

[file:///Users/bill/Desktop/Pardon My Spanglish! « Athenaeum of Greatness.webarchive](file:///Users/bill/Desktop/Pardon%20My%20Spanglish!%20«%20Athenaeum%20of%20Greatness.webarchive)

# A T H E N A E U M O F G R E A T N E S S

An online portfolio of reviews,  
musings, and commentary

« [The Athenaeum of Greatness](#)

POSTED MARCH 11TH 2009

[Craig's Page](#) »

## Pardon My Spanglish!

*Pardon My Spanglish* ([website](#)) is a new book by [Bill Santiago](#), a hilarious comedian based in the US. (Check out his [videos](#) on YouTube). The book is a wonderful and informative exploration of everything Spanglish—and full of irreverent jibes at both Spanish and English purists. As Santiago himself says, Spanglish has “twice the vocabulary, and half the grammar.”

I had the pleasure to work for [Quirk Books](#) and served as a consultant editor to the volume. If you don't know Quirk, it's a small press based in Philly founded by the guy who co-wrote the well known worst case scenario survival guides. They publish quite a few excellent books and coined the term “irreference”—irreverent, funny books that are still informative.

The best part about *Pardon My Spanglish* is that it's actually written in Spanglish with some English and Spanish thrown in for good measure. Take this example:

Sounds wacky, *pero funciona*. Faking it, *estar* pretending, *puede ser un* powerful tool *para* self-*mejoramiento*. Behave *como si ya fueras un* Spanglish speaker, and you become the Spanglish speaker *que tanto deseas ser*.

It gives you the rules of Spanglish and identifies several types of Spanglish. One of these you may know already is gringo Spanglish, like when someone says “That's good *guac*.” Santiago loves all kinds of Spanglish and includes loads of examples overheard in real life.

The book's most important contribution—besides its humor, of course—is its attempt to teach an appreciation of the contributions and creativity of Spanglish as a hybrid language with its own rules. It's not just a random amalgamation of Spanish and English—it's using words from one language in the other that have untranslatable or powerful meanings (like using *pow pow* in Spanish when threatening a child or *caderas* in English as opposed to the monosyllabic 'hips').

This book is definitely worth the \$10 price on Amazon. Check out Santiago's videos and, if you have the chance, go see him live!

This entry was posted on March 11, 2009 at 2:22 am and is filed under [Literature](#), [Reviews](#) with tags [bill santiago](#), [comedy](#), [quirk](#), [review](#), [spanglish](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed You can [leave a response](#), or [trackback](#) from your own site.