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"ONLY WHEN ABSOLUTELY APPROPRIATE": ATTITUDES TOWARD CODESWITCHING IN A PUBLIC MIDDLE SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT

This study examines educator and student attitudes toward codeswitching in a K-12 public school and the perceived role of languages other than English in the learning environment. Although largely unfounded in recent research, it is commonly assumed by educational practitioners that successful second language (L2) acquisition requires the avoidance of the L1. This view commonly manifests itself in generalized monolingual expectations in public schools. In contrast, current research suggests that codeswitching practices are beneficial for language learners, as well as established bilinguals. This paper seeks to uncover educator and student ideas that permeate our public schools concerning codeswitching and L2 acquisition. In addition, this study offers a sociocultural perspective of multilingual language practices and advocates for codeswitching in school as a valid way for all students to use available linguistic resources. Finally, the need for more extensive educational opportunities regarding multilingual language use is emphasized and encouraged for students and teachers alike.

KEYWORDS

Bilingualism, Codeswitching, Multilingualism, Second language acquisition, Translanguaging

Although recent research concerning second language (L2) acquisition favors a more inclusive understanding (Cook, 2001; García, 2007, 2015; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2003), teachers and students frequently adhere to monolingual mindsets when it comes to the role of students' first language (L1) in school. Most classroom and traditional ESL teachers in U.S. public schools prohibit codeswitching in the classroom (Guadalupe & García, 2012), expecting L1 maintenance to be handled at home (Lee & Oxelson, 2006). Because of the stigma associated with L1 use, even students who have experienced the benefits of codeswitching tend to assume it to be an overall hindrance to L2 acquisition (Escobar, 2015; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2003). By perpetuating English-only expectations, schools serve to discredit students' complex linguistic repertoires and, subsequently, their full identities in terms of acceptable forms of expression.

Unless teachers understand the benefits of bilingualism, they are unlikely to prioritize the needs of bilingual students in their pedagogy (Lee & Oxelson, 2006). As such, the standard language that students are required to use at school frequently misaligns with the complex language practices used at home (Sayer, 2008). For example, students may be free to

draw upon all linguistic resources while communicating, reading, or writing outside of school, but may then be expected to limit themselves to English in the classroom. As a result, students are frequently denied the benefits of codeswitching and collaboration in their L1 due to popularized, yet unwarranted, language learning practices (Auerbach, 1993; Cook, 2001).

The purpose of this study was to gather and analyze opinions of both educators and students regarding students' use of codeswitching in public schools. In order to better understand reported opinions on codeswitching in schools, information was also gathered concerning educators' understanding of L2 acquisition as well as preparedness to work with linguistically diverse students. Additionally, this study compares the reported opinions of these educators and students with literature regarding best practices for language learners and multilingual students in order to identify prevalent discrepancies or misconceptions. In order to best meet the needs of linguistically diverse students, studies of this type are needed to identify areas of possible growth in public schools and teacher preparation programs. It was hypothesized that findings would suggest low levels of support for codeswitching practices in public schools by teachers and students. Additionally, it was expected that educator responses would indicate limited training in the area of second language acquisition or working with linguistically diverse students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Avoiding the L1

It is commonly held by educators that the most effective way to teach an L2 is by abandoning the L1 in favor of the target language (Cummins, 2008). Although largely unfounded in research, L1 avoidance is often rendered paramount in language teaching circles. Drawing from Krashen's monitor theory, the Natural Approach insists that an environment rich in L2 input is among the most important factors in second language acquisition (Krashen & Terrell, 1995). As a result, in seeking to provide the purest, most natural conditions for language acquisition, many K-12 public school teachers in the U.S. virtually ignore the existence of students' L1 (Cook, 2001). While some studies advocate for structured or limited use of the L1 (Alshammari, 2011), it is uncommon to find contemporary research that condones use of the L1 altogether in traditional public school settings.

