Spanish Literacy and the Academic Success of Latino High School Students: Codeswitching as a Classroom Resource[1]

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Abstract: *Bilingual Latino high school students who studied Spanish as an academic subject demonstrated a heightened awareness of how to use their two languages as complementary resources in school and professional settings. A case study traces one student's literacy development in Spanish over four years and her ability to use it as a resource in her development of academic English in a college setting. Analysis of videotaped classroom presentations illustrates how an instructor's acceptance of student codeswitching, along with his selective use of codeswitching in his own interaction with students, created an academic environment that validated students' home language patterns but at the same time maintained Spanish as the classroom norm. Students' performance on national Spanish language tests, as well as their enrollment in college preparatory classes, suggest areas for further research on high school retention and preparation for postsecondary education.*

Introduction: The Problem

Latino students have historically had the highest school drop-out rates of all the major U.S. population groups. Recent figures from the U.S. Census Bureau indicate that, whereas young African-American adults (ages 25 to 29) have finished high school at about the same rate as young white adults (86% and 88% respectively), only 62% of young Hispanic adults have done so (Reisberg 1998). Even more disheartening, this rate has risen only 2% over the past decade. Looked at another way, nearly 40% of young adults in what is soon to become the largest minority population group in the United States (36 million by the year 2005) are not completing high school (Holmes 1998). The number going on to obtain college degrees is a small 11%.

At the same time that such a large percentage of U.S. residents are not graduating from high school, the U.S. business community has been requesting special visas for foreign workers with "high-tech" skills. In 1998, Congress was asked to increase the previous annual limit of H-1B visas from 65,00 to 115,000 by the year 2002. (Puzzanghera 1998). Within one year, all the visas allotted for the three-year period had been issued, plus at least 10,000 unaccounted for, and new

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legislation was introduced to increase the allotment to 200,000 per year ("Glitch Allows," 1999). The link between the education of all students, whatever their socioeconomic backgrounds, and the well-being of the whole society, is one that is all too often invisible.

For educators, the immediate concern is to address the question embedded in our current drop-out figures, which ndirectly affects the national issue of too few skilled workers for positions in high-tech industries. What would it ake to improve the high school completion and college attendance rates of millions of American Latino young people, so that this extraordinary request for educated vorkers from other countries would be unnecessary?

We report here on one promising approach to language eaching for adolescent Latinos that both engages them in heir academic subjects and gives them incentive to prepare or future college work in many different subjects. A case tudy portrays one student's literacy development in panish over a four-year period and follows her into two ollege English classes. A description of how the teacher nd students selectively used Spanish/English *codeswitching* the alternation between two or more language varieties vithin the same conversation) in five separate lessons (literature/discussion and direct grammar instruction) illustrates the environment that was created to enhance academic success. Finally, student performance on nationally ecognized placement tests in Spanish — along with their nrollment in college preparatory classes and graduation ates — suggest the potential of this approach.

Our intended audience is present and future policy akers in U. S. education at the national, state, and especially local levels. In our uniquely American tradition, for etter or for worse, the real decisions about how we serve ur children are made at the local level by individuals who ave a vision about what is possible for our children and ur teachers. This study suggests ways to enhance the high chool graduation rate of a large and growing number of atino children. It also contributes to an awareness of language use that exists in the multicultural and multilingual nited States, by recognizing codeswitching (all too often onsidered a liability for bilinguals) as the linguistic source that it is. Although the colonial language of ngland has triumphed over its competitors from France nd Spain, the speakers of Spanish continue to immigrate *El Norte* from Mexico, Central America, and South merica. This migration has contributed to what Fishman 967) has termed a broad "diglossic" situation between nglish and Spanish among bilingual speakers, who use nglish as a public (or high) language and Spanish as a private (or low) language. Codeswitching between languages nong bilinguals is a well-documented and natural consequence of the coexistence of English and Spanish over the ur centuries since the American continents were colonized by Europeans.

Background

The current study builds on a previous three-year collaborative project between a state university and a suburban high school district with about 20% Latino students in the midst of Silicon Valley in northern California. At the beginning of the project, the Latinos — like others in their ethnic group — were dropping out of high school in disproportionate numbers, with only 5% to 6% of them going on to college. This was the case despite the fact that they lived within easy commuting distance of six community colleges, a state university, and two world-class universities. Funded by the California Academic Partnership Program (CAPP), the Campbell Union High School District (CUHSD) and San José State University (SJSU) together developed a Spanish for Spanish Speakers (SSSP) program[2] for students in the ninth through twelfth grades (Quintanar-Sarellana et al. 1993). Concerned about the lack of participation by Latino students in foreign language classes in Spanish, school and university educators recognized the inappropriateness of traditional foreign language instruction for students from homes where Spanish is spoken (Valdés et al. 1981). Few native-speaking students were enrolling in the existing Spanish foreign language classes, finding themselves bored by elementary pronunciation drills and not challenged to develop literacy skills equivalent to their speaking and listening skills. Directors of the CAPP program believed that a new focus on functional proficiency within the foreign language teaching profession finally made conditions ripe for capitalizing on the oral skills these students would bring to the classroom.

As is the case with many education programs funded by grant money, when outside funding disappeared, the school district was not able to continue a highly successful peer tutoring program between the SSSP classes and the foreign language classes. At a time of severe budget cutting at the state level, even the nationally praised oral proficiency exams that had been given to all foreign language students in the district were temporarily discontinued.

To help replace the discontinued grant money, local fund-raising projects were initiated within one of the schools to help pay the fees for students who wanted to take the College Board Advanced Placement (AP) exam in Spanish. One of the teachers most active in this fund-raising, Manuel Colón, had been a student teacher in the SSSP program under the CAPP grant and thus understood the value of the now-defunct peer-tutoring and year-end oral proficiency exams. He reasoned that the potential college credit offered by the AP exam and his students' successful competition with the best and the brightest students nationally would reinforce the value of their literacy skills

in Spanish. This national placement exam would essentially take the place of the peer tutoring and district oral exams that had been eliminated with the loss of outside funding for the SSCP program: It might provide incentive for more of the Latino students to complete high school, plan for college entrance, and obtain the college credits that come with passing the exam. The local state university grants six semester units of credit for scores of 3 and above (on a 5-point scale), which gives students a stake in future college attendance.

