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Spanish Translation of the Microsoft Product Reaction Cards

By V. D. Hinkle

Summary. Three Spanish translations of the Microsoft Product Reaction Cards (MPRC) tool were evaluated to determine whether there were any differences in the feedback elicited from Hispanic participants based on the type of Spanish translation provided (direct translation, translator-validated, and user-validated). The direct translation used the first Spanish word returned using Google Translate. Exact wording provided in Spanish was used as the direct translation for the English word. The translator-validated translation was created by one translator based on the results from the direct translation. The user-validated translation was created based on an online study with 52 bilingual participants in English and Spanish. Results showed that translation quality ratings were not significantly different for the translator and user-validated translation conditions. This was perhaps due to their bilingualism or the minimal differences in translation between the three Spanish versions.

INTRODUCTION

The Microsoft Product Reaction Cards (MPRC) tool developed by Microsoft researchers Joe Benedek and Trish Miner (Benedek & Miner, 2002) is typically used by usability and user experience researchers and practitioners to gauge perceived desirability of products or services. The MPRC tool has been previously validated and has been extensively used with English speaking consumers by user experience and usability researchers (Williams, Kelly & Anderson 2004; Rohrer 2009; Barnum & Palmer 2010). Since the MPRC tool has never been used in Spanish, there was a need to determine whether the tool could enhance user feedback from Hispanic consumers. The purpose of this research was to assess whether the translation quality of a Spanish version of the MPRC tool affects the feedback collected from Hispanic users. Preliminary research was needed to translate the original tool and then create Spanish versions with varying levels of translation fidelity.

CREATING THE TRANSLATION CONDITIONS

Three translations were created – direct translation, translator-validated, and user-validated. The direct translation of the MPRC was created by using the first choice provided in Spanish to the English word in Google Translate. The exact wording provided in Spanish was used as the direct translation for the English word. The translator-validated translation was created by one translator after revising the results from the direct translation. Words awkwardly translated by Google Translate were adjusted to better options in Spanish. The user-validated translation was created based on an online study with 52 bilingual participants in English and Spanish. Participants chose from the provided options in Spanish or suggested their own for a given English word from the MPRC tool. The Spanish options were based on the direct and translator-validated translations of the MPRC tool. The results from this following study helped create the user-validated translation.

METHOD

Participants

Sixty participants of Mexican descent living in the United States, age 18 years or older, volunteered to participate in the study and were compensated for their participation with a $15 electronic Amazon gift card. Participants completed an acculturation scale called the revised Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans (ARSMA-II) and answered a background

questionnaire w hich included questions about demographics, Internet experience, and language preferences. All participants felt comfortable using computers and the Internet. With the exception of tw o participants, most participants had 1 to 2 years of college education.

Materials

Online MPRC Tool. The tool included a section for answ ering the ARSMA-II acculturation questions, w hich w as used to create an acculturation score for each participant, and a section for the exercises w ith the MPRC w ords. In the MPRC section, participants w ere asked to choose as many w ords as they w anted that best reflected their general impression of a w ebsite's homepage. Once they w ere done choosing w ords, the MPRC tool prompted them to explain w hy they chose those w ords. Participants w ere randomly assigned into one of the three Spanish translation groups and also assigned to a counterbalanced presentation of the homepages.

The three translation types had the same number of w ords, 120 w ords, but varied in their Spanish translation type. There w ere 54 w ords (45%) that w ere the same across all lists. Sixty-five w ords (54%) w ere the same for tw o out of the three lists. Ten w ords (8%) w ere different in each of the three translation lists (Table 1). See **Appendix A** for a complete list of the MPRC w ords in the user-validated version.

Table 1. Unique Words by Translation Condition

MPRC word	Direct Translation	Translator-Validated	User-Validated
Businesslike	Serio	Práctico	De apariencia profesional
Calm	Calma	Calmado (a)	Tranquilo (a)
Distracting	Distraer	Que crea distracción	Que distrae
Empowering	Empoderamiento	Que da empoderamiento	Que da poder o autosuficiencia
Gets in the way	Interpone en el camino	Inoportuno (a)	Que se interpone
Inviting	Invitando	Invitador (a)	Atrayente
Low Maintenance	Bajo Mantenimiento	De bajo mantenimiento	De poco o bajo mantenimiento
Novel	Novela	Inusual	Nuevo (a), Original
Patronizing	Protector	Condescendiente	Insultante, Condescendiente
Simplistic	Simplista	Simple	Muy Simple

