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Despite growing assimilation,
the Spanish language travels as well

Hispanic population follows job market out to the suburbs

By GEORGE SWISSHELM

Hispanic-Americans have become one of the fastest growing special markets in the U.S. Now an estimated 21.2 million strong, with total spending power of \$163 billion, according to Strategy Research Corp., Hispanics are also spreading out from their traditional central city locations. They're following jobs both to the suburbs and to smaller towns surrounding their chief population centers. And they're settling in new cities as well. Dr. Leo Estrada, professor of demography at UCLA's School of Urban Planning, reports tracking a number of trends, some bearing further investigation, and others that are more apparent.

One of the more apparent, says Estrada, is "suburbanization of the Latino population. Because there's less discrimination against Latinos than other groups, they face fewer barriers to moving to where the jobs are. And more and more jobs are turning up in the suburbs."

SRC's new 1988 Los Angeles Hispanic Market report documents Estrada's observations. SRC shows a 34.9% increase in numbers of Hispanics in Los Angeles County

itself between 1980 and 1988, to the point that the county's 2,787,200 Hispanics now make up 32.3% of Los Angeles County's population.

During the same period the number of Hispanics jumped 39.2% in Orange County, 42.6% in Ventura County, 52% in Riverside West and nearly 61% in San Bernardino County.

But what Dr. Estrada is talking about is by no means limited to California markets. In Chicago, Jesse Wilson, executive vice president, marketing research director for San Jose Associates, has tracked and mapped upward mobility of Chicago Hispanics based on changing enrollments in elementary schools. Notes Wilson, "Because Hispanic families tend to be so tightly knit, parents don't want to get their kids involved in long-distance busing. They want them in nearby neighborhood schools. That's enabled us to follow family movement out of their point-of-entry neighborhoods. These are in the older parts of town with the lowest cost housing that used to be populated mainly by immigrants from middle European countries, whose own kids are now grown and living in the suburbs."

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