Because the exam fee ($74) was out of the reach of most of his students and because the group had never before been encouraged to take the exam, Colón and his students raised the money for all but $10 of the fee through a variety of activities. He reasoned that if the money barrier were removed and all students were encouraged to take the exam, they would experience both individual and collective academic success from this outside evaluation. As we began our collaborative project in 1995, Colón had been teaching in the SSSP program at Prospect High School for two years, using the curriculum established by the initial CAPP grant and encouraging all students to sit for the AP Spanish Language exam whenever they felt ready.[3]

Rationale for the Focus on Codeswitching

Our project might be viewed as the maturation stage of the original curriculum for the highly successful SSSP program, in that it expanded a previous teaching unit on language awareness to include a focus on *codeswitching*. Our rationale for including an examination of codeswitching in the SSSP curriculum was similar to that for the previous study of Spanish dialects. There is a hierarchy of dialects within every world language. Speakers of a low-prestige dialect, either geographic or social, experience disparagement of their speech — both outside and inside the classroom — which can have negative effects on their academic performance (Rickford 1996; Baugh 1998). Those bilinguals who engage in the practice of codeswitching often experience even greater disdain for their language use than do speakers of nonstandard dialects. Monolingual speakers (and even some bilinguals who learned their two languages separately and now use them for distinctly different functions) frequently perceive codeswitching as reflecting a lack of knowledge of either language. However, rather than a lack of knowledge, codeswitching reflects fluency in both languages, which in turn permits a structured alternation between the two codes. As Rodolfo Jacobson observes in his introduction to *Codeswitching Worldwide:* "alternation between codes in bilingual discourse is more than a random phenomenon occurring now in one language and then in the other but is rather a structured mechanism of selection of two or more languages in the construction of sentences" (1998, 1).

Following Jacobson, we have used the ter "codeswitching" to indicate more than the isolated bo rowing of single words or phrases. In this study, it include both isolated switches at the phrase or clause level, as we as the construction of whole stretches of discourse in tw different languages within the same conversation. Th extensive work of Myers-Scotton (1993a; 1993b) o codeswitching among a variety of language types reveal that one language is always used as the matrix languag (contributing the primary grammatical morphemes), and second or third is used as the embedded language (con tributing lexical morphemes). A fluent user of codeswitch ing can vary the choice of which language is the matri and which is the embedded one at different points in th conversation.

It is this ability to *choose* that is the distinguishin characteristic of bilinguals who can codeswitch: knowin when, where, and how often to switch between their code (Valdés 1981; Myers-Scotton 1993a; Milroy and Muyske 1995; Zentella 1997). As the systematic study of the phe nomenon is beginning to reveal, codeswitching does con versational "work" between bilinguals that neither of thei languages can do separately. In short, rather than indicat ing that bilingual speakers know neither language well fluent codeswitching is evidence of their knowledge of th structures of more than one language and of speaker understanding of where it is appropriate to use then together. Those who codeswitch are always bilingual, bu not all bilinguals codeswitch. Codeswitching between lan guages is a choice made by fluent bilinguals.

More personal reasons for the focus on codeswitchin arose from the experiences of three of the researchers. As teacher trainer, Patricia Nichols had observed both teacher of a bilingual kindergarten class and an instructo of adult education refer to students' use of two language in one conversation as evidence that the students had "n language." As a college student, Manuel Colón ha observed that his own performance in both Spanish an English improved dramatically after he studied with a pro fessor who validated the use of codeswitching as natura for bilinguals and who had used it in his own publishe poetry. A third member of the research team, Rosalind Quintanar, had observed prospective teachers in her bilin gual education classes express concern about their own use of codeswitching with bilingual friends and in thei bilingual classrooms. We suspected that the widespread (and internalized) disparagement of their everyday lan guage would have a serious effect on SSSP students' aca demic aspirations and performance, similar to that described in the literature for minority dialects. We rea soned that including codeswitching as an academic topic, one worthy of study, could have positive results similar to

hose of the study of dialect variation, by helping both stu-lents and teachers recognize it as a resource rather than a leficiency in language use.

We introduced the new material on codeswitching in hree phases: (1) observation of natural language, (2) nalysis of codeswitching in videotaped taped and live dra-natic presentations, and (3) analysis of codeswitching in udiotaped peer and family conversations. For the obser-ation phase, students were asked to keep notes in class ournals of examples of codeswitching heard among their ers and in their communities. These examples were dis-ussed in class, along with articles on Spanish/English odeswitching written in both languages (Valdés 1976; paracio 1990).

For the analysis of codeswitching used in theatrical roductions, students were shown a videotape of Luis aldez' one-act play, *Los vendidos*, and they also read the lay's printed script (Valdez 1967). After discussion of aldez' dialogue choices, students in small groups modi-ed his script, making dialogue changes where they felt deswitching could exist in natural conversation, and esented their revised skits to the class. Students also tended a live production of a more recent play, *Barrio* by m Anselmo Gill, which was followed by class discussion. udents did not revise the dialogue for this play, since a inted script was not available.

The final phase of preparation focused on students' e of codeswitching with classmates, family, and friends. irs of students taped their own conversations within the ssroom, transcribing them by hand and then entering em into a computer. At the conclusion of these typed nscripts, students wrote brief analyses of why they had deswitched at specific points, based on information they d gleaned from class readings and discussions. They npared when and why codeswitching took place in their n conversations with examples used in Valdez' one-act y. When we later compared these transcriptions with ual tapes of students' conversations, we recognized that challenging task of transcribing their own spoken dia-ue into writing might be useful for both developing and essing literacy in their two languages. Students who had iculty with the task transcribed only a portion of their versations, exhibiting difficulty in determining word ndaries and using conventional spelling.

In the process of these pedagogical activities, we col-ed some videotapes of class activities and noted that the her, Manuel Colón, used some limited codeswitching self in structuring the class lessons. For the second of the project, five 50-minute lessons were videotaped tudy instructional uses of codeswitching in the SSSP ses. In the process, patterns of codeswitching for spe-students also emerged; these patterns reflected stu-ts' awareness of the appropriate contexts for codeswitching within the classroom setting.

