Chicano English

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Chicano English

States of the USA
Chicano English

Traditional dialect areas of white English in the USA
Chicano English
Spanish speakers in Texas
Chicano English is a term used to describe the English of Latin American immigrants to the United States. Most of these are from Mexico and the label probably derives from the name of that country. This variety of English shows features of Spanish, especially in phonology.
Self-perception of the Chicanos
Self-perception of Chicano English

I have lots of Chicano friends who speak English, but do not speak Spanish. These persons are *monolingual*. Yet, many of my monolingual friends choose to mix in words in Spanish. Linguists have documented this as a dialect of English known as *Chicano English*. Originally people thought that *Chicano English* wasn’t even a separate dialect of English, that it was just the way that people spoke when their first language was Spanish (“making mistakes”, and with an “accent”). But while *Chicano English* is influenced by Spanish in a general way, we now know that it is its own separate dialect, not just a “Spanish accent” because there are *monolingual* English speakers who don’t know any Spanish, and yet still speak *Chicano English*. 
"Kids of color and working-class kids," explains Otto Santa Ana, a linguist at UCLA, grow up speaking "an organic dialect, a language of their community." Santa Ana has an appointment in the Department of Chicana/o Studies and has written extensively on Chicano English in Los Angeles. He says "there is no linguistic problem" with students who speak any of the various non-standard English variants, which are often mistaken for broken English or for English learned as a second language. It's just that "standard English is a dialect that they acquire."
Prejudice against non-English speakers?
To a native Spanish speaker the English verb "molest" is what linguists call a "false friend." It sounds a lot like the Spanish verb *molestar*, but doesn't mean exactly the same thing.
Linguistic features of Chicano English

Vowel variations
Chicano English speakers merge æ and ɛ, so *man* and *men* are homophonous as. ɪ and i mergers into [i], so *ship* and *sheep* are pronounced like the latter.

Final consonant deletion
The rules of Spanish allow only [n], [l], [s], [r], and [y] to occur at the end of words. All other single consonants in English would thus be unfamiliar to Chicano English speakers in this environment. This means that words which end in consonant cluster have this simplified, e.g. *most* becomes "mos"; *felt* becomes "fell", *start* becomes "star".
Consonant variations

The devoicing of [z] in all environments: Examples: [isi] for easy; [wʌs/was] for was.
The devoicing of [v] in word-final position: Examples: [lʌf] for love; [hɛf/xɛf] for have; [wajfs] for wives; and [lajfs] for lives.

Chicano speakers may realize /v/ as a [b]: Examples: live [lib], invite [inbait]. They pronounce TH as a single D or T/S/F, so that is pronounced [dɛt] and think may be pronounced [tink], [fink] or [sink].
The realization of Y for J [dʒ] and the realization of J for Y, so:
joking is [joukɪŋ], you is [dʒu], jet is [jɛt], just is [jʌs] and, yet is [dʒɛt].
M at the end of a words becomes [ŋ] or [], so welcome is [welkən] or [welkəŋ]. Words with a G sounding like [dʒ] are pronounced like [ʒ], so:
change is [ʃeɪnʒ]. /ʃ/ merges with /ʃ/, so sheep and cheap are pronounced like [ʃip].
R is pronounced as a flap, so ready is [rɛdi]
Did You Barely Call Me?

Speakers of Chicano English and other variants "maintain solidarity with those linguistic features" which "signal … home and community," according to Santa Anna. Their speech gives comfort and promotes camaraderie. It may also employ double negatives and other non-standard forms that are not often welcome at school.

Chicano English, for example, has some "lexical items" that are specific to the language, according to linguist Carmen Fought in her book Chicano English in Context. The words fool ("dude" or "guy"), kick it ("hang around"), and barely ("just recently") take on altered senses in the amiable phrase, "Hey fool, don't you wanna kick it? You barely got here." Differences in pronunciation may be noticed, for example, in the dropping of "g" from the suffix "-ing" and in intonation, so that the second syllable of "running" sounds more like "een."
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Chicano English in Context

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2002

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Chicano English

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