In reality, L2 acquisition is not equivalent to L1 acquisition, and the L1 cannot be ignored: teachers and students consistently utilize the L1 despite efforts to exclusively use the L2 (Cook, 2001; Raschka, Sercombe & Chi-Ling, 2009; Wei, 2011). In the case of bilingual teachers, Cook (2001) claims that they frequently "resort to the L1 despite their best intentions and often feeling guilty for straying from the L2 path" (p. 405). For instance, in a study of EFL classrooms in Taipei, Taiwan, which investigated teachers' use of codeswitching during instruction at two schools with opposing stances on L1 incorporation, Raschka et al. (2009) reported that the teacher at the English-only school used codeswitching in her instruction as frequently as the teacher at the school that promoted use of the L1. In much the same way, bilingual students are drawn back to the L1 despite their best efforts. For example, Scott and de la Fuente (2008) found that students used the L1 through private speech despite their instructions to use only the target language. Even among bilingual schools, driven by the notion of language compartmentalization, codeswitching is prohibited unsuccessfully; teachers and students continue to engage in the practice (Palmer, 2009). Furthermore, Storch and Wigglesworth (2003) found that university-level ESL students rejected the use of the L1 in language learning despite reporting that using the L1 helped them complete their tasks. Similarly, Escobar and Dillard-Paltrineri (2015) found that students held conflicting beliefs about translanguaging as a tool for L2 acquisition. L1 avoidance thus appears to be a

commonly expected feature of L2 teaching and learning, despite reported experiences which suggest otherwise.

L2 Learners and Codeswitching

Research from the sociocultural perspective proposes that the L1 has a valuable place in L2 acquisition (Cook, 2001; Shin, 2013). The Vygotskian sociocultural theory emphasizes that cognitive development takes place only within the learner's zone of proximal development (ZPD); a crucial part of learning within the ZPD relies on interaction with more capable peers or adults (Vygotsky, 1978). Aligned with the sociocultural perspective, Anton and DiCamilla (1999) suggested that students' use of the L1 within L2 learning allowed them to access their ZPD through externalizing their inner L1 speech. Specifically, they found that L2 acquisition was facilitated when students used their L1 to collaborate during an assigned task. In line with these findings, Scott and de la Fuente (2008) discovered that students who were permitted to use their L1 to collaborate on a form-focused task were more successful at sustaining collaboration, using metalinguistic terminology, and completing the task at hand than students who were instructed to use only their L2.

A significant aspect of language learning within the ZPD includes what Moore (2002) refers to as "the interactional dimension of language learning" (p. 281)—specifically, that negotiating language is a crucial component in meaning-making and learning. A common way that language learners and competent bilingual speakers use their language resources is through codeswitching. In its most broad sense, and how it will be interpreted in this study, codeswitching is the use of linguistic resources from more than one language during the same conversation (Myers-Scotton, 1993). Recently, attention has been given to the role that codeswitching may play in language learning. Moore (2002) found in a study of codeswitching in the second language classroom that codeswitching can be highly beneficial, although teachers tend to be wary of the practice. For instance, codeswitching can serve to bridge linguistic gaps in discourse as well as facilitate L2 acquisition. In their research, Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain (2004) found that language learners use codeswitching not only to compensate for insufficiencies in the L2, but also for regular discourse; Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain therefore insisted that it is possible to establish a classroom environment where the L1 may be incorporated without jeopardizing acquisition of the L2.

Rather than compartmentalizing languages and regarding bilingual students as equally competent monolinguals, research proposes that all linguistic resources have an important place in language learning (Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Cummins, 2008; Gort, 2015). Moore (2002) described students' L1 and L2 as a total communicative resource and suggested that codeswitching may help students learn to bridge linguistic and cultural borders. If one is to understand the languages to which students have access as equally viable linguistic resources, a more modern understanding of language may be necessary. García (2007) posited that "if language is constructed and inhabited by people, it cannot be limited to the descriptions and conventions adopted by nation states (or national groups) and their academies and educational institutions" (p. 13). In place of the traditional understanding of language, García advocated for the term *translanguaging*[1] to best describe how people with multiple language resources communicate. The concept of translanguaging is particularly relevant for English learners when considering the circumstances of their language learning. As opposed to many language learners who opt to learn a second

[1] García posits that the term translanguaging includes the many ways in which speakers draw upon their linguistic repertoires to make meaning and serve as resources for learning. Some understand this term to be different than codeswitching because it focuses on the speaker rather than the speech being produced or the switch in languages.

language for a variety of reasons, English learners are tasked with learning what García (2007) referred to as an "everyday lived language" (p. 18). This difference is important because it challenges teachers to go beyond teaching English: they must help their students incorporate their new language into their repertoire in a way that gives them a voice of their own. By encouraging students to investigate their language repertoires through codeswitching, teachers can help students identify better with their new language.