Findings

The findings will be divided into three parts: (1) an individual case study of academic development over four years (class journals, AP examination results, student autobiographical narrative); (2) a description of language used in the classroom for different types of lessons and activities by both teacher and students (five 50-minute videotaped lessons); and (3) indications of group academic success, which suggest directions for future research (performance on AP examinations, enrollment in college preparatory courses, and retention rates).

Case Study of Academic Performance

We have allocated the most space to a case study of one student who was in the SSSP program for all four of her high school years, because the detailed evidence of her language development provides a rare window on the emergence of literacy in a heritage language. Because the development of academic literacy typically takes more than four years, either in the first or second language, the progress of this student is particularly noteworthy and reflects the academic progress that students can make in a supportive classroom environment.

To protect her privacy, we will call this student "Marta." Because Marta's writing in these journals was done on a regular basis in timed segments over the four-year period, it provides an in-depth overview of one student's development of Spanish literacy. Marta's journals consisted of brief entries on topics assigned by Colón: a topic of the student's choice, social issues, the family, women and men, personal identity, and reflections on movies, holidays, and lectures. The goals of the in-class journal writing were to promote written expression (in either Spanish or English) free from concern about grammar and spelling conventions and to provide ideas for class discussions. Colón monitored the writing to ensure that all students complied, but he neither read the journals nor commented on what students had written. He used the journals to promote written fluency and to generate oral discussions. Prior to our decision to examine the writings for examples of codeswitching, he had collected (but had not previously read) the journal entries we discuss below.

Born in the United States, Marta initially spoke Spanish at home but, by the time she entered high school, was using English, primarily, with her siblings. For the class journals, Marta chose to write in Spanish, even though students had been given permission to use either language (or both). Illustrating her understanding that Spanish was the target language of the class, Marta used only six English words over four academic years, and she set each of them off with quotation marks — to mark them

as "foreign" in the context of her Spanish class.

Early journal entries reflect the fact that the SSSP class was her ffrst exposure to the formal study of her home language: She had very limited literacy in Spanish when she began. The spelling of her early entries reflects an active learner struggling to figure out the orthographic system of a language that she speaks and understands but does not read or write (Perfetti et al. 1997):

Yo espero de esta clase apreder del hitorico de mexico y de otros paises de spanoeblates.	In this class I hope to learn about the history of Mexico and other Spanish-speaking countries.
Yo quer mehora me lecturo me escritura, me vocablario y otras cosas qe me budar ayudar.	I want to improve my reading, my writing, my vocabulary, and other things that can help me.
Yo quiero mejarar estas cosas porqe yo pienso qe es emportante Saber dos idonas y intendelos para me futuro.	I want to improve these things because I think that it is important to know two languages and to understand them for my future.
No tengo comentario para usted. (9/4/92)	I do not have any comments for you.

In this and other early entries, Marta uses her prior knowledge of the English orthographic system in her attempts to spell words in Spanish:

Marta's Spelling		Spanish Target
1. qe	→	que
2. me	→	mi
3. telephono	→	teléfono
4. communidad	→	comunidad
5. hente	→	gente
6. abla	→	habla
7. hente	→	gente
8. mayana	→	mañana
9. eya	→	ella

The last two very common Spanish words, *mañana* and *ella*, contain palatals that do not occur in the English orthographic system, so Marta uses a y, which represents an English palatal sound and thus is the nearest equivalent in the system she knows. Examples 6 and 7 contain letters common to English and Spanish that have different sound equivalents in the two languages, and Marta's invented spelling again reveals her reliance on the English orthographic system. The letter h represents a silent sound in Spanish, and, not having figured out the Spanish spelling system, Marta writes *habla* as it sounds: "abla." Since the letter g is pronounced in Spanish like the sound written as **h** in English in some environments, Marta quite logically spells *gente* as "hente," using her spelling rules for English.

Other spelling attempts reflect a mishearing of the Spanish word and focus on the how the word sounds to her. The orthographic system she is using seems to be a blend of Spanish and English:

Marta's Spelling		Spanish Target
10. buden	→	pueden
11. idomas	→	idiomas
12. entendelos	→	entenderlos
13. hue	→	fue

Another kind of learning strategy over the four years is reflected in her use of diacritic marks. Given in chronological order below, the three examples of her use of the tilde (~), which is conventionally placed over the Spanish palatalized nasal, reflect her stages in learning to use it correctly:

Marta's Spelling		Spanish Target
14. espanõl	→	español
15. espaniol	→	español
16. ayo	→	año

Example 15 shows her approximation of the palatal nasal by adding an **i** to the English nasal. Example 16 shows her using a English palatal y (compare Examples 8 and 9 above), which she then lines out and writes correctly as the Spanish word *año*. In these unread and uncorrected journals, this student has clearly taken advantage of the opportunity to experiment with her growing understanding of conventionally written Spanish and, in a classroom environment of rich language input, has eventually figured out the general rules for usage.

Another entry in her second year exhibits a different kind of self-monitoring. As she struggles with how to represent irregular forms of the verb *poder*, first Marta gives an incorrect form and then — in the very next sentence — a correct one:

Buede ser calquiera de los dos, depende en como lo ves.	It can be either one of the two, depending on how you see it.
Puedes verlo positivo se lo ves en manera que ... (10/27/93)	You can see it positively, if you see it in that way...

Marta's increased fluency in these journals is an even more telling indication of her growing understanding of academic Spanish. As most composition teachers can verify, the amount of writing students produce within a set time period reflects their confidence and experience in

using the conventions of writing. Figure 1 shows that the average number of lines for her journal entries was relatively stable for the first two years (less than 8 lines per entry) but jumped dramatically by the third year — almost doubling to 14 and 15 lines for her last two years.

This dramatic increase in the amount of writing for the timed class journal writings reflects the three-year minimum needed to attain writing fluency by most younger students experiencing formal schooling in their home language for the first time (see *Every Child a Reader*, by the California Department of Education. 1995). Because Marta's early educational experience had been restricted to instruction in English for non-native speakers rather than a bilingual education program designed to develop academic skills in both of her languages, the SSSP program was her first exposure to the formal study of Spanish. Thus, the three years needed to achieve written fluency in her native language parallels the timespan needed by native speakers of English in the early grades.

