-Está bien decir whatever-

Heritage Learner Instruction: Incorporating Code-switching

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Action Research Project Submitted for
Masters of Education in Teaching
August, 2015

Abstract

In this Action Research Project, students in an urban high school Advanced Placement (AP) Spanish Language and Culture class were experiencing anxiety about producing orally in the classroom. The class was comprised entirely of bilingual children of Mexican and Central American immigrants, only one of whom had been in any previous courses taught in Spanish in their educational careers. Interviews with students and the subsequent research conducted suggested that their apprehension was a result of societal devaluation of bilingual language production. The recommendations of the literature review were to challenge those societal perceptions about linguistic correctness and prestige. Three problem sets had students engage with their bilingualism in ways that presented them with a new framework with which to view their linguistic abilities. Students were given opportunities to interact with culturally relevant material and produce oral presentations as if they were in a non-educational setting. Students were then given opportunities to practice producing oral presentations consistent with the expectations for the AP Spanish Language and Culture Examination. The intention of counter-positing these was to lower their affective filter and establish a clearer distinction between the two methods of production, consistent with methods used in teaching English to African-American students who use code-switching. The results were that students felt more confident in their abilities and were able to produce longer utterances with fewer instances of interference from English in their practice AP presentations.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to the Reach Institute for School Leadership for its expertise and guidance on my path to teaching. I am especially grateful to the excellent instructors who have supported and pushed me: Lynette Parker, Sierra Thai-Binh, and my coach Victoria Folks, whose patience and encouragement were critical to my success. Furthermore, my sincerest appreciation to the students who were the focus of this project: thank you for helping me to broaden my practice.

My deepest thanks to my mother, Linda: Mom, thank you - for being an example of how to be the change you want to see in the world; for being my role model and counseling me on this journey; and for being my critical friend (and editor) - I want to be like you when I grow up.

Introduction

Lighthouse Community Charter High School, in East Oakland, California, had no foreign language program to speak of when I applied for a job there five years ago. They had no need for one, as their student population was 75% Latino students, the majority of whom were able to pass a language equivalency examination which would give them the necessary credit for their graduation requirement. I convinced the administration to allow me to develop an Advanced Placement Spanish class in order to serve the school's stated mission of propelling their graduates "through, not just to" college by preparing them to pass the AP Spanish Language Exam, giving college credit to those students who passed. This proposal relied heavily on the expectation that these college credits would help them graduate from college sooner. My superiors gave me their blessings and I proceeded to investigate what such a class would entail and how to go about its design, development and implementation. I soon found out that there is little specific guidance around curriculum design for AP classes, save a few strict requirements. One of these non-negotiable aspects was that the class must be taught entirely in the "target language." I proceeded to source readily available syllabi and course outlines in constructing my own, which was approved by the AP College Board, and began teaching my first class of four students, four years ago.

What I learned quickly is that these students' experience with the Spanish language was much like my own. They had grown up in a community where Spanish was spoken. In the home, on the streets, in the store--with their family, their friends, their neighbors--Spanish was central to their experience. It was not, however, the Spanish of the Advanced Placement Spanish Language and Culture Examination. It was a Spanish

heavily influenced by the experience of living as immigrants and children of immigrants in California. It was flavored by the experience of living with immigrants from multiple Central and South American countries. It was augmented with variations from across Mexico, each providing alternate opportunities for expression depending on context and need. It was a Spanish that was spoken without the use of a dictionary, because who needs a dictionary when you have a bilingual brain? It was a Spanish that was integrated with and married to English. And it worked perfectly, until they got to my class.

In a formal Spanish language environment, their Spanish was acknowledged as being "different." I conceded to them the existence of their language, having grown up producing it myself. I challenged them to follow my path, which was to embrace the Spanish of the dictionary and bring their abilities up to the level that would be necessary for economic viability. This strategy continued unabated until I had a student last year who was making consistent errors in his production, specifically in regards to "interference" from English. I corrected him often, multiple times per class, to which he would respond, "Sorry." I would then correct him by explaining that "Sorry" was an English word and that there were three different ways to express this in Spanish, eventually making a poster for him detailing these correct forms. He was downcast and unfortunately apologetic about this, usually repeating the error in successive failed attempts to self-correct. I finally realized what was happening when I heard his mother, speaking to another parent in the halls outside class in the Spanish which is natural and normal in this community, say "*Pues no puedo ir a la reunión, sorry*." ("Well, I can't go to the meeting, sorry.")

When presented with the opportunity to research and carry out an intervention

about a problem that was present in my classes, I immediately and intuitively realized that I could research how to reconcile the AP's prohibition on "interference" with the need to acknowledge and promote the use of students' bilingual abilities. I had to find a way to both prepare students for an exam which could be a key factor in their obtaining a college degree and, at the same time, help them realize the power of their bilingualism.

Literature Review

As the number of Latin American immigrants has increased in the United States, so, too, has the number of Spanish speaking families. This increase to an already established "Hispanic or Latino (of any race)" population which numbers 13 million, provides our schools with great opportunities to address their language needs. The main thrust of the response has been a movement towards English-only instruction and a reduction or elimination of bilingual instruction due to pushes at the local, state and federal level from media, educational think-tanks and federal policies such as NCLB (No Child Left Behind) and Title III Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students. (Coles-Ritchie & Lugo, 2010) The rhetoric that is universally employed in these arenas posits bilingualism as a problem to be overcome, as opposed to an attribute to be acknowledged and encouraged. (Van Doren, 2014) Students who are Heritage Learners (HLs) are subjected to these attitudes from an early age in our society and have experienced discrimination from within and without their communities. (Tse, 1998; Krashen, 1998) An experience many HLs have is feeling as if their skills aren't good enough, which contributes to the push for them to abandon their bilingualism.

One of the challenges to embracing HLs' learning needs is that they are too often taught as if they were Foreign Language Learners (FLL), in language classes where the curriculum is designed for students who have little or no experience with the language, as compared to HLs who have been raised in a home where their language is spoken, understand the language and to some degree are bilingual in that language and English. I propose to address this difficulty in an Advanced Placement Spanish class, a setting where the disparity between the curricular approach and the experience of the student is

compounded by the existence of a summative assessment (the AP Spanish Language and Culture Examination) which has potentially far-reaching consequences. The purpose of this Literature Review is to establish the need for an approach different from the norm, and to propose a course of action through reviewing the literature related to the use of "Spanglish," code-switching and inclusion of nonstandard varieties of Spanish in the curriculum in an attempt to better meet the needs of HL students.

