upbringing can create a viewing attachment for some networks. In a positive correlation, one can see how the previous McNair research suggests the current trend that more self-identified Mexicans prefer Univision based on their location. With over 94% of the self-identified Mexicans found living in the Southwest of the United States, Univision seems to have a firm grasp on Latinos living in the Southwest region. This agrees with the original hypothesis from the McNair research. On top of this, the interviews concluded that most self-identified Latinos prefer Univision.

However, although the correlation between ethnicity and location seems to go hand-in-hand, it does not explain why many Latinos between the ages of 18-34, also known as the target audience, do not watch Spanish networks on their own time. In interview after interview, it became evident that many young Latinos only watch their preferred network because it is what they watched as kids. One of the interviews that really stood out was with Kassandra Izaguirre. Throughout the interview, she used the term "novela" many times as if to explain that the only reason she chooses to watch Telemundo is purely for entertainment purposes. Like Izaguirre, many Latinos choose to only watch one network over another because it is what their parents watch (or watched). The common idea throughout the survey's written responses were that recipients only watched Univision or Telemundo because that is what they knew—it is what they grew up with. Because of this, the following question arose; When the parents of second- and third-generation Latinos die off, will Latinos continue to watch Spanish

networks like Univision or Telemundo? If the data continues this way, the possibilities of having an even deeper dip in viewership are increased.

Along with the literature presented before, the original question of which Spanish media network the audience prefers has now created an entirely new idea. Perhaps, the question shouldn't be which do they prefer, but rather, do they even still watch Univision or Telemundo for their news? As mentioned in some interviews and written responses, Univision clearly looks aesthetically pleasing. From its graphics to the type of logos used to promote the network, Univision is attracting Latinos who like the modernized, American look. However, what was received revealed more than just what Latinos prefer. Rather, it was found out that more young, targeted Latinos are not watching Univision or Telemundo. They simply catch glimpses of it when their parents have it on. Their only basis as to which network they prefer is based on what their parents watch.

From this point, the research can assume that more Latinos found within the second and third generation who do not speak or understand Spanish will leave the networks soon. While the literature expresses strong arguments for both sides, one can see how the immersion of Latinos into anglo-American culture is causing them to remove themselves from the Spanish networks.

However, one can also assume the concept of Latinos potentially returning to Spanish news even as second and third generationals—the idea of returning to their roots. Just as previously mentioned, many companies like BuzzFeed are using their platforms to ask the questions many Latinos are asking themselves today. Although the

numerical data suggest otherwise, the responses made by the interviewees suggest that perhaps Latinos prefer one network over another because they do not want to lose a portion of themselves. Whether it be because of a mother, grandmother or father figure who caused the household to pick one network for the home, perhaps Latinos are choosing to watch Univision or Telemundo not for its news, aesthetic look, or even their adolescent upbringing, but because it is part of their culture.

Therefore, it is safe to assume that a new trend can emerge. For many second and third generationals, the concept of returning back to one's original roots is more than just continuing to watch one network from another—it is about watching one network even when you do not have a need for it. Just like in Gonzalez's interview, many Latinos do not care which network they watch. They just want to keep watching one so that they can feel connected to the community. From this, the research concluded with several questions still not answered. What does it mean to "return to one's roots"? Does the Latino community care more about its culture than its image on television? Are Latinos consciously thinking about which network they prefer? While these questions are very minuscule to the overall concept of Hispanic television studies, many minute problems arise from just a misconception made by quantitative researchers.

Overall, the problem lies within the unconscious answers of the survey results and interviews. Targeted, young Latinos are not caring enough about which network they prefer. Whether they are not caring because of their age or are not thinking about the consequences of their network preferences, young Latinos need to be sought after by companies such as Univision and Telemundo.

The lack of Spanish diversity in the media today is an epidemic. Media companies need to have more awareness and understanding of the importance not only of achieving the Hispanic audience, especially as those in the targeted demographics. As mentioned before, the Spanish language should be treated by broadcasters with just as much care and thought as English. Even within the two companies' names, their mission and stance towards the Hispanic population. Univision, literally translated, is "one vision," suggesting one vision to achieve one population for one Hispanic origin within one nation. Similarly, Telemundo, literally translated, is "World-TV," indicative of the vision to achieve all aspects of the Spanish language and the dialects it possesses.

### **Conclusion**

Because of these findings, this thesis concludes with the following remarks. The idea that Univision and Telemundo have targeted demographics as far as location is concerned was correct and positively correlated with the previous McNair research. The new hypothesis that most Latinos who identify as Mexican prefer Univision over Telemundo also proved to be somewhat accurate with a few exceptions. However, the factors as to why certain Latino ethnicities preferred one network from another did not appear to be correct. From this project, it seems that Latinos offer many reasons for preferring Univision over Telemundo and vice versa. Instead of thinking culturally, the hypothesis tried to box in reasons Latinos prefer one over another when the case was much different. In the future, the research would need a larger and more diverse sample size to hear from other points of view. Based on the survey results and interviews, it

seems that one's adolescent upbringing and generational class played more of a role than whether Latinos understood one network's dialect more than another.

While there is much more research to be done on this topic, future projects can include looking into how much viewership comes from second and third generationals and if they will return to networks after leaving their parents in an effort to keep their Latin roots. While these questions are on a case-by-case basis, the developmental answers to these questions can bring important information for companies such as Univision and Telemundo regarding how they can reach their targeted audience.

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