Because Marta is a far more intellectually sophisticated than an early childhood learner, a 25-line written entry on "Machismo" written in her fourth year reveals the complex social thinking of a young adult, and it contrasts sharply with a brief four-sentence entry in her first year on what she hoped to learn in the Spanish class:

Machismo es cuando el hombre siente control total sobre la mujer en general. Machismo afecta a la mujer de muchas mañeras. Por ejemplo para una mujer es deficil tratao de ser una individual o salir adelante en los estudios y sus vidas porque los machismos crean que deben quedarse en la casa y no les gusta la idea de que la mujer se educe o piense por sí misma porque pierde el control que tiene sobre ella. La sociedad en general tiene la culpa de que alguien sea machisto porque es aseptado por la sociedad, por las mujer de ser inferiores. Por una parte hay mujer iqual que hombres que crean que asino tiene que ser. Tambień hay mujers y hombres que siente que debe cambiar pero no asen nada para ellos mismos para aser el cambio, no ponen esfuerso. Pienso que siempre a existido el machismo por la razón que el hombre siempre a sido fisicamente mas fuerte que la mujer que ase que la mujer esta de deventaja en el mundo. (11/14/95)	Machismo is when the man feels total control over the woman in general. Machismo affects the woman in many ways. For example, it is difficult for a woman to try to be an individual or to succeed in their studies and their lives because macho men believe that they should stay at home and they do not like the idea that the woman get an education or think for herself because [they] lose the control that [they] have over her. Society in general is to blame for macho people because it is accepted by society, by women that they are inferior. On the other hand, there are women as well as men who believe that it should not be like this. There are also women and men who feel that this has to change but who do not do anything for themselves to bring about this change, they do not make an effort. I think that machismo has always existed for the reason that the man has always been physically stronger than the woman which causes the woman to be at a disadvantage in the world.

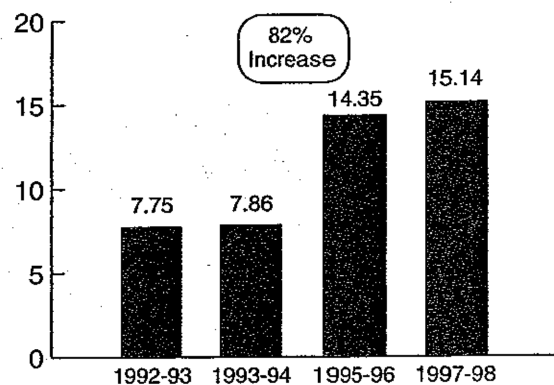
In this entry, Marta uses cohesive devises to mark transitions in her argument, embedded clauses, and the complex tense marking needed to signal distinctions between what is and what might be if relations between men and women were more equal. To be sure, her writing is not free from error, but as a first draft this classroom journal entry compares favorably with many English-only essays of college-bound students who are seniors in California high schools.

Marta's oral fluency increased along with her growing written fluency. She reported that during her first year in the SSSP class, she never entered into class discussions. By her third year, she was doing volunteer work at a local attorney's office and could translate fluently and accurately for clients who needed her services. That same year she took and passed the AP Spanish language exam, achieving the highest possible score (5).

In an oral presentation for a conference of bilingual educators, Marta described her continuing language growth as a freshman at a local community college (Nichols and Colón 1998). Taking two separate English composition courses, she had experimented with the different strategies required by the two instructors and discovered that using both of her languages in the draft stage

Figure 1

AVERAGE NUMBER OF LINES PER JOURNAL ENTRY FOR MARTA'S JOURNALS



of a composition was essential. For the instructor who insisted on English only from start to finish and who was rigorous about the academic conventions at every stage, she produced essays that were inferior in his eyes and in her own. For the instructor who encouraged her to use whatever language came first to mind in her early drafts, then convert to English at the final stage, she produced essays of much better quality — ones of which she was proud and that were graded "A." Because Marta had gone through the instructional unit on codeswitching in her junior year of high school, she was not only open to the second instructor's suggestion, but she understood and valued her own natural tendency to use both languages for expressing her ideas. Encouraged by this college professor, she was able to tap the full range of her linguistic ability for class assignments.

It is important to recall here that Marta had never used written Spanish during her first eight years of formal schooling, and was literate only in English before enrolling in the SSSP high school program. Reflecting Colón's personal experience when he himself was a college student, Marta's high school study of academic Spanish seems to have given her permission to use — and to have helped her understand the benefits of using — what she knew in both languages for the new level of academic work in her college classes. Most studies of bilingual education have focused on the younger learner and have found that the use of two languages has positive effects on mental growth (Bialystok and Hakuta 1994). This sketch of Marta's academic language development suggests that studies of older learners of heritage languages might also teach us much about mental growth.

Classroom Uses of Codeswitching

Given Marta's growth in Spanish literacy after two years of formal study, we turned to the classroom environment for clues about some of the factors motivating Marta to develop her skills in academic Spanish. As she herself reports, the formal study of codeswitching helped her appreciate how she used both of her languages and draw on them in her subsequent study of academic English. Specific details on the sociolinguistic environment of the high school SSSP classroom show that Manuel Colón himself selectively used codeswitching to help students become literate in Spanish. Although codeswitching constituted a relatively minor part of Colón's language use in the classroom, we give extensive examples here to highlight the functions for which this experienced teacher used it.

We were motivated to study this aspect of the classroom because we had noticed during our instructional unit on codeswitching that Colón himself infrequently codeswitched during class. However, he never commented on or rebuked a student for codeswitching. Because he had repeatedly been recognized as one of the most effective teachers within his school district, we decided to examine instructional uses of codeswitching in the Spanish classroom as a potential contribution to his teaching effectiveness. During the second year of the project, we videotaped five different lessons from a second-level class, then transcribed and analyzed the teacher's own codeswitching between Spanish and English.[4]

The lessons encompassed both reading/discussion and writing, as well as direct language instruction. Lesson 1 focused on mock interviews that students conducted in class, in preparation for interviews of family members on how their early lives had differed from those of their children. Under Colón's supervision, the class conducted mock interviews in pairs, observed demonstration interviews by peers, and discussed good interview questions and style. Lesson 2 was a class discussion of *Hambre de Memoria*, a Spanish translation of Richard Rodriguez' *Hunger of Memory* — an autobiographical account of how a child of Mexican immigrants deals with a school language and a public world that his parents will never be part of. Students read passages from the book aloud and compared Rodriguez' experiences with their own in a whole-class discussion. For Lesson 3, students began with silent writing in their individual class journals on the theme of generational differences between themselves and their parents, followed by a class discussion of differences they had discovered and how these differences affected their daily lives with family members. Lessons 4 and 5 were on Spanish grammar, focusing on the main verb clauses in preparation for the AP exam that students would take the following month.