General Benefits of Codeswitching

It is important to note that rules governing language use in schools, whether official or covert, can inhibit the language practices of established bilinguals as well as language learners (Wiley, 2004). As previously mentioned, codeswitching is not merely a result of language inadequacies; rather, it is a common way in which bilinguals use their linguistic repertoires to accomplish an interactional goal. Even among language learners, codeswitching is used for discursive purposes, reflecting typical bilingual interactions (Moore, 2002).

Codeswitching, if encouraged in schools, can be used among bilinguals to enhance learning through promoting creativity (Kharkhurin & Wei, 2015; Sayer, 2008), criticality (Stewart & Hansen-Thomas, 2016; Wei, 2011), and identity development (Canagarajah, 2004; Ellwood, 2008; Stewart & Hansen-Thomas, 2016). Sayer (2008) studied the story retellings of four bilingual girls in the third grade and analyzed their use of Spanish codeswitches, borrowings, and calques in their negotiating of literary events. He found that most of the girls' Spanish utterances were in the form of codeswitches and served to add richer meaning to the girls' retellings. Sayer posited that codeswitches may be a "more evolved linguistic form" because of the greater expressive power they hold (p. 108). In short, codeswitching allows bilingual students to personally express themselves in more precise and more meaningful ways than only one language would provide. Kharkhurin and Wei (2015) also identified expressive benefits of codeswitching among bilinguals, who codeswitch frequently, compared to bilinguals who do not typically codeswitch. In their study, bilinguals who codeswitch in their everyday interactions scored higher on creativity tests than their counterparts who do not frequently codeswitch. The researchers therefore suggested that one benefit of codeswitching is a greater capacity for innovation. Thus, it is possible that by withholding students from exercising their linguistic potential through codeswitching, schools stifle the expressive potential of bilingual students.

In addition to allowing for greater expression and creativity, codeswitching may also enable bilingual students to more effectively perform their identities through navigating social roles and interactions. The standard language that students are required to use at school often does not match the flexible language that students use at home, particularly for bilingual students. Analysis of codeswitching can provide insight into how students view themselves and wish to be seen by others (Ellwood, 2008). Very often, these instances of codeswitching are quiet side conversations reserved for the hallway or lunchroom, which allow students to briefly access their full linguistic repertoires (Canagarajah, 2004). Canagarajah calls these locations *safe houses*—places hidden from clear observation where bilingual students feel safe to perform their identities through codeswitching. When codeswitching is prohibited in the classroom, the identities of many students may be only partially seen. Acknowledging students' codeswitching as a legitimate form of communication serves to offer students a *safe house* to validate the identities they wish to express.

Within this context, this present study aims to provide a deeper understanding of the attitudes that exist in public schools regarding codeswitching practices. This study examines what educators and students think about codeswitching and its role in the school setting. Findings are compared with rele-

vant literature in order to contribute to the body of research concerning multilingual language practices. Moreover, the study aims to identify misconceptions related to the nature and use of codeswitching as revealed in participant responses. Finally, it discusses potential improvements in the public school setting and teacher training programs in order to better serve linguistically diverse students.

METHODS

To most accurately understand the attitudes that pervade public schools concerning codeswitching, both students and educators were included in this study. Participants included 209 students ranging from sixth to eighth grade, as well as 39 educators from the same year-round middle school in a large, urban, middle-class county in the southeastern U.S. Eligible participants completed an online survey concerning their attitudes toward codeswitching in school; educators received one form a survey (Appendix A), and students received another (Appendix B). All participants provided informed consent prior to participation and were guaranteed anonymity in their responses.