There are various reasons for addressing HLs' language needs. First, as Latinos continue to grow as a demographic group[1] their numbers in schools generally and in Spanish Language classrooms specifically will increase, making more and more urgent the need to understand and meet their needs. Second, as their language skills in their language of origin improve, their abilities in English improve as well. The culture of "English-only," with the subsequent internalizing of "white standards," pushes down heritage language production. (Krashen, 1998) Comprehensible input is essential to students at this stage in their development as Heritage Learners. (Tse, 1998) However, what exactly is "comprehensible input?" According to the dictionary, much of what is comprehensible to HLs is grammatically incorrect. Classes which are focused on grammatical correctness exclude HLs from participating in ways which inspire self-confidence and lead to shyness and ultimately estrangement from the language and culture themselves. (Cho & Krashen, 1998) The Latino dropout rate is the highest nationally (U.S. Department of Education, 2010), illustrating the need to work more effectively with these students. Unfortunately, most foreign language teachers treat HLs as if they were simply two monolinguals in one body, neglecting to recognize that HLs

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[1] The Spanish-speaking population is the fastest growing language group in the United States. In 2010, 50.5 million Latinos lived in this country, constituting 16% of the U.S. population. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010)

are linguistically complex individuals, with varying degrees of bilingualism. (Correa, 2012) This ignorance of the nature of HLs' linguistic abilities and needs contributes to an educational framework that emphasizes a formal register consistent with an abstract concept of what correct Spanish ought to be. This abstract concept of a variety that "nobody speaks" is determined by the Real Academia Española (RAE), the royal institution responsible for overseeing the Spanish language in order to "ensure that the changes that the Spanish language undergoes do not break the essential unity it enjoys throughout the Spanish-speaking world." (www.rae.es) The basic flaw in applying this unified construct to all learners is that it denies them the language that they actually use in their communities. The imposition of this "prestige" structure can inspire HLs to abandon their language altogether .(Said-Mohand 2010)

Prior to discussing the issues specific to instruction of Heritage Learners, there needs to be a discussion of the classification itself. Just as there has been a push to cease using the term ESL (English as a Second Language) in favor of ELL (English Language Learner) when describing students whose primary language is something other than English due to political and technical correctness, there has been a push to refer to formally classified Native Speakers as Heritage Learners. However, there still exists some confusion and clarity is needed in order to effectively discuss these students' abilities and needs.

For example, here is one description of the difference between these two terms:

> "For most people, a native speaker is one who can function in all settings in which other native speakers normally function. Moreover, to be considered fully native, a speaker must be indistinguishable for other native speakers. (Valdés, 1998, page 153) Heritage speakers may be classified as individuals who speak their first language, which is not English, in the home, or are foreign-born. (Campbell and Peyton, 1998)

> Heritage language learners may also be defined as individuals who have learned a language other than English somewhere other than in school." (Scalera, 1997) (Draper & Hicks, 2000:19–20)

And here another, indicating that the difference between them is that HLs are "students who are exposed to significant amounts of Spanish in their daily life, but who have never been formally educated in the language" and Native Speakers are "those who have age-appropriate literacy in their home language." (Aldritch & Yutzy, 2013: 1)

What is clear from these sources and others is that there exists a range of experiences and abilities that students bring with them into the classroom and a need to address them accordingly. This is in contrast to most language classrooms, where students enter with more or less similar content understanding due to their having been promoted from the previous years' classroom. For the purposes of this project, I will classify the students in this study as HLs using the criteria proposed by Valdés (2001: 37) which defines Heritage Learners as "individuals who are raised in a home where a non-English language is spoken" because this accurately and uniformly reflects the experience of this group.

Issues confronting educators tasked with instructing HLs typically fall into two categories: 1) how to provide HLs with rigorous academic preparation, and 2) how to meet the social and affective needs of these students. (Carreira, 2007) Addressing both of these is a complicated assignment for the AP Spanish teacher. The indications from the AP College Board about how to address the first category are three-fold: first the HLs should be instructed in how to spell correctly, because Spanish speakers "need extra guidance in spelling" and second, HLs should be instructed in the proper register, because "(t)he tendency is to call everybody *tú*" and use "certain colloquial expressions

with people they do not know or in more formal situations." (Advice for AP Spanish Language Teachers, AP College Board) In addition, AP Spanish teachers ought to use their HLs as tutors for the FLLs or as sources of "native" language production. This philosophy is well summed up here:

> "In a mixed class, non-native speakers can learn from the other students by listening to and observing them (different accents, vocabulary with regional variations, different cultural characteristics), and Spanish speakers can, in turn, learn *basic* language skills from their non-native counterparts." (Advice for AP Spanish Language Teachers, AP College Board)

The implications of both of these suggestions are problematic due to the fact that there is little evidence that either strategy is effective. The evidence from studies on HL linguistic development points to the ineffectiveness of focusing on correcting students' errors in their language production. (Kagan and Dillon, 2001; Wu and Chang, 2010) Problematizing HLs' linguistic abilities serves to further exacerbate their feelings of inferiority by sending the message to them that their "repertoire is fundamentally flawed." (Carreira, 2007: 154) When the College Board refers to HLs' production as consisting of "unfamiliar words, colloquialisms, and imaginative constructions" they are representing the perspective which has been communicated to HLs: that they speak a sub-standard variety of Spanish, often denigrated as "Spanglish." By applying this strategy to teaching HLs, students are disconnected and marginalized from learning opportunities and subjected to the same linguistic hierarchies which have resulted in them feeling as if they are participating in or representing a "mongrelized" version. As Valenzuela discusses: "Rather than building on students' cultural and linguistic knowledge and heritage to create biculturally and bilingually competent youth, schools subtract these identifications from them to their social and academic detriment." (Valenzuela, 1999: 25)

Providing HLs with the instruction one would use to teach FLLs is flawed and dismissive of the uniqueness of their linguistic needs. However contrastive analysis methods, such as those used by instructors in teaching "speakers of African American Vernacular English in increasing the written production of various mainstream U.S. English features" has been found to be beneficial. (Potowski, Jegerski and Morgan-Short 2009: 564) Additionally, studies have found that allowing students to participate in code-switching activities is essential to establishing the value of the duality inherent in linguistic alternations and can grant students an "affiliation with two disparate linguistic and cultural worlds." (Toribio 1999: 115) The premise is that when students are able to contrast the language they use at home with the language required of them in formal academic settings, they are able to more easily identify the differences between the two and switch from one to the other where necessary and appropriate. This happens without demeaning or negating (through correction) the language students bring with them. The key concept is that different language patterns are appropriate to different contexts and that multiple and various contexts exist and so then too should the varieties of language to fit each. (Wheeler and Swords, 2004)

When looking for suggestions from the AP College Board on how to address HLs' social needs or affective filter, the lack of any indications as to how one might address the difficulties HLs experience in a foreign (but not to them) language classroom are only more pronounced when compared to what does exist: directions on how to make sure your FLLs don't feel intimidated by the HLs. What is missing are instructions on how HLs might not just need a little extra help with distinguishing between the formal

and informal register or making sure they aren't interchanging *b* for *v* in their writing, but something more holistic. As Gutierrez points out:

> "Teachers need to be made aware that heritage speakers are not simply imperfect speakers of Spanish who have fallen short of the monolingual norm. They are, rather, complex persons who are fundamentally different from monolinguals. Unlike monolingual speakers of Spanish from societies in which Spanish is the sole or primary language, bilingual United States Latinos and Latinas are members of speech communities in which a single language does not meet all their communicative needs. I feel current and aspiring teachers of Spanish need an introduction to language awareness... I mean awareness of how languages and dialects are used in real-life social contexts, that is, how Spanish is spoken in the real world and, more important, why it is spoken as such." (Gutierrez, 1997: 34)

Leeman writes:

> "With the best intentions of helping students broaden their linguistic repertoires by incorporating the linguistic behaviors associated with power, instructors may be sending an implicit message to heritage speakers, who are already members of Spanish-speaking communities, that Spanish is not really theirs but instead belongs to some other group of speakers who get to decide the rules about what is appropriate." (Leeman, 2005: 35-45)

A more recent work (Doris Margot Madrigal's doctoral dissertation "Beyond 'Spanglish': Ideologies of Language and Identity in Bilingual Chicana/o Cultural Production") presents equally compelling arguments that HLs ought to be instructed by teachers who have awareness of the complexity and flexibility of bilingualism. She suggests that, in addition to others, one of the most important factors is that bilingualism as a phenomenon is "grounded in a lived experience." Adding to previously cited works, she contributes that it is better to validate what students can do with their language rather than focusing on their deficiencies. (Madrigal, 2010: 15)

These works perfectly sum up the recommendations of the literature that I read. I attempted then to encounter evidence that others have made to incorporate similar

recommendations, which yielded varied results. Apart from studies which enumerate the grammatical structures which perplex HLs more consistently than FLLs (Corte, 2012; Potowski, Jegerski and Morgan-Short, 2009; Montrul & Bowles, 2010; Thompson and Harrison, 2014), there is a preponderance of literature suggesting the implementation of code-switching practices in HL classrooms. (Becker, 1997; Toribio, 1999; Hornberger & Wang, 2007; Ahmad & Jusoff, 2009; Del Valle, 2014; Llombart-Huesca, 2012; Thompson & Harrison, 2014; Villa, 2010; Dumitrescu, 2014)

For the purpose of this action research project, I will use code-switching or bilingualism to refer to the introduction of unassimilated loan words or entire loan phrases into a discourse. Often this is called "Spanglish", where an English word or phrase would be inserted into Spanish speech, without altering the word to fit into Spanish grammatical morphology or phonology. The term "Spanglish" can be used to refer to a whole series of linguistic devices, which are popularly held to indicate a lower, less-correct, form of production. Due to its stigmatization and the typically derogatory use of the term "Spanglish," I will instead follow Madrigal's suggestion to use the term "bilingualism" as she argues it "is a much more complex and adequate term." "Bilingualism," she argues, "is itself best envisioned as a continuum that, like identity work, changes depending on contexts and domains across spatial-historic time. If we accept this complexity then we are not only validating these languages but also their speakers." (Madrigal, 2010: 4-6) One of the practices that I will employ in this action research project will be to attempt to educate my students about the linguistic skills and attributes required of bilinguals. By demonstrating to my students that they in effect employ these skills and are capable of higher order linguistic functioning than has been

attributed societally to bilingual speakers, I will be trying to destigmatize their language usage and empower them. There are a host of suggestions that code-switching and bilingual-friendly instruction might be incorporated into HL classrooms, but very little established research demonstrating its efficacy. The recommendations of the literature are for inclusivity as opposed to mere acknowledgement of nonstandard varieties, code-switching and bilingualism. "By including discussions of dialectal variation and register differences in classroom instruction, we will both empower the speakers of less prestigious dialects and encourage them to deepen their knowledge of the Spanish language in its many variations." (Leslie, 2012: 8)

Toribio suggests "that the mere act of acknowledging that bilingual speech forms are worthy of examination will cultivate an affective environment that will translate into greater engagement on the part of Spanish heritage students." (Toribio, 2004: 147)

My proposal is to employ a strategy in my class that highlights and recognizes this language awareness, by teaching students register differences through explicit code-switching instruction designed to provide students with opportunities to use and practice the language skills that they possess, while using and practicing the language skills necessary to be successful on the AP Spanish and Culture Exam. Continuing to address instruction of HLs as if they were non-HLs is detrimental to them and to the society at large. Therefore, I propose to take the recommendations of the literature and support my HLs' language development by doing more than simply acknowledging the existence of multiple modes of language production, but instead give them relevant examples of actual and "authentic" sources from their own community to reflect upon. (Aliakbari and Faraji, 2011; Leeman 2005, 2015; Helmer, 2013; Correa, 2011) Nieto recommends that

HL teachers "must engage students in critical conversations about language variation if they are to effectively address nonstandard speech in the classroom;" rather than working towards the elimination of bilingualism, we should use an understanding of its function as material for exploration and discussion on language in order to have a positive and dynamic relationship with our students and their abilities. (Nieto 2010: 50) The implicit idea is to increase students' metacognition relating to their language production in order to achieve a healthy and balanced self-assessment. Nieto goes on to recommend not only that the HL teacher should have an understanding of the "nonstandard dialect," but that authentic sources reflecting its use can be used in order to affirm their legitimacy and increase awareness of purpose, as well as social and political implications of choice in usage. Teachers of every subject impose a paradigm on students due to the existence of an inescapable regime that they have incorporated through experience and practice. Taking a position, articulated by José del Valle, that one makes a political choice in deciding what to teach and including students in that process, is critical to their having agency in their linguistic endeavors. (del Valle, 2014) Giving students the analytical tools with which to navigate the cultural, political and social context of the choices they will need to make as they engage in their different linguistic modalities is necessary if language teachers are going to move past the kinds of deeply entrenched dogmas which are impeding growth. In the same article, del Valle cites the work of Jennifer Leeman in establishing a critical pedagogy around language instruction:

> "Not only is it misleading to teach students that there is a single set of norms to follow, as if those norms were unchanging and unchangeable, but it is also disenfranchising, as it denies students any agency in the shaping of such norms, and it negates the possibility of resistance or contestation of those norms." (Leeman, 2005: 35-45)

Considering also the work of Lucy Tse, who shares that, "given contact with HL in an environment that is supportive of its development, positive attitudinal changes can be effected," (Tse, 1998: 68) I propose to work on improving feedback in the classroom in ways which are more implicit. As stated above, correction as a method of providing feedback is flawed. Students may feel as though feedback given in the form of correction can be insensitive or even insulting. The position of superiority that arises when correction is used leads to students' negative reactions because the language that they speaks represents their home, their personal and cultural heritage. An alternate method suggested by Potowski is to give students clear feedback about the effects of utilizing different varieties in varied contexts. (Potowski, 2001) In order to carry out this suggestion, I propose to have my students participate in activities where they will interact with sources representing both "standard" and "non-standard" varieties, specifically ones using the formal Spanish indicated as correct by the RAE, and those employing the bilingualism that characterizes the language use in the community where the students involved in this study reside.

