Laughing with Los Angelenos:
The Production of Gender
As Heard on Spanish-language Radio

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Landscape of Radio

Number of Spanish-language Radio Stations

Year


67  317  603  700
Billboard photo for
“El Cucuy” (Boogeyman)

Promotional photo for
“El Piolín” (Tweety Bird)
LA’s Top Radio Hosts

El Piolin taking his U.S. citizenship oath

El Cucuy advertising his “votos por America” eleven city voter registration and citizenship bus tour
Commonly Heard Sounds

- Horns
- Buzzers
- Water dripping
- Heavy sighs
- Birds chirping
- Pages flipping
- Door opening/shutting
- Footsteps
- Kisses (smooches)
- Zippers
- Male Host (narrator) and Other voices (women, “foreigner,” and los gay)
Gringo en Luna de Miel (1:46)

Narrator: [Laughter] A gringo and a mexicana get married and spend their honeymoon in Cancun! [wax music]. There in Cancun with the sun, sand, and beach, the ambiance, Cozumel the hotels [birds chirping]. They stay in a beautiful suite for newlyweds and spend two or three days without leaving the room, even to eat! After the third day, they descend to the hotel lobby to eat. There the hotel manager sees them and approaches the gringo and asks.

Hotel Manager: [In an accented English] Excuse me, Mr. Smith?

gringo: Yeah, I am John Smith.

Hotel Manager: [in English] Oh hello, Mr. Smith, [In Spanish] I am very happy to meet you. I’m the hotel manager; it’s a pleasure to personally serve you. I wanted to thank you for choosing to spend your honeymoon at the best hotel in Cancun. [water pouring/sound of dishes]. How is everything, Mr. Smith? How has the hotel treated you?
gringo: [Slowly in an exaggerated Spanish accent] Oh marvelous. Excellent. In the morning, I throw myself on the terraza. In the afternoon, I throw myself on the terraza. In the evening, I throw myself on the terraza. And at night, I throw myself on the terraza.

Narrator: The wife turns around and replies…

mexicana: My name is Te-re-sa, you idiot. [Laugh Track/closing jingle]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>00:15</td>
<td>‘Magic-wand-time-warp’ sound effect and alarm clock ringing</td>
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<tr>
<td>00:15</td>
<td>Sighs, heavy breathing, murmurs; birds chirping begins</td>
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<tr>
<td>00:15</td>
<td>Woman’s voice: have you awakened, my love?</td>
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<tr>
<td>00:15</td>
<td>Man’s voice: almost [yawns]</td>
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<tr>
<td>00:15</td>
<td>Sighs, heavy breathing, murmurs; birds chirping begins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>00:15</td>
<td>Woman’s voice: did you like our first night together, my love?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>00:15</td>
<td>Man’s voice: uh-huh [yawns]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>00:15</td>
<td>Woman’s voice: Gosh I’d like a cup of coffee</td>
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<tr>
<td>00:15</td>
<td>Man’s voice: Me too, I’d like a cup of coffee</td>
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<tr>
<td>00:15</td>
<td>Woman’s voice: My love? [pause]</td>
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<tr>
<td>00:15</td>
<td>Man’s voice: Yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>00:15</td>
<td>Woman’s voice: Do you make coffee?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>00:15</td>
<td>Woman’s voice: Or do you not know how to make that either?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>00:15</td>
<td>[Laugh track/station identification]</td>
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</tbody>
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Questions

• How can linguists inform media studies? (speaker/listener = producer/consumer)
• How is Spanish-language radio not just a “site” of identity politics but also of gender and immigration?
• How is California-based immigration politics also that of non-Californian immigrants?
• How does California-based Spanish-language media influence national and transnational listeners?