For participating students, the study was carried out entirely during the school day at times agreed upon by classroom teachers. Due to anticipated misunderstandings regarding the description of codeswitching in survey questions, students were shown a brief video clip of a conversation between three family members that included many clear examples of codeswitching between English and another language. After watching the video, students were encouraged to ask clarifying questions concerning their understanding of codeswitching prior to beginning the survey. Educators were informed of the study via e-mail and voluntarily completed the survey through an anonymous survey link. Codeswitching was consistently described as 'switching between two or more language while speaking' in both students and educator surveys.

In the student survey, students were directed to one of two survey paths depending on their self-reported use of codeswitching. Surveys for students who reported codeswitching practices during school, and for students who reported no codeswitching, contained 15 and 14 questions, respectively. For each survey path, four demographic items were included. Five items were Likert-scale questions, four of which were statements regarding attitudes toward codeswitching during school. The remaining statement concerned the length of time needed for students to learn English as their L2. For two of the questions, space was also provided for students to explain their reasoning behind each answer choice. The surveys also consisted of three open-ended questions designed to elicit descriptions of students' experiences with or observations of codeswitching during school. The remaining items on each survey were multiple choice questions regarding students' encounters with codeswitching during school.

For educators, the 21-item survey contained the same five Likert-scale items as in the student surveys. The educator survey included seven additional Likert-scale statements that targeted teaching practices specifically related to ESL students. In addition, educators were asked two open-ended questions concerning codeswitching in school, as well as six demographic items.

School Context

In spring of 2017, the time of the study, the student population of the focus school was comprised of 6% Asian, 10% African American, 11% Hispanic, 70% White, and 3% two or more races. Because of the nature of the year-round school, one group of students in each grade, called a *track*, is out of school for three weeks every nine weeks, in place of the traditional summer break. The school has four tracks, or groups of students, referred to as tracks 1-4, with one of the four tracks on break at any given time. This schedule allowed students enrolled in tracks 1-3 the opportunity to participate in the study. Students from track

4 were excluded from the study because they were on break at the time of implementation.

Students

A total of 207 student responses (N=207) are reported here. Of these, 45 participants indicated that a language other than English is spoken at home. In all, 23 languages other than English were reported as home languages. A total of 23 students indicated that they used codeswitching at school, while 184 students indicated that they did not. Of the 23 students who reported codeswitching practices at school, 16 indicated that a language other than English was spoken at home while seven indicated that they were raised in English-only households. Of the 184 students who indicated that they did not use codeswitching at school, 155 indicated that English was the only language spoken at home, while 29 indicated a multilingual home.

Educators

The participating educators (n=39, 31 females and 8 males) included teachers, counselors, teaching assistants, and administrators who worked at the focus school at the time of the study. To ensure anonymity, exact roles of the educators were not elicited on the survey and, therefore, were all categorized simply as educators. Nearly half of the participating educators (n=19) had been working in the field of education for more than 10 years at the time of the study. Four educators indicated that they were in the beginning of their careers with one to three years of experience, while 16 indicated that they had four to ten years of experience. Only one educator reported that English was her L2. Nineteen educators indicated that they do not speak another language, while the other 20 educators reported some level proficiency in a language other than English: 12 reported beginner-level of proficiency in a language other than English, while four and three educators reported intermediate and advanced levels of proficiency, respectively.

RESULTS

Educator Results

To begin, results indicate that educators at the focus school were somewhat unprepared to meet the needs of bilingual students and language learners (see Table 1). Of the educators surveyed, only one participant "strongly agreed" that he/she had adequate training to work with ESL students. In contrast, more than half of the educators (51%, n=20) reported that they were underprepared to work with ESL students. These results were underscored by the lack of reported teacher training in this area. Nearly half (n=19) of the teachers who reported having received training in teaching language-minority students cited various

Table 1. Educator views on Codeswitching (CS) and prior ESL training

	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)
CS is helpful for ESL students.	71.9	21.9	6.3
Teachers should allow CS during school.	69.2	20.5	10.3
Students should avoid languages other than English during school.	30.7	12.8	56.4
The main reason why students CS is to exclude others.	25.7	30.8	43.6
Students learning English as a second language should be able to learn the language within 2 years of arriving in the U.S.	43.6	28.2	28.2
I have adequate training to work with ESL students.	28.2	20.5	51.3
I am interested in receiving more training in working with ESL students.	79.5	12.8	7.7

in-service day workshops and college coursework, yet their responses largely failed to mention more rigorous or current best practices (see Table 2).