The initial phase of this code-switching instruction will utilize three Problem Sets developed by Siena Leslie in her 2012 bachelor's thesis titled, "The Use of Linguistics to Improve the Teaching of Heritage Language Spanish." She outlines the use of these problem sets as opportunities for HLs to challenge their assumptions about the "correctness" of their language use and begin to accept that there is a relative acceptability of language variation that students learn to apply in given contexts. Once they have the increased awareness of their skills they will then be better prepared to interact with and analyze authentic source materials representing multiple variants and

contexts. The first problem set covers code-switching, the second borrowing, semantic extension and calques, and the third dialectal variation.

Theory of Action

Theory of Action			
Problem of Practice	**Literature Review**	**Intervention**	**Expected Change**
Student apprehension around language abilities results in fewer and shorter oral presentations AP curriculum as designed discourages use of English in class, leaving students unable to express themselves fully	Differences between Heritage Learner (HL) vs. Foreign Language Learner (FLL) Justification for alternative approach in Critical Pedagogy Research recommends explicit teaching of code-switching: Legitimizing students' experiences; Giving students opportunities to be successful in multiple contexts	Explicit instruction of code-switching Using prompts representing both community and prestige varieties, practice oral presentations utilizing same	Students will experience greater confidence in their ability to produce the prestige variety in AP style formal presentations Students will score higher on AP style formal presentations

Intervention

Intervention Rationale

I decided to use a survey designed by Almeida Jacqueline Toribio for her examination of Spanish-English code-switching (Toribio; 1999) due to her success in using it to establish greater understanding of bilingual language use in Spanish speaking adults who had either been born here or lived here for most of their lives. The questionnaire I borrowed from Miriam Jacqueline Garcia Gallegos' investigation of what "Spanglish" means to those who speak it. (Gallegos, 2012) Both of these tools were chosen because they had been used effectively by other researchers, had been designed with adult participants in mind, and would give me an adequate baseline of student

attitudes concerning the topic of my research. Following up these questionnaires with interviews served to allow me to clarify student responses and to allow students to voice more of their personal experience with how they felt in class.

The simulated AP Style Presentations were given to students throughout the year. Their performance on these presentations established areas of growth for each of them in terms of their ability to be successful on the AP Spanish Language and Culture Examination. Focusing on the length of their recordings and frequency of interference from English were in response to my perceived importance of these aspects derived from the College Board's admonition to instructors concerning these as well as from conversations with AP Readers at AP Conferences which led me to believe that these were important factors in students attaining high marks on the Exam.

I chose to use three problem sets focused on increasing student awareness of the function of bilingualism for this intervention. These problem sets were designed by Siena Leslie in her bachelor's thesis titled "The Use of Linguistics to Improve the Teaching of Heritage Language Spanish." In researching the problem identified, I found many suggestions from the literature, but few practical and concrete tools to use in the classroom. These problem sets, however, were fully fleshed out and easily applied in the context of where this particular class was in the school year, considering the course outline, sequence of units and proximity of the AP Exam.

An integral aspect of any Heritage Language class is the inclusion of culturally relevant instruction. There was a preponderance of recommendations for this in the literature; however I felt that the focus of this project ought to be on implementation of code-switching because it was a crucial element that wasn't presently being addressed on

a substantive level with this group. Incorporating culturally relevant instruction has been a focus in my class both prior to and alongside the proposed intervention and will be referenced periodically as part of student practice with community varieties of Spanish. In particular, as part of the intervention, I developed a unit using some elements from a website (corridos.org) hosted by the Smithsonian Institute's Traveling Exhibition Service called *Corridos sin Fronteras* because it fit well in the context of a larger investigation on the Mexican Revolution and it presented opportunities for community sources of language production.

Demographics

The class was comprised of 21 high school students: 15 females and 6 males ranging in age from 15 to 20. Five students (four female and one male) dropped the course prior to the intervention so they are not included in the study. The group taking part in the intervention is comprised of 16 students: 11 females and five males. All but two (#2 and #11, both born in Mexico) of these students were born in the U.S. to immigrants from Mexico and El Salvador. All but two of them had both parents from Mexico. One female student had both parents from El Salvador (#5) and one male student had parents from Mexico and El Salvador (#14). All students have lived in California, (primarily Oakland, San Francisco Bay Area) since, or soon after, birth.

Intervention Action Plan

	Component	Activities	Purpose
1	Survey Questionnaire ----------------- Follow-up interviews	Survey questions including rating scale and short answers ------------------------- Questions determined by survey answers	Identify students' opinions and attitudes about bilingualism Identify frequency and context of students' bilingual production Provide baseline data for change in student attitude about bilingualism ________________________ Clarify survey responses Identify focus students
2	Simulated Oral Presentations	AP style Formal Oral Presentations	Assess students' abilities in performing formal communication consistent with AP expectations Provide baseline for future comparison
3	Problem Sets	1. Code-switching; 2. Borrowings, Semantic Extensions, Calques; 3. Linguistic Variation	Confront societal devaluation of bilingualism and establish community variety of production as legitimate form of communication
4	Exposure and response to non-standard varieties	Unit on *corridos*	Reduce student apprehension by presenting and allowing for natural production
5	Exposure and response to standard varieties	AP style Formal Oral Presentations	Determine efficacy of intervention
6	Post-Intervention Interview	Post-interview questions	Gather information about change in student attitude about bilingualism

Intervention Results:

Results of Questionnaire & Survey/General consensus represented by samples

Students were given a questionnaire (Appendix A) asking them questions about their attitudes around Spanglish and a survey (Appendix B) asking them to check boxes indicating if they agreed with certain statements about usage of Spanglish and in which circumstances they used it. To reduce their anxiety, they were assured of confidentiality in the beginning and throughout the process. To this end, I refer to students exclusively by numbers that I assigned to them randomly.

Questionnaire: All students recognized the term "Spanglish," with most identifying it as a mixture of English and Spanish. Seven students (38%) specifically referenced that Spanglish was oral in nature ("used while talking," "when speaking," etc.). Other student responses of note were that it was "fusing Spanish and english,[sic]" a "language incorporating Spanish and English words," "the synthesis of English and Spanish language in order to communicate with others." One student indicated that it was "Spanish with a few english [sic] words here and there." Only one student qualified it as "not proper Spanish." When asked if they used Spanglish, all but one student (#3) responded "yes." Of those who responded "yes," four students also qualified that they used it often ("a lot," "all the time," "all the time to be honest," etc.). The student (#3) who responded "no" answered subsequent questions ambiguously:

Q: "Why or why not?"
A: "I am good at speaking the both languages."
Q: "With whom do you use it?"
A: "I only uses [sic] it with family members that don't speak English."
Q: "Where do you use it?"
A: "I use it at home with my mom and sometimes with my dad."