Colón himself codeswitched more in the grammar lessons than in the discussion sessions. For all five lessons, it wass quite clear that the medium of instruction and the "norm" for the SSSP class was Spanish. The lesson opened in Spanish, the topic for the day and instructions were given in Spanish, and questions were asked in Spanish. Students often responded in English, depending on the topic and on an individual's proficiency in Spanish, but Colón never "corrected" the use of English. He almost always responded in Spanish, indicating that his expectation was that students would comprehend spoken Spanish, even if they found it easier or preferred to use English for that moment. When he perceived that an English-dominant student did not understand something crucial in Spanish, he repeated it in English — moving back to Spanish either within the same conversational turn or in the subsequent one. The only time in the five lessons that Colón produced an extended sequence in English was when he talked on the telephone (to someone in the office), when a non-Spanish speaker entered his classroom, when he talked with students after the class, or

when he perceived that a student did not understand a crucial point in Spanish.

Some specific examples from each type of lesson reveal how Colón used codeswitching from Spanish to English in the Spanish class. First, he used it to make sure that his directions were clear. When setting up the mock interviews for Lesson 1, he spoke to individual students in English. Because Spanish is Colón's normal classroom language, his use of English was a "marked" language use in Myers-Scotton's (1993b) analysis of codeswitching. As such, students were likely to give it more attention. Bold type is used here to indicate the codeswitch to the marked language. (Note: Both "OK" and "so" were used as textual markers in both Spanish and English in Colón's speech. They appeared to be lexical items within both languages, given their frequency and the contexts in which he used them. Neither item violated a phonological constraint in either language, and both seemed to serve as transitional markers between switches. We have underlined them in the following examples, since it is not clear whether they should be considered Spanish, English, or both.)

Later in this same lesson, Colón gave students a time warning for concluding their interviews, first in Spanish and then in English, emphasizing the need to hurry by reducing the time in the codeswitched utterance (M = Manuel Colón; S = Student):

M: Les voy a dar otros diez minutos para que terminen. OK, otros diez minutos.	I am going to give you another ten minutes to finish. OK, another ten minutes.
M: Six minutes to finish, OK?	Six minutes to finish, OK?

At the conclusion of a mock interview, while students discussed the presentation, Colón commended a student's point first in Spanish, then in English — reinforcing its importance.

M: Sí, excellente, **yeah, that's good because it would connect you with what he was saying.** OK, pongan atención.	Yes, excellent, yeah, that's good because it would connect you with what he was saying. OK, pay attention.

Lesson 2, the discussion of *Hambre de Memoria*, contained one of Colón's rare extended examples of codeswitching, consisting of an explanation after a student did not understand a question posed in Spanish:

M: ¿Pero cómo puedes impedir que te mudes a un lugar que no es latino?	But how can one prevent you from moving to a place that is not Latin?
: ¿Cómo impedir la um . . . ?	How to prevent the um . . . ?

Colón followed up in English:

M: Keep you from moving into an area that's, in his case, his parents moved into an all-white neighborhood, and he says that everything was fine and that everybody um — as long as you don't worry about racism you can move into any area, and um, everybody can do it. Right? And I asked if you agree or disagree. Do you think that it's true that you can do it and what are some of the problems? And if you can do it what are some of the problems?

More typical was his brief empathetic comment after a student told of his difficulty communicating with parents:

S: It's true van a pelear más porque hay mala comunicación.	It's true, they are going to fight more because there is bad communication.
M: I'm sorry. ¿Qué necesitamos para ser criados bien? ¿Qué necesitamos para ser criados bien? ¿Cómo se criaron nuestros padres?	I'm sorry. What do we need to be properly raised? What do we need to be properly raised? How were our parents raised?

We should note Colón's use of the inclusive first person plural verb forms here, which translates into the English "we". In this segment he included himself in the need to have good parenting, signaling with this choice of verb form a sense of "we're in this together."

Lesson 3, two days later, contained only one brief example of codeswitching on Colón's part, an echo of a student's question and a rare example of his use of Spanish and English within the same clause:

M: Pues, demen ejemplos, demen opinión.	Well, give me examples, give me (your) opinion.
S: Ninety, probably ninety percent	Ninety, probably ninety percent ...
M: Ninety porciento **of what?** ¿No va a hacerlo o va a hacerlo?	Ninety percent of what? Is one not going to do it or going to do it?

Except for this brief switch, Colón spoke entirely in Spanish throughout the 50 minutes, while leading a class discussion on what students had learned about generational differences in family, tradition, and culture.

Lessons 4 and 5 contained many more uses of codeswitching than the previous three. In Lesson 5, he introduced an irregular verb by telling students, in both Spanish and English, that he knows they will make mistakes with one particular form of it:

M:...*Sigo, sigues, sigue, seguimos, siguen.* Muchos estudiantes van a confundirse y van a decir *siguimos*. Estoy seguro.	"I continue, you continue, he/she continues, we continue, you/they continue" Many students will be confused and say

I guarantee you that que van a decir siguimos. *Seguimos*, por favor.	"siguimos." I am positive. I guarantee you that you will say "siguimos." *Seguimos*, please.

A note of excitement enters in as students begin to question the variable pronunciation of g in Spanish and together work out when it sounds like /g/ and when like /h/:

M: ¿Es /ha/ /he/ /hi/ /ho/ /hu/ /ga/ /ge/ /gi/ go/ /gu/?	Is it /ha/ /he/ /hi/ /ho/ /hu/ /ga/ /ge/ /gi/ go/ /gu/?
S: **How do we know?**	How do we know?
M: **I'm gonna tell you.**	I'm gonna tell you.
S: **Without /u/ it's pronounced like /ga/ /ge/**	Without /u/ it's pronounced like /ga/ /ge/
M: Sí, OK, la, la cuando lleva una *a*, cuando lleva una *a*, por ejemplo la palabra *gato*, en la palabra *gato* la pronunciación as /ga/.	Yes, OK, the, the, when it has an "a," when it has an "a," for example the word gato in the word *gato* the pronunciation is /ga/.
S: *Gerónimo*	*Gerónimo*
M: Ahora en este, muy bien.	Now in this (one), very good.