Homepages of Websites Selected. The homepages of the w ebsites selected for this study w ere chosen because both provide a Spanish version of the site for prospective and current Hispanic consumers. Additionally, the sites w ere chosen because they provided content and imagery specific to Hispanics in different w ays. For example, one of the sites has been identified as a successful w eb customization for Hispanic consumers (amfamlatino.com) by several experts specializing in Hispanic Marketing (Korzenny & Korzenny 2011; Kutchera 2011). The sites selected included All State (miallstate.com) and American Family Insurance (amfamlatino.com). Screenshots of the homepages w ere captured on April 30, 2012. Figure 1 show s the homepages for All State and American Family Insurance in Spanish.
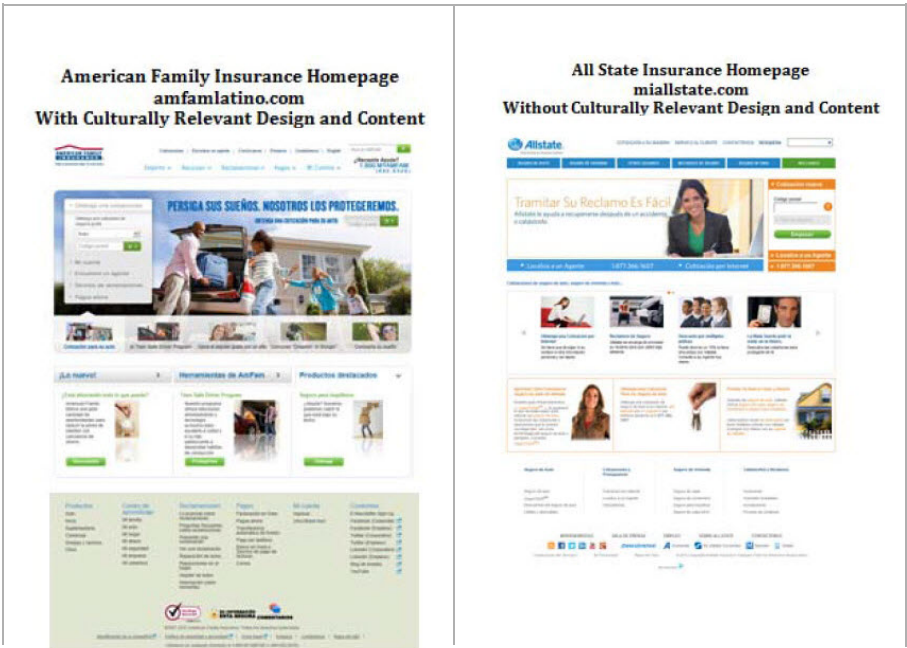
Figure 1. Selected homepages.

Procedure

Participants were asked to read an informed consent prior to committing to participation in the study via the Online MPRC tool. At the beginning of the session, participants answered acculturation questions, and then they were asked to rate their general impression of the Spanish homepages for two websites. Participants did a practice exercise to get familiar with the application prior to starting the exercises for the study. They were instructed to take a look at the image of a Spanish homepage and choose as many words from a list of 120 words (MPRC tool) to describe their impression of the Spanish homepage. Participants had an opportunity to look at all the words before committing to the final number of words from the list to describe their impressions. The MPRC tool automatically kept track of the words selected. Once participants finished choosing words to describe their general impression, they were prompted to explain why they chose those specific words. Participants then wrote their explanations inside text boxes provided next to their chosen words. Participants repeated the same steps for the second homepage. Once they had explained why they chose those words to describe their general impression of the homepage, participants were asked to rate how satisfied they were with the words provided to describe their general impressions using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = Very Satisfied; 7 = Not At All Satisfied). Participants also rated the translation quality of the words in the list using the following adjective scale:

Worst Imaginable	Awful	Poor	OK	Good	Excellent	Best imaginable
Lo Peor Posible	Horrible	Malo (a)	OK	Bueno (a)	Excelente	Lo Mejor Posible

RESULTS

A Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to determine whether the translation quality ratings were significantly different across translation conditions. The results show that the translation quality ratings were not significantly different across the different translation conditions: $X^2 (2) = 3.019$; $p = .221$ (see Table 2). The results indicated that participants overall did not perceive their assigned translated list as a bad translation despite the obvious quality of some of the words translated in the direct translation, e.g., Novel was translated as Novela which means a novel as in a type of book or a soap opera.

Table 2. Frequency Count for Translation Quality Rating by Translation Condition

Translation Quality Rating	Translation Type		
	Direct Translation	Translator Validated	User Validated
Poor - 3	0	0	1
Ok - 4	2	2	3
Good - 5	4	3	6
Excellent - 6	11	11	8
Best Imaginable - 7	3	4	2
Total	20	20	20