A follow up interview with student #3 established that his attitudes about Spanglish and code-switching were influenced by family history. This student's maternal grandfather was French, had been instructed in Castilian (prestige) Spanish and, though this student's mother and father grew up in the same village in Mexico, the student's mother's linguistic heritage represented the prestige variety. He had previously had instructors who were either from Spain or had studied there. His responses in the questionnaire and survey were generally negative in regards to Spanglish.

When students were asked if they thought Spanglish was an important method of communication and identification amongst their peers, the responses of all but three (#3,

#12, #14) were positive. Five student responses mentioned that it was important because they felt it reflected their culture, community or heritage. The results of the final question of the survey, regarding the inclusion of Spanglish in literacy materials was an attempt to ascertain whether students felt that Spanglish was a valid form for use in educational settings. Student responses reflected the total range, with five students in favor, eight students against and three non-committal. Of the favorable responses, two referenced Spanglish as being representative of their culture (#6 "show the real us."). The negative responses indicated that it was "slang," "not a valid language. It's kind of 'hood' I guess one can say," "not a language," and "not a real language. It is improper."

These pre-intervention tools established that students knew what Spanglish was, that they generally felt comfortable using it in speaking with their friends and family, and understood it to be an informal method of communication.

In my follow-up interviews with students, I asked them about how comfortable they felt in participating orally in class. The students who had difficulty in previous oral presentation assessments were able to self-identify in these interviews as being anxious about speaking up in any situation where they had to talk in front of the whole class. Students said the language used in materials distributed in class (news articles, audio sources, instructional materials, short stories, etc.) was problematic for them. Students said that the fear of using the wrong word, or saying something in English when they had been instructed not to, was a major factor in their reluctance to speak at the group level.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
It sounds pretty when speakers mix Spanish and English in conversation.	6% (1 student)	6%	62%	18%	6%
It bothers me when speakers talk in Spanish and English at the same time.	6%		25%	50%	18%
The mixing of English with Spanish leads to the loss of Spanish.		31%	31%	37%	
The mixing of English with Spanish helps to maintain Spanish.		25%	37%	31%	6%
The mixing of English and Spanish enriches interactions in my community.		62%	25%	12%	
When I mix languages, others regard me as less intelligent.	6%	18%	43%	18%	12%
When I mix languages, I am more respected by my community.			43%	43%	12%

Check or mark all that apply

I mix languages:

100% at home
81% at school
18% at work
31% with spouse/girlfriend/boyfriend
75% at family gatherings
(#5) I try not to

I mix languages in writing:

6% (1 student) letters — to whom? To friends and family
6% (1 student) e-mails — to whom? To friends
12% my journal
12% other (please specify) *(#4) I try not to though it is easy to write in one language, (#5) I don't mix languages when I write, (#16) try not to, (#8) I don't use it in writing, (#9) text, (#7) texts to family members*

I mix languages in spoken speech because:

87% I might not know a word
68% it allows me to express myself more fully
56% there is no translation for a concept
37% for added emphasis
37% to express emotion
18% to affirm my identity
37% just because I can
(5) maybe

I mix languages in writing because:

50% I might not know a word
37% it allows me to express myself more fully
25% there is no translation for a concept
18% for added emphasis
12% to express emotion
18% to affirm my identity
18% just because I can
(5) I don't mix languages when writing

Much of what the data reflected about students' opinions of their language use reinforced my own ideas about why this intervention was necessary. This is a limitation of my lack of objectivity in the process, as those students whose responses were not consistent with the majority were not addressed in a meaningful way. Additionally, I failed to have students respond to these surveys again after the intervention ended, opting instead for one-on-one interviews.

Results of initial recordings/samples/frequency of interference per recording

Student recordings are expected to be entirely in Spanish and two minutes in duration, per the AP Exam. Approximately 40% of the recordings of students' oral presentations prior to the intervention included at least one instance of interference from English, the most being four instances in a single recording. Most of the examples of interference are transitional words such as "and", "so" and "like." Students are able to

produce presentations two minutes in duration about 70% of the time. Only four students produced multiple recordings of less than one minute in duration.

Results of Problem Sets/Teacher Observations

The basic premise of the problem sets is that the students are presented with examples where there are Spanish and English words and phrases in the same sentence. For example: "I want to go to *la tienda*" ("I want to go to *the store*") and *"I want to *ir a la tienda*" (*"I want to *to go to the store*"). Students are told that the first sentence has been judged to be "natural" by bilinguals and that the second sentence, as indicated by the asterisk, is "unnatural". Students were asked to come up with a set of rules governing "natural" code-switching use, and as more examples were added, students' rules (and understanding) became more robust.

Students were able to interact with the code-switching exercises contained in the first problem set in ways which were positive and empowering. Students were intuitively able to identify "natural" and "unnatural" sentences, determining that the difference between the two was grammaticality. Once they had established that their internalized ability to form bilingual sentences which were grammatically correct in both languages was perfect, they began to see that some of their previously held notions about the bilingual speaker being "dumb" were perhaps not true. Our discussions in class about the purpose of code-switching challenged students in two ways: first, it had them recognize the structure and rules that govern its use, legitimizing code-switching; second, it had them be more conscious and paradoxically self-conscious about the ways in which they were code-switching. One student (#15) remarked, "It made me more critical and analyze

which words I switch out and pay attention to how I switch out and what makes sense and what wouldn't. I notice more instances of code-switching in my own speaking."

The second problem set covered borrowings (the full phonological and morphological integration of a word from one language into another), semantic extensions (when a word that already has a meaning in Spanish has its meaning extended to cover another concept) and calques (word-for-word translations of an English phrase directly into Spanish, instead of using the original Spanish expression or compound noun). In this problem set, students were challenged to distinguish the different aspects of their bilingualism further. One of the great rewards of this work was that students were able to finally put a name on the way that their brains work and recognize that others did the same thing.

> Student #1: "It was interesting and funny because it's what I relate to, something that I do everyday, to know that other people do it too."

> Student #14: "It was interesting because I use it a lot with my parents and friends, it was interesting knowing that it was other people too it wasn't just me."

The student (#3) who relates more to the prestige variety had a different takeaway in regards to the use of borrowings and semantic extensions, specifically mentioning the word for "parking lot" in Spanish: "It helped me to learn the two sides… if I go to Mexico and say *parquiadero* they say *estacionamiento,* but I want to know how to do both so if I'm talking to someone in Oakland I'll know to say *parquiadero* so I don't put myself at a higher level than them. I want to be able to know when to use the words that are appropriate for the situation."