In relation, and as cited in previous research about teacher attitudes (Lee & Oxelson, 2006), results of this study highlight a discrepancy between educators' beliefs and their reported classroom practices. Among the 39 educators surveyed, 27 indicated that they believed codeswitching to be helpful for students learning English; however, only 10 reported that they "very often" or "always" allow ESL students to use their native language during class. Instead, 42% (n=13) indicated that they "very often" or "always" instruct ESL students to speak in English during their class. Additionally, while almost half (n=14) of the educators indicated that they sometimes provide materials for their ESL students in their native language, fewer than 10% (n=3) of the educators reported that they do so very often. These findings support the claim that many educators equate successful English acquisition with L1 avoidance. Despite most educators (n=27) indicating that codeswitching is helpful for students learning English, the discrepancy in their reported practices suggests stronger, more deep-rooted ties to an immersion-based understanding of language learning, as is evident in the following selected responses from educators:

Excerpt 1:

In response to *do you think codeswitching is helpful for students learning English as a second language?*

Selected Response: Probably yes

Explanation: "Practice makes perfect! Students should be encouraged to speak English as frequently as possible. Most professional language institutes advocate immersion as best strategy for language learners."

Excerpt 2:

In response to *do you think teachers should allow students to switch between English and another language while speaking at school?*

Selected Response: Probably not

Explanation: "They are trying to learn English so they should only speak English as often as possible."

Excerpt 3:

In response to *do you think teachers should allow students to switch between English and another language while speaking at school?*

Selected Response: Probably not

Explanation: "They should use the language accustom to the society in which they live in order to be successful."

Excerpt 4:

In response to *have you received training in teach-*

Table 2. Educator views on best practices

	Always / Very Often (%)	Sometimes (%)	Rarely / Never (%)
I allow ESL students to use her/his native language in my class	32.3	51.6	16.1
I instruct ESL students to speak in English when they are in my class	40.7	31.3	28.2
I issue punishments when students do not speak English in my class.	0	0	100.0
I provide materials for ESL students in their native languages.	9.4	43.8	46.9
I consult the ESL teacher about best practices for teaching ESL students.	40.7	43.8	15.6

ing language-minority/ESL students?

Selected Response: Yes

Explanation: "I used to teach ESL summer camps and was trained on how to do that. They were not allowed to speak another language there, and I was not allowed to say words other than English."

The educator responses in these excerpts demonstrate that some educators not only promote an outdated approach to L2 acquisition that focuses on immersion, but also consider it to be best practice, citing professional opinions to support their reasoning. Undoubtedly, these teachers have the best interest of their students at heart, yet their understanding of L2 acquisition may be insufficient to provide the environment that recent research suggests is more advantageous to student success.

At the focus school during the time of the study, one ESL teacher held formal ESL classes and supported content-area teachers through collaboration and with instructional resources. Educators who taught students who were learning English at the time of the study did report a high level of initiative in seeking support from the school's ESL teacher, with 87% of educators indicating that they at least sometimes consulted the ESL teacher about best practices (Table 2). Additionally, in contrast with previous findings (Reeves, 2006), most of the educators (79%, n=31) responded that they were interested in receiving further training in the area ESL (Table 1). The interest and initiative of the participating educators suggest that while they were interested in learning how to best serve their language-minority population, there may have been a lack of time or resources available in the county or school to do so.

Educators' responses tended to correspond with misunderstandings about the role that codeswitching plays in language learning, as previously described by Cook (2001). Among responses from educators who did not regard codeswitching as helpful in the language learning process, several included misconceptions concerning language interference. For example, several educators expressed concern that switching between languages would hinder students' ability to learn English, as illustrated in responses provided below to the question, "do you think switching between English and another language is helpful for students who are learning English as a second language?"