More codeswitching followed as the class explored which words are spelled with a /j/ and which with /g/ when they have the sound of /h/. Later, when Colón discussed a spelling change from "i" to "y" for certain verbs, he codeswitched again, probably to emphasize the rule he had just summarized in Spanish.

For another spelling rule involving verbs like *crecer* and *conocer*, in which there is alternation between /s/ and /k/ for the sound spelled with a "c," Colón switched between Spanish and English, producing another rare example of both languages within the same clause and using this switch to emphasize the spelling that reflects the sound change:

M: Ustedes lo pueden escribir en forma completa, OK. Cuando el infinitivo termina en *-cer* o *-cir*, antes de la zeta, **before the z**, antes de la zeta, hay una vocal, **a vowel, OK** vocal, **add**, pónganle una zeta, **add a z**.	You can write it in its full form. OK. When the infinitive ends in -cer or -cir, before the "z," before the "z," there is a vowel, a vowel, OK vowel, add, add a "z."

Colón went on to repeat this rule, alternating Spanish and English, clearly in an attempt to help all of the students understand and making maximum use of the linguistic resources at their disposal.

In Lesson 4, Colón deliberately used both languages to illustrate how the verb endings changed according to a set pattern, explicitly calling on students' prior knowledge of both English and Spanish:

M: . . . ¿Qué es un infinitivo? ¿Qué es el infinitivo de, en inglés, para caminar?	What is an infinitive? What is the infinitive of, in English, for "walk"?
S: *to walk*	*to walk*
M: *to walk*, ¿verdad? ¿Y el verbo sería qué, la conjugación de los verbos?	*to walk*, right? And the verb would be what, the verb conjugations?
SS: *to walk*	*to walk*
M: tú	you...
SS: *walk*	*walk*
M: él or ella	he or she...
SS: walk	*walk*
M: *he, she*	he, she
SS: walks	*walks*
M: aah nosotros	aaah, we...
S: walk	*walk*
M: y	and
SS: walk [laughter]	*walk*
M: Verdad, so entonces vemos ayer les expliqué que, les dí este ejemplo para mostrar que en inglés no cambia más que en la tercera persona singular. Verdad? En español van a cambiar en cada persona, pero en inglés empezamos con *to walk* que es el infinitivo....	Right, so then yesterday I explained to you that, I gave you this example to show that in English it doesn't change except for the third person singular. Right? In Spanish they are going to change in every person, but in English we begin with "caminar," which is the infinitive....

Eliciting what students knew about the infinitive in English and the morphological ending for the third person singular in the present tense, Colón helped them understand the grammatical jargon that applies to both languages. When students gave him a wrong answer after a Spanish prompt, he repeated the prompt in English and elicited the correct answer. He concluded this brief comparison by summarizing the general similarity (for both languages) of a base verb plus endings, pointing out that Spanish changes endings for every person. This bit of contrastive analysis was designed to help students acquire a metalinguistic understanding of the verb systems of both of their languages.

His most dramatic use of English, however, was for the repetition of rules given in Spanish and as a teaching aid in summarizing general patterns:

M: Si no son irregulares, si no son irregulares, entonces van a ser regulares. **If there isn't something that makes them**	If they are not irregular, if they are not irregular, then they are going to be regular. If there isn't something that makes them

irregular, **then they are going to be regular.**	irregular, then they are going to be regular.

Emphasizing the systematic patterns for irregular verbs in the following example, he summarized the limits of one verb class first in Spanish and then in English, enunciating each English word separately in a louder than normal voice and pointing to the examples on the board. He then answered a student's rhetorical question in English before continuing the lesson in Spanish:

M: Sí, **it follows the rule.** OK, es muy importante, es muy importante, OK, **so** grupo número uno, solamente estos. **There isn't any other verb that fits into this group.**	Yes, it follows the rule. OK, it is very important, it is very important, OK then group number one, only these. There isn't any other verb that fits into this group.
S: Those are the only ones?	Those are they only ones?
M: **Those are the only ones.**	Those are the only ones.
S: Wow!	Wow!
M: OK, ¿Hay preguntas con el primer grupo?	OK, Any questions about the first group?

The student's "Wow!" represented one of those moments of positive feedback for which every teacher yearns: an understanding — at least for the moment — of both the pattern and its boundaries.

There were also clear examples of codeswitching used simply for establishing or maintaining rapport with students. In the lesson on verb endings, a student used English to try a diversion (a not uncommon tactic in any language between students and teachers). Colón acknowledged the attempt, using English himself, then smoothly brought the class back to the work at hand, using Spanish:

M: Cómo le llamamos a las palabras, a esto?	How do we call these words, this? [What do we call these?]
SS: Terminaciones	Endings.
M: Terminaciones. **So** ésta es la raíz y ésta es la terminación.	Endings. So this is the root and this is the ending.
SS: [laughter]	
S: **Whoa, we're rollin'**	Whoa, we're rollin'!
M: Estaban poniendo atención ayer.	You were paying attention yesterday.
S: **Aren't you happy?**	Aren't you happy?
M: **Yes, I'm very happy.**	Yes, I'm very happy.
S: **Happy enough not to give us any homework?**	Happy enough not to give us any homework?
M: Mmmmm, No.	Mmmmmm, no.
SS: [laughter]	
M: **Good try, though.** OK, muy bien, **so** entonces, tenemos la raíz.	Good try, though. OK, very good, so, we have the root...

Near the end of the same lesson, when students had been working intensively on grammar for several days, Colón codeswitched to coax students along:

M: **You know I'm getting tired too.** Número nueve. **But this is gonna help you a lot in your spelling.** Número nueve, cuando termina, **the same thing,** cuando termina en *–cer, -cir.*	You know I'm getting tired too. Number nine. But this is gonna help you a lot in your spelling. Number nine, when it ends, the same thing, when it ends in *-cer, -cir.*

The codeswitching in these five lessons represented only a small part of Colón's total language use. Spanish was the norm for his instruction of students in the SSSP class, and his codeswitches to English were nearly always brief. Lessons 1, 2, and 3, had the fewest examples of codeswitching, with six instances, four instances, and one instance, respectively. Lessons 4 and 5 had the most instances: 20 and 22, respectively. The grammar lessons contained material that would be on the upcoming AP exams, and most of Colón's switches into English were for the purpose of clarifying or emphasizing grammatical points that students needed to remember.