Students began to see that their language use could be a choice. This is a crucial aspect of the intervention, the intention being to have them apply this understanding to their performance on the exam.

This recognition that there are different ways of speaking Spanish in different countries reflects some of the results of the discussions we had about dialectical variation in the third problem set. The focus of this problem set was to establish an understanding that there is a wide range of linguistic expression across the Spanish speaking world and ideally have students perceive that no one variety of Spanish is superior to another. There was a great deal of negativity to overcome in this work. Fourteen out of the sixteen students characterized their way of speaking in derogatory terms. These ranged from the fairly technical and benign ("low prestige") to disparaging ("people think my Spanish is dumb" and "my Spanish is … viewed as 'white-washed' "). Students came around to the idea that there were aspects of their language production that were not just regional in nature, but also situational. Students identified scenarios in which "prestige" language use (that observed the "rules" of formal Spanish and avoided "mixing with English") would be beneficial.

Finally we looked at examples of these different manifestations of bilingualism in prose ("Return to the Motherland" by José Burciaga and excerpts from "Borderland/La Frontera" by Gloria Anzaldúa), poetry ("The First Lowrider in Heaven" by Luis Alberto Urrea and "ARE YOU DOING THAT NEW AMERIKAN THING?" by Juan Felipe Herrera), music (Manu Chao, Gloria Estefan, Shakira, Pitbull, Gerardo, Ricky Martin, Prince Royce, Molotov and Mellow Man Ace), popular culture (skits from comedians Bill Santiago and George Lopez) and media (bilingual language use in print, billboard

and television ads). Throughout the study of these examples, we analyzed the language use and identified which aspects of bilingualism were most commonly represented and discussed their function.

Students connected nearly all of the bilingual language use in these examples to an effort by the artists to appeal to a common cultural experience, heritage and/or identity. One theme that was not explored as much as I would have liked is the commodification of the bilingual Latino identity in the advertising examples. The association of bilingualism with monetary gain is an important theme that could be addressed further. Starting the intervention earlier in the year would have allowed for expanded opportunities to investigate these topics.

Results of *Corridos* Unit/Teacher Observations

The structure of this unit was as follows:

1. Overview of the Mexican Revolution using the Mexican Muralists
   Using some rudimentary principles of art criticism established in a previous unit, we discussed the perspectives of the murals about the Mexican Revolution.

2. History of the Mexican revolution using *corridos*
   Using *corridos* (narrative songs) from that time period, we studied the major events and personages of the Mexican Revolution.

3. Conducting interviews
   Students prepared and executed an interview with an adult that elicited a story about their interviewee's life and times.

4. Evolution of the *narco-corrido,* creating *corridos*
   Students used their understanding of *corridos* to study the evolution of the *narco-corrido* (songs that celebrate drug traffickers). Students created their own *corrido,* reflecting their understanding of structural and thematic elements of *corridos*.

5. Respond to prompts
   Students respond to non-standard (or community variety) Spanish sources by recording oral presentations where they are encouraged to use the variety of Spanish which is most comfortable to them.

The aspects of this unit that were most relevant to the intervention were the family interviews, student discussions of the *narco-corrido*, and the oral presentations they recorded about the prevalence and ethical implications of the *narco-corrido*.

In the interviews, students were presented with the opportunity to study the linguistic production of members of their family. Some students gained insight on their linguistic heritage, analyzing the ways in which their family members represent the community variety of Spanish spoken in this area. Students reflected that this work afforded them a new perspective on the concepts of "prestige" and "correctness."

> Student #8: "This work made me think differently about my community, how we speak Spanish, that it's not just about the correct way but about the way we use Spanglish in our community, and how it's not something superior rather than inferior because one cannot speak in one single language."

Students were instructed to engage in conversations, without the prohibition on interference from English, about the articles that we read on the *narco-corrido* genre. I observed students who were normally hesitant to participate in conversations that were monitored, for fear of being reprimanded for their bilingual language use, freely conversing in small groups and contributing to the whole class discussion.

Students then recorded oral presentations where they were asked about their feelings about bilingualism and Spanglish. They were given the freedom to speak in the variety of Spanish that they felt most comfortable. Only one respondent had difficulty speaking for the recommended two minute duration (Student #1's response was just over one minute and was almost entirely in English). The average number of code-switches per response was four, with Student #15 topping the list at seven switches and Student #3 avoiding them altogether. These responses were varied in their demonstration of an

understanding of how bilingualism works, often reflecting the idea that language mixing is primarily a result of "not knowing" a word in Spanish. However, there was a significant change in the general attitude around the legitimacy of bilingual language use:

> Student #2: *"Ahora que sé los diferentes reglas del lenguaje bilingüe me siento más cómoda porque es una parte de mi que no identificaba mucho… creo que no debe de ser criticado."* (Now that I know the different rules of bilingual language (use) I feel more comfortable because it's a part of me that I hadn't identified well … I think that it shouldn't be criticized.)
>
> Student #3: *"¿Quién soy yo para decir como debe de hablar la gente?"* (Who am I to say how people should speak?)
>
> Student #5: "*Me siento mejor sabiendo la función de alguien que es bilingüe porque me enteré que es...* it has to do with multitasking so that makes me feel better because that tells me that I'm better at organizing my thoughts because I'm bilingual." (I feel better knowing that the way someone who is bilingual works because I figured out that…)
>
> Student #12: *"Me siento más informada y confidante [sic] cuando hablo el lenguaje bilingüe por las razones que aprendí muchas de las reglas relacionadas con este lenguaje."* (I feel more informed and confident when I speak bilingually because of having learned the rules related to this language.)
>
> Student #15: "It shows how our brains function efficiently and how they've adapted to this new situation in which you're getting influenced from both English and Spanish speakers."
>
> Student #16: "*Me siento mejor después de aprender las diferentes cosas de ser bilingüe… es algo bueno porque puedes comunicarte con la gente de diferentes maneras… es algo que yo hago mucho*. I code-switch a lot *y yo pienso que no es nada malo…* although *mucha gente dice que Spanglish es malo y que eso significa que la persona no es inteligente, yo digo que eso está mal."* (I feel better after learning different things about being bilingual… it's a good thing because you can communicate with people in different ways… it's something that I do a lot… I code-switch a lot and feel like it's not a bad thing … although many people say Spanglish is bad and that it means that someone isn't intelligent I say that that's wrong.)

One of the segments that worked most successfully in this unit was sourcing students for examples of *corridos* that they were familiar with, particularly important as it

related to the challenge of finding *corridos* that countered the glorification of the cartels with positivity. One of the aspects of this unit which was most appreciated (being free to speak bilingually) was limited in its scope by constraints of the time available. Students should have had more opportunities to present bilingually. Students had experienced a class that for most of the year had been monolingual, which led to them being apprehensive even when they were encouraged to break from that norm.