Excerpt 5:

Selected Response: Might or might not

Explanation: "It's a priority to learn the language for the country they live in."

Excerpt 6:

Selected Response: Might or might not

Explanation: "It may make them more comfortable in stressful situations, but in the long run I feel it would hinder their ability to acquire the language."

Excerpt 7:

Selected Response: Might or might not

Explanation: "Depends on the situation, the research states students need practice with the language they are currently learning. So in ways it can be detrimental but in other ways it can provide a sense of belonging and community with those who also speak their language."

Excerpt 8:

Selected Response: Probably not

Explanation: "English is so different in syntax from most other languages that I think it can confuse things."

The answers provided in Excerpts 5, 6, and 7 highlight an important misconception: namely, that using the L1 can inhibit learning the L2. As suggested in Excerpt 5, these educators often believe that practice in the target language must, in turn, prohibit the

L1. Excerpt 8 illustrates the common fear that codeswitching causes confusion during the language learning process. These results align with the either/or understanding of language learning observed by Lee and Oxelson (2006) while studying teachers' attitudes toward heritage language maintenance.

Misconceptions about the nature of codeswitching are also highlighted in selected representative explanations provided for several answer choices, provided in the following excerpts:

Excerpt 9:

In response to *do you think that teachers should allow students to switch back and forth between English and another language while at school?*

Selected Response: Might or might not

Explanation: "I think that students should be able to switch back and forth when first learning, but after 1 year they should be able to communicate without switching back and forth (assuming no developmental delays)."

Excerpt 10:

In response to *do you think that teachers should allow students to switch back and forth between English and another language while at school?*

Selected Response:

Explanation: "I think that this is a good way to help students with limited English to be able to express their knowledge of a topic and to be able to understand what is going on. The only part that would make me hesitate at all would be if they know enough English and don't need to speak another language."

Excerpt 11:

In response to do you think that teachers should allow students to switch back and forth between English and another language while at school?

Selected Response: Probably yes

Table 3. Student attitudes toward codeswitching (CS)

	Students who reportedly CS during school			Students who do not reportedly CS during school		
	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)
CS is helpful for ESL students	91.5	8.7	0.0	71.2	14.7	14.1
Teachers should allow CS during school.	82.6	13.0	4.3	56.8	33.3	9.8
Students should avoid languages other than English during school.	13.6	17.4	72.7	14.7	23.9	61.5
The main reason why students CS is to exclude others.	34.7	30.4	34.8	29.9	19.6	50.5
Students learning English as a second language should be able to learn the language within 2 years of arriving in the U.S.	34.8	34.8	30.4	38.0	41.8	20.1

Explanation: "It is likely necessary for the student in the process to learn English."

Excerpt 12:

In response to *how would you feel if you heard a student switch between English and another language while speaking at school?*

Response: "I embrace all students regardless of their native language. We offer support for ESL students who are transitioning from using their language to English."

As is evident in excerpts 10-12, codeswitching was narrowly understood by many of these educators to be a stage in the language learning process, rather than a sophisticated language practice of bilinguals. More specifically, Excerpt 9 demonstrates an understanding that codeswitching is lacking in structure and knowledge of language. In addition to the excerpts above, a few other educators (n=8) indicated "language deficiency" as a reason for student codeswitching during school. It could be that the lack of educators who reported learning a second language themselves, compounded with perceived lack of training in the area of L2 acquisition, resulted in an overall minimal understanding of codeswitching and its functions.

Student Results

According to student responses, students who use codeswitching practices during school tend to be more inclined to support the use of languages other than English during the school day and more readily acknowledge the benefits of doing so (see Table 3). While 92% of students (n=21) who reported codeswitching consider it to be helpful for ESL students (see Table 4), only 71% of students (n=131) who did not report codeswitching held similar beliefs (see Table 5). In addition, 56% of the strictly monolingual students (n=104) agreed that teachers should allow codeswitching during school, as opposed to 83% of their codeswitching counterparts (n=19). The small percentage of codeswitching students (n=3) who believed that languages other than English should be avoided at school approximates that of the non-codeswitching students; however, students who reported codeswitching tended to more strongly disagree with this statement than their peers who did not codeswitch (Table 3). This could suggest that codeswitching results in stronger feelings toward multilingual language practices. As mentioned previously, some students who use codeswitching at school indicated that they did not speak a language other than English at home. This finding indicates that some students can take advantage of the diverse linguistic resources available at school without having a complex linguistic background. Most interestingly, students raised in monolingual English speaking homes who codeswitched more staunchly defended the use and benefits of codeswitching in schools, compared to their peers who were raised in multilingual homes and did not codeswitch.