In the first three lessons, the specific content was less important than students' ability to follow arguments presented by their peers and class readings and to contribute relevant examples from their own experiences. In these lessons, students had more control over the vocabulary used, whereas in the grammar lessons they were learning new vocabulary for grammatical categories, as well as orthographic conventions for academic Spanish that they would need for the AP exam.

We should emphasize that students in all of these lessons codeswitched much more than did their teacher, but Colón never requested that they speak only in Spanish. Rather, he responded to their English comments in Spanish and usually received Spanish in the following conversational turn. He seemed to be acknowledging where they were — linguistically speaking — and showing them where they needed to be, a pedagogical technique that works across learning situations as diverse as yoga, language, and woodworking.

Although we have not yet fully analyzed student codeswitching, we have noted that one student codeswitched extensively in class discussions about generational differences, but spoke Spanish exclusively when he played, in a mock interview, the role of an older immigrant for whom Spanish would be the primary language. These bilingual students, like their teacher, appeared to know the appropriate contexts for Spanish-only, English-only, and both-at-once.

In Colón's teaching, codeswitching was clearly used as a resource to help students learn as well as to demonstrate

that dual language proficiency is a resource within a public academic setting. By modeling this carefully constructed use of codeswitching, the teacher taught a lesson that students would carry with them into more challenging academic settings.

Indications of Group Success

Latino students at the school made up about 20% of the entire student body, and less than half of the Latinos were enrolled in the SSSP program. All SSSP students were from working-class backgrounds, divided equally between those of Mexican origin and non-Mexican origin, with eight Latin American countries represented among them. About 20% of the Latino stuents were from Central America, 20% were from South America, and 10% were from the Caribbean. This distribution provided the project with a mix of dialects and experiences with the native language. Another factor that contributed to diversity among the students was the length of time in the United States: They were almost equally divided between recent immigrants and long-term or native-born residents. Most were fluent speakers of both languages, with 9% identifying English as the home language, 44% Spanish, and 47% both. All fifty students in the project had been in the SSSP program for at least one year, and all were enrolled in other classes in which English was the medium of instruction.

The performance of SSSP students on the AP examination in Spanish Language provides the best available objective data on their academic success because this test has been validated by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) with a national population of high school students. Students are rated on a 1 to 5 scale, with those receiving a score of 3 or above being eligible for six semester units of college credit at their local state university. The year before Colón's appointment at the high school and his subsequent encouragement of all SSSP students to take the exam by offering them reduced fees, only three SSSP students took the exam, whereas some 25 students from the Spanish foreign language class took it. With Colón's encouragement of all second-year SSSP students, substantial increases in the numbers taking the exam occurred in subsequent years.

Table 1 shows the numbers of students taking and passing the AP exam from 1992, the year before Colón appointment, to 1998, the year after his departure, when some of his former students were still in the program. In the intervening years, the number of SSSP students taking and passing the exam increased, with a slight dip in 1997. For both the SSSP program and the foreign language program in Spanish, the number of students taking the exam was roughly equivalent between the years 1993 and 1996, and the pass rate was quite similar, even though twice as many students normally enrolled in foreign language Spanish as in SSSP. Thus, measured by both local and national standards, students in the SSSP classes were demonstrating a high level of proficiency in written Spanish (most by their second year in the program) and were receiving college credit for this proficiency if they went on to college.

Since very few Latino students were even sitting for the AP exam before 1992, their level of success is remarkable. The percentage of SSSP students achieving the highest score possible on the Spanish language exam is even more remarkable: Of the 96% who passed the exam over the six-year period 1993 to 1998, 38% of them scored a 5, the highest score possible. Most of the SSSP students took the exam at the end of their second year in the program,

Table 1

SPANISH LANGUAGE AP EXAM AT PROSPECT HIGH SCHOOL, CAMPBELL UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT, 1992–1998

Spanish Language AP Exam Date	SSSP Students Taking	SSSP Students Passing	FL Students Taking	FL Students Passing
May 92	3	3	25	18
May 93	12	12	24	19
May 94	19	17	18	17
May 95	18	18	19	18
May 96	17	16	18	15
May 97	12	12	30	26
May 98	18	18	34	32

whereas foreign language students took it at the end of their third or fourth year. This figure for SSSP students is especially impressive, considering, as in the case study, how low the students' literacy skills in Spanish could be when they began their formal study of Spanish. Moreover, for most of the Latino students, the SSSP courses represented their first exposure to college preparatory classes.

Other objective measures of academic success are yearly dropout rates, graduation rates, and completion of course requirements for entrance to higher education. The graduation rate from 1991 to 1998 for Latinos at this suburban high school ranged from 69% to 83%, according to figures collected by the California Basic Educational Data System (CBEDS) of the California Department of Education. Although Prospects' figures are above the 62% average for Latinos nationwide — and for some years have been nearer the 86% to 88% national average for blacks and whites — the official CBEDS figures do not tell the whole story. Kollars (1998), in a recent series of articles on the undercounting of California high school dropouts, points out that the numbers of students counted as ninth graders is typically artificially high because those who would be in the tenth grade but are behind in credits are reclassified as ninth graders.

In the present study, several Latino students in the SSSP program who had not dropped out by their senior year did not qualify for graduation with their cohorts, although some may have gone on to graduate at a later date through an equivalency exam or work in adult education. Others who had moved out of the district between the October census date and the June graduation date were not counted as dropouts, even though there was no documentation of their attendance elsewhere. California does not at present have any system in place for tracking the future education (or lack of it) of students who leave a particular school district, and thus the official drop-out rates are highly suspect. Individual schools like Prospect do attempt to keep their own records when students request that transcripts be sent to a new school, but there is no system in place for tracking their actual enrollment in another school. Based on the available data provided by the school, our best estimate is that students in the SSSP program were graduating at rates slightly higher than Latinos elsewhere.