Results of exposure and response to standard varieties

Students practiced oral presentations throughout the school year in preparation for the AP Exam. The majority of students were able to successfully produce quality recordings of their oral presentations, with relatively few instances of interference from English, few long breaks in production within the recording, and minimal stammering.

The final oral presentation gave students an opportunity to interact with AP style materials (authentic prestige variety sources) and respond to a prompt consistent with what they would see on the AP Exam.

In comparing the number of instances of interference from English in the formal oral presentations pre- and post-intervention, I found that, with the exception of Student #4, all students had, on the average, the same or reduced number of instances. Student #4 had one instance of interference in her final oral presentation, where she had been averaging half of such occurrences per recording previously. Student #10 had the most significant reduction in interference, producing less than half as many instances as her average on previous recordings.

Four students (1, 12, 14, 16) had multiple sessions where they had difficulty producing recordings of at least two minutes in duration. In their final oral presentation,

all four of these students had longer recordings than their pre-intervention average, with three of them achieving for the first time the two minute recommended duration.

Results of Post-Intervention Questions/Interviews

After the intervention, students were interviewed about their experience in class in general and specifically about the work we had done around bilingual language use. Students had a range of experience about how they felt in class. Some students acknowledged that the class materials were challenging but that there were sufficient strategies in place to help them overcome the disparity between the language they were accustomed to and what was being presented to them. Student #3, who was more comfortable with the prestige variety, said that he has always felt different until being in this class. He said, "I've never had a problem with the kind of Spanish used in this class." Two other students expressed opposite views, indicating that not only was the Spanish used in class and represented in the materials not representative of the community variety they were comfortable with but that it made them feel like they couldn't participate effectively in class. Student #7 said, "Many times I felt my Spanish wasn't good enough to speak in class." Student #1 said, "The articles we read were hard because the words were different than the words we speak" and the Spanish used in class "made me feel like my Spanish was wrong, not as academic."

As far as the prohibition on speaking English during class, most students felt as though it made things harder, but not unreasonably so. Student #9 said, "We were in an AP Spanish class. I knew we weren't supposed to be speaking English." But some students felt that they were unable to express themselves at all. Another student (#2) said that she thought her classmates made fun of Student #7 when she read aloud or spoke in

class, which made Student #2 more self-conscious about her own abilities. She suggested more frequent, more rigorous class reflection on norms and expectations around language-shaming. Student #7 was definitely affected, stating that she felt shut down "many times." Student #1 said, "Maybe I didn't participate because it's harder to communicate in Spanish only, so when you said don't speak in English it made me feel like I couldn't participate. That made it harder."

Students universally acknowledged that the lessons on bilingualism had a positive effect on them. Student #7 said, "I use it a lot every day. I enjoyed learning about it with others because it made me feel like others understood how I felt when speaking Spanish. I no longer feel self-conscious about my Spanish as I did before." Student #15 said, "I felt more comfortable … like I was able to communicate in both of my languages … like I could articulate … like I could learn new words because we were switching with both … like I could just get out what I wanted to say even if it was in English."

I asked students what units of study they felt were most culturally relevant for them. Many students mentioned some aspect of the *Corridos* unit as the time in class that they felt was most culturally relevant.

> Student #15: "When we did the Mexican revolution, I enjoyed that a lot ... because I have family members, a great-grandfather, who have stories about it. Usually in school we just study colonization and skip the rest. We studied the politics of the revolution and learned about how it got to where it is today."

> Student #9: "For sure the *corridos* and Mexican Revolution. We never learn about us; we always learn about Europeans and white people history. History is interesting but it gets hard to relate sometimes because it doesn't have anything to do with you."

Not all students felt connected culturally to the *Corridos* unit. Student #3 said that he doesn't relate as much to Mexican American culture and instead appreciated the foray

into art appreciation where we analyzed Joaquín Sorolla y Bastida's *Los Nazarenos* because his mother used to be Catholic and studying what other faiths believe was interesting.

One student suggested that instead of studying the geography of the Spanish-speaking world, the class could focus on the geography of Mexico, since most of the students are of Mexican descent. He suggested that it could be a part of the work on linguistic variation in the unit on bilingualism.

Results of AP Exam

Soon after the intervention was completed, students took the AP Spanish Language and Culture Exam. All students except one (#11) said that they felt well- or extremely well-prepared for the exam overall. I asked students about the aspects of the Exam which were most challenging to them. All students said that the Essay portion of the exam was the area they felt least prepared for. Half of the students rated the Oral Presentation as the hardest or one of the hardest sections.

When asked what they felt was most useful overall in preparing them for the Exam, two students (#8, #10) specifically mentioned practicing the Oral Presentations. Two other students (#4, #15) indicated that we should have practiced the Oral Presentations more.

This group of students had higher scores than the three previous years. The AP doesn't provide detailed reports on individual students, so there is no way to tell how each of the students performed on the Oral Presentation section. They give overall

reports; however, three students who are not a part of this class also took the test and are included in the report, rendering the group performance results, for the purpose of this study, irrelevant.

Implications and Conclusions

This action research project provided significant evidence to support the idea that instruction that focuses on linguistic awareness is beneficial to Heritage Learners. Students in this group at the beginning of the year experienced a learning environment which was intended to be rigorous and engaging, but fell short of inclusivity. By holding to the mandate that all instruction and subsequent student production must be entirely in Spanish, most of the students' linguistic and cultural reality was marginalized. Acknowledging the existence of the community variety while enforcing the exclusive practice of the prestige variety aggravated the negative feeling that students have about their language. Denying these Heritage Learners' bilingual experience reinforced a societal dynamic where the student was a passive object to be instructed in the correct way of speaking. The sum total of all of this was to disconnect students from expanding their learning. The intervention plan sought to amend this limiting stance by setting students up to be knowledgeable experts in the field of linguistics. It was successful because students' were given opportunities to explore their intuitive linguistic abilities and, as a result, their attitudes about their patterns of language production changed.

Teachers should be instructed in bilingual linguistics

Beginning the process of instructing my students in the linguistic components of our shared patterns of communication made a few things clear: first, this style of instruction (centering the learning on the intuitive ability of the student in order to establish confidence in a difficult grammatical concept) had occurred to me in teaching the rules of accent marks. Any success I have had in students learning those rules has been because I start the unit with an exercise where students pronounce words they've

never seen before like *borborigmo* (the sound produced by movement of gases in the intestinal cavity), pronouncing them effortlessly despite having no idea what their definition is. Playing with this idea of intuitive understanding, I move forward into a discussion of how Spanish words are pronounced and what the purpose of the accent mark is, all based on the notion that the students themselves are holders of an innate ability to immediately and accurately locate the syllable of emphasis. The shift in my thinking occurred when I realized that students would be far more successful in this unit if I allowed the entire process to be guided by the students' nearly flawless intuition, as opposed to it being a cute albeit effective hook for the introductory lesson. Again, some of the simplest tools work best, in this case the problem sets proposed by Leslie are simple and effective tools through which many difficult grammatical concepts can be tackled.