A one-way ANOVA with type of translation as a between variable and acculturation score as the dependent variable was conducted to determine whether there were any significant differences in the participant's acculturation ratings within each of the translation conditions. The mean acculturation score for the direct translation condition was $M = -0.15$ ($SD=.48$), for the translator validated condition was $M = -0.06$ ($SD = .55$), and for the user validated condition was $M = -0.08$ ($SD =.71$). The one-way ANOVA showed that the mean acculturation scores were not significantly different across condition groups $F(2, 57) = 2.62$, $p = .886$ (see Figure 2). Table 3 provides the cutoffs for determining acculturation levels based on acculturation scores.
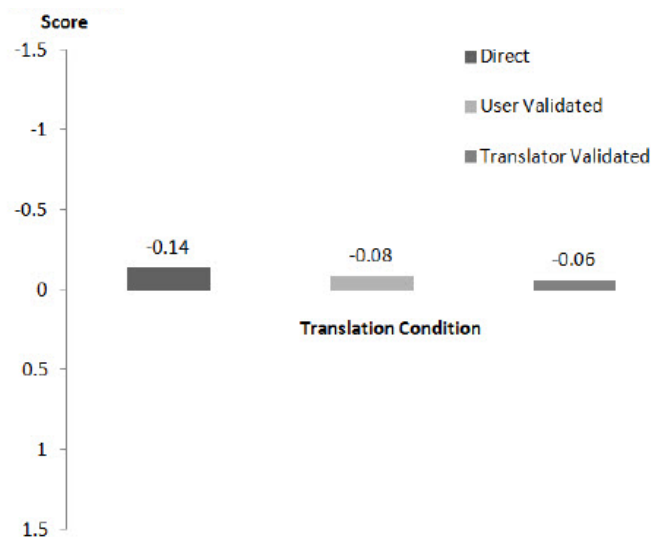
Acculturation
Score

Figure 2. Acculturation ratings by translation condition.

Table 3. Cutoffs for Acculturation Levels Based on Acculturation Scores

Acculturation level	Cutoff for Acculturation Scores
Very Mexican Oriented	< -1.33
Mexican Oriented to Approximately Balanced Bicultural	> or = to -1.33 and < or = to -.07
Slightly Anglo Oriented Bicultural	> -.07 and < 1.19
Strongly Anglo Oriented	> or = to 1.19 and < 2.45
Very Assimilated, Anglicized	> 2.45

DISCUSSION

Translation quality ratings w ere not significantly different depending on the translation condition. The ARSMA-II acculturation scores indicated that all participants w ere bicultural and bilingual in English and Spanish. Perhaps bilingualism compensates for poor quality of translation and this w as something reflected on the translation quality ratings as some of the latest research report from the Pew Hispanic Center show s that Hispanics seem to be reading new s in English more than in previous years (Hugo Lopez & Gonzalez-Barrera, 2013). Since the majority of the participants w ere college educated and computer and Internet savvy, something that is not very common w ith Hispanics w ith low acculturation scores, this could also have been an influencing factor on the translation quality ratings. The lack of statistically significant differences for the translation quality ratings could have been a result of the bicultural background of the participants in the study. This may also be due to the fact that there w ere only 10 w ords w hich varied among the translation types. Due to the minimal number of unique w ords betw een the translator and user validated lists, it seems like a translator can adequately perform the job w ithout the need of recruiting participants to validate the translation for each MPRC w ord.

Because participants w ere bicultural, w ith similar degrees of biculturalism, more research needs to be conducted w ith less acculturated individuals w ith different levels of education, language proficiency in English and computer know ledge. It is entirely possible that the results w ould be different if conducted w ith less acculturated Hispanic participants.

This study had several limitations. Because the study w as conducted online, it is entirely possible that the results w ould vary w hen conducted in person. Typically, user experience and usability sessions that are conducted in person tend to yield richer results than those conducted via online tools. In terms of being able to generalize the findings, this study w as limited to American Hispanics of Mexican descent. While the w ords w ere translated w ith the idea of keeping a universal Spanish translation in place, it is necessary to validate that the w ords are the most common translation across different ethnic groups in the Hispanic population.

CONCLUSION

Translation types used in this study did not matter to Hispanic participants of Mexican descent. They seemed resilient to translation quality w hich is not surprising due to the great disparity of

translation quality they typically encounter online. While their translation quality and satisfaction ratings w ere not significantly different based on translation conditions, it is possible that the lack of significance is rooted in their biculturalism, English proficiency, and overall expectations based on previous experience w ith Spanish versions of w ebsites in the United States. It also seems unnecessary to have a user-validation of the translated MPRC w ords, since a small percentage of unique translations for the MPRC w ords occurred based on the translation condition. To fully understand the impact of Spanish translation quality on the user experience of Hispanic participants, an acculturation measure is needed to understand the degree of difference it w ill make to the Hispanic users. It seems that bicultural, and therefore bilingual, Hispanics did not perceive differences on translation quality of the different Spanish versions tested in this study, but these findings may be very different for Hispanics w ith low proficiency in English and w ho are less acculturated.

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APPENDIX A

User-validated translation into Spanish of the Microsoft Product Reaction Cards Tool

[list](#)

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