Another measure of academic success is successful completion of courses required for entrance to California public institutions of higher education. At Prospect, very few Latinos complete any of the college preparatory (CP) course requirements for entrance into four-year public universities. Because almost half of the students in the SSSP program are also enrolled in English Language Development classes, their language skills are usually not adequate for success in the typical CP class requiring extensive reading and writing in English. Thus, *any* increase in CP enrollments is a sign of academic success.

Virtually all of the SSCP Latinos who went on to graduate completed at least three of the required six CP courses.[5] These students had begun to see themselves as prospective college students, a self-image that is critical to increasing graduation rates.

Three SSCP students not taking three or more CP courses deserve special attention because they lead us to an important subgroup within the SSSP classes: recent immigrants. The three SSSP graduates who completed only one or no CP classes besides Spanish were all enrolled in English Language Development (ELD) classes throughout high school — a clear indication that they were recent immigrants experiencing difficulty with academic subjects taught in English. The SSSP students who were enrolled in at least one ELD class during their high school career constituted 36% of the group studied (18 out of 50). Many of these ELD students were clearly beginning to succeed in the U.S. high school setting: Eight of them passed the AP exam in Spanish language, a remarkable feat since this examination is designed for English-dominant students, with directions written in academic English. Nine (or half) of the ELD students in the SSSP classes took three or more CP courses before graduating.

Given the piecemeal data that is currently collected in California on the progress of individual students, we find a reasonably strong association between our students' enrollment in more than one CP course and their graduation from this high school. We suggest that students' success in the CP classes of the SSSP program allowed them to see themselves as part of a broader academic community that regularly took CP classes and expected to complete high school. Through real academic achievement in challenging high school courses that validate and expand their home language, these Latino students have begun to internalize the values of formal education, at the same time developing a peer support network to help them meet even greater academic challenges.

Conclusion

The number of students on which this study is based is small; only 50 students were enrolled in the classes for which we obtained data. A single student and a single teacher's language use were studied in depth. However, the overall achievements of these students, and of Marta in particular, provide direction for development of language curricula that build on and expand students' prior knowledge of language structure and use. Beyond the language learning that has obviously taken place, the SSSP program at this suburban high school has provided an opportunity for a wide range of Latino students to work together in the same classrooms — one seldom found in academic settings.

For students with strong Spanish skills but weaknesses in English, the program offers a unique opportunity to use native language resources in an academic setting. Latino students who immigrate to the United States and enroll in public schools as adolescents are rarely recognized for their native language proficiency in school. The enrollment of SSSP students in challenging college preparatory coursework, even while they continued to take ELD classes to improve their English, suggests that the SSSP program in this school provides a launching pad for academic success. For those with strong English skills — the 50% born in the United States or immigrating in early childhood — the program has helped strengthen latent Spanish language skills and has fostered a high level of literacy in a world language other than English. For our collective future, students with strong academic skills in both languages form a foundation for a future professional teaching corps without parallel in our country's history.

Such a program is not inexpensive and should not be undertaken casually. The foundation laid so carefully by the initial state grant to develop the program in Campbell High School District included both careful attention to a sequenced curriculum and support from an informed administration. Essential components of such a program include:

1. Counseling of students and placement into the appropriate classes, based on incoming language skills in Spanish;
2. Textbooks designed specifically for native speakers who have already attained a measure of oral fluency in Spanish;
3. Curriculum that includes all four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing), as well as topics of relevance to students' lives, an exploration of cultural and linguistic diversity, and regular journal writing;
4. Testing of students with nationally recognized tests, with costs underwritten by the school;
5. Selection of teachers well-prepared in the subject matter, in the cultures of the students, and in the pedagogical methods best suited to teaching heritage languages;
6. Visits to local college campuses where students can meet successful students, observe classes, and obtain information on entrance requirements.

While the heritage language program developed by Campbell Union High School District has served as a model for other such programs (Quintanar-Sarallena et al. 1993), it has suffered from a lack of institutional funding. The acclaimed peer tutoring program between the foreign language and heritage language Spanish classes, which was part of the original curriculum, did not receive district funding after the initial development grant from the state. A severe state recession, furthermore, caused local budget cuts that affected district-wide oral proficiency testing of all language students. Even with these substantial losses, however, the heritage language program has had success in motivating students to graduate and to take courses that prepare them for college work. The student' success indicates that, if educators use the resources students bring to school as one part of a challenging curriculum, a bridge is built to academic success. More such bridges need to be built, sooner rather than later, if we are to educate — and to learn from — this growing Latino population.

Notes

1. We are deeply grateful to Campbell Union High School District and especially to Rita Matthews, principal of Prospect High School, for encouraging and making possible the research reported on here. We thank Carol Myers Scotton and Guadalupe Valdés for comments on an earlier draft and two anonymous reviewers for their suggestions.

2. Such programs go by a variety of names, as Villa and Villa (1998) have noted. *Heritage language* is probably the most common, denoting a family language that the student may or may not speak but hears spoken. Enrollment in the SSSP classes was voluntary, and the first level often contained recent immigrants whose spoken English was weaker than their spoken Spanish. Although the district had an English Language Development program for such students, it offered no bilingual education program. Except for the language classes, all classes were conducted in English.

3. Participants in the first year of the current project included Ann Jensen (codirector of the original CAPP grant and coordinator of the CUHSD's oral proficiency exams), Manuel Colón (CUHSD teacher of Spanish and English Language Development and a student teacher in the original CAPP project), Rosalinda Quintanar-Sarellana (SJSU professor in bilingual education and a participant in the original CAPP project), and Martha Bean and Patricia Nichols (SJSU professors in linguistics and language development). In the second year, Colón and Nichols studied the use of codeswitching within the classroom itself.

4. We thank Yvonne Undeen and Cecilia Gomez for help with these transcriptions. At earlier stages of the project, Sylvia Ortega and Claudia Contreras also provided invaluable assistance.

5. In the California three-tiered, postsecondary system, students going on to college who have not completed these entrance requirements in high school typically begin their studies at a community college, from which they can transfer to a four-year university. If they must complete some of these entrance requirements while attending college, or if their scores on college placement tests require them to take remedial courses, their time in college is extended and the degree is often not completed. Like other Latinos in their high school, few SSSP students in our project completed all of the six required CP courses before graduation.

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