In some instances, the responses of non-codeswitching students approximated the educators' responses. For instance, the educator and non-codeswitching student groups similarly reported codeswitching to be an intermediate stage for language learners, with 23% of educators (n=9) and 28% of non-codeswitching students (n=52) directly noting this in their responses. Similar misconceptions regarding the time needed to learn an L2 also appeared in student responses. A few of the multilingual students (n=7) who codeswitch, despite having likely experienced the challenges of acquiring a new language, responded that they still feel that a language should be able to be acquired within two years.

Educator and non-codeswitching student groups also demonstrated comparative feelings toward students' codeswitching practices during school. Twenty percent of non-codeswitching students (n=37) and 33% (n=13) of educators mentioned feelings of concern or suspicion when they hear students codeswitching during school, as is exemplified in their responses to the question, "How would you feel

Table 4. Comparing attitudes of CS students from monolingual English-speaking homes with those from multilingual homes

	Students who reportedly CS					
	Monolingual English-speaking home			Multilingual home		
	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)
CS is helpful for ESL students	85.7	14.3	0.0	93.8	6.3	0.0
Teachers should allow CS during school.	100.0	0.0	0.0	75.1	18.8	6.3
Students should avoid languages other than English during school.	14.3	0.0	85.7	12.5	25.0	62.6
The main reason why students CS is to exclude others.	42.9	0.0	57.1	3.3	43.8	25.0
Students learning English as a second language should be able to learn the language within 2 years of arriving in the U.S.	14.3	28.6	57.2	43.8	37.5	18.8

if you heard students switching between English and another language while speaking at school?"

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Excerpt 13:

> *Educator Response:* "It would make me feel uncomfortable, perhaps they are speaking about me."

Excerpt 14:

> *Student Response:* "i would feel self conscious only because i would not know what they are saying and feel like maybe they are talking about me in a negative light."

Similar responses suggest that these educators and students were somewhat hesitant to approve of codeswitching practices because it left them uncertain about the nature of the conversations. Similar feelings were demonstrated in response to the question, "Do you think teachers should allow students to switch between English and another language while speaking at school?" as in the following excerpts:

Excerpt 15:

> *Selected Response:* Probably yes

Explanation: "I think this because if they switch between languages, chances are they are saying something inappropriate or mean. The only time it should be used is while helping another student."

Excerpt 16:

Selected Response: Probably not

Explanation: "Teachers should not have to deal with students who do know English speaking another language and not understanding what they are saying about them or others."

From these responses, it seems students and educators alike have concerns about the reasons for codeswitching, particularly among students whom they perceive as knowing English well enough. Regardless of their opinions on whether codeswitching should be allowed, unsettled feelings regarding the nature of codeswitching during school were common among student and educator responses. These worries coincide with the one-third of non-codeswitching students and one-third of educators who mentioned "privacy" or "secrecy" as a main reason for codeswitching in school. Only three codeswitching students mentioned privacy as a main reason for their own codeswitching, even though eight of these same students "somewhat agreed" that they codeswitch to exclude others.

In contrast with the worry and suspicion expressed by students and educators, student responses suggested that codeswitching provides comfort and pride for students who practice it, as illustrated in students' answers to the question, "How do you feel when you mix languages while speaking?"

Excerpt 17:

Selected Response: "I feel comfortable because it is easier to express myself."

Excerpt 18:

Selected Response: "I like it, it makes me feel less confined."

Excerpt 19:

Selected Response: "weird but more compatible"

From these students' responses, we can assume that codeswitching, although occasionally admitted to be "weird" or "different," may provide a way for students to more