Second, I realized that my university instruction in linguistics had been excellent if I were to only teach FLLs. I had a great deal of understanding of how the Spanish language functions but I needed more training in bilingual language use if I were to continue teaching bilinguals. The more I investigated the patterns and varieties of bilingual language use, I saw that there were gaps in my understanding which needed to be addressed if I was to guide students through their own self-reflective journey of linguistic discovery.

Third, I found myself caught up in the emotion of this experience, because of its power to affect students. There was a time when I decided that I didn't want to teach, because I thought that a foreign language could only be truly learned through immersion, which is how I acquired fluency in Spanish. Then I was inspired by a great teacher and

leader to think of the act of teaching as a subversive exercise. Through teaching, we have the gift of connecting to people in a way that few can, empowering them to grow in innumerable ways. This, then, was the most important facet of teaching: not whether a student can learn a foreign language effectively outside of an immersive experience, but whether they could be supported in an environment where they could improve their ability to think about the world about them, perhaps even change it for the better. My problem of practice was centered on the fortunate realization that I had become a limiting factor in my students' education, by buying in to the notion that "interference from English" was anathema to the AP College Board. What I found was that demonizing myself for having done this was not useful and that I ought to recognize my error and move to correct it. If dwelling on my mistakes would not help my students today, then the best way to make up for them would be to change my practice to reflect my new understanding and continue to be open to new ways of improving.

One of the key recommendations of the literature review is that HLs should be instructed by teachers who are themselves students of linguistics. Bilingualism is by nature dynamic and the Heritage Learners in our classes represent a wide range of abilities and an assortment of linguistic and cultural heritages. The instructors of Heritage Language Learner need specific awareness of the unique complexity represented by bilingualism. The basic Linguistics class offered as part of the coursework in university Foreign Language studies is insufficient. The fallacy that language instruction designed for Foreign Language Learners will suffice for HLs should be admitted and discarded.

Problem sets should be a springboard for student empowerment

The mindset that HLs' deficits need to be corrected in order for them to be

successful reinforces societal dynamics which devalue immigrants and their families. It is isolating and discouraging to be reminded over and over that the language of your community, of your family and friends, is insufficient. It makes the AP Exam a gate-keeper which only allows those who reject their cultural heritage and their social class to participate. Taking an approach which positions students as experts in the field of language sets the stage for an engaging and fulfilling exercise in discovery. Through the use of the problem set protocol, students uncover their own intuitive understanding of what is "right" and what is "wrong" and use that ability to create rules for how the language works. The possibilities for use in the language classroom are endless. No doubt many HLL instructors use this concept in ways large and small, and perhaps have established their own problem sets addressing grammatical concepts which are typically challenging to HLs. It's a solid educational device: to use students' prior understanding in order to establish the basis for the next stage of learning. Here, we are simply increasing students' awareness of an unsuspected inner resource, their intuitive power to identify linguistic structures which sound good. Students need practice in trusting that power and problem sets like those used in the action research project give them guided practice in the application of this skill.

Culturally relevant instruction should be the foundation

Teaching culturally relevant material is a nearly universally agreed upon educational principle. It is also really hard to do because our students don't share the same cultures. Just as heritage language learners bring different linguistic attributes, so too do each of them bring a distinct cultural inheritance. Though all of my students shared the same regional experience for the majority of their lives (East Oakland, CA),

none of their parents hailed from the same towns and only a few of them were from the same state in Mexico. Studying *narco-corridos* was the most engaging lesson for some, the least for others, usually depending on what music their parents listened to. What I recognized in this action research project was that an integral element of culturally relevant instruction is that each student needs to be the one who decides what is relevant for them in the context of the learning. For example, in studying Carmen Lomas Garza's piece *La Tamalada*, students had the opportunity to relate the artist's depiction of a family gathering centered around making tamales in preparation for a celebration to their own families' practices around food and celebrations. Having a student whose faith prohibits celebrations meant having to challenge him to think about simple mealtime practices and the fashion in which the family participates in those. I need to be flexible about culturally relevant instruction because, no matter what my agenda, few if any student groups will even approach anything like homogeneity. What I will aspire to incorporate in my planning for future classes is a rough outline of cultural reference points on which to base student explorations, while designating curricular development time in the first few weeks of class to include input from student surveys of their cultural heritage and interests.

The feedback about cultural relevance from students in this project was clear and consistent with the literature and field of education as a whole: make the learning activities about things that matter to students and they will get more out of the learning. The study of bilingualism itself is culturally relevant to these students, but there are more avenues for enriching the discussions and activities. Heritage Language instruction has to incorporate linguistic sources and models from the community where the learners reside.

These sources should represent as diverse a sample as possible, including regional differences as well as representatives of community members with varying lengths of residence. The opportunity to connect to family members who reside in communities in other countries can provide an exercise in tracking linguistic changes. Expanding the pool of resources for authentic source materials that represent the varieties of Spanish spoken by every member of the group affirms the notion that every student's heritage and voice belongs.

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Appendices

Appendix A

1. What is the meaning of the word Spanglish?

2. Do you use it?

3. Why or why not?

If you use Spanglish, with whom do you use it?

Where do you use it?

4. Do you think Spanglish is an important way of communicating and identity between you and your friends?

5. Do you think Spanglish should be included in literacy materials such as books for children or teenagers?

Appendix B

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
It sounds pretty when speakers mix Spanish and English in conversation.					
It bothers me when speakers talk in Spanish and English at the same time.					
The mixing of English with Spanish leads to the loss of Spanish.					
The mixing of English with Spanish helps to maintain Spanish.					
The mixing of English and Spanish enriches interactions in my community.					
When I mix languages, others regard me as less intelligent.					
When I mix languages, I am more respected by my community.					

Check or mark all that apply

I mix languages:
_____ at home
_____ at school
_____ at work
_____ with spouse/girlfriend/boyfriend
_____ at family gatherings

I mix languages in writing:
_____ letters — to whom? To friends and family
_____ e-mails — to whom? To friends
_____ my journal
_____ other (please specify)

I mix languages in spoken speech because:
_____ I might not know a word
_____ it allows me to express myself more fully
_____ there is no translation for a concept
_____ for added emphasis
_____ to express emotion
_____ to affirm my identity
_____ just because I can

I mix languages in writing because:
_____ I might not know a word
_____ it allows me to express myself more fully
_____ there is no translation for a concept
_____ for added emphasis
_____ to express emotion
_____ to affirm my identity
_____ just because I can

Está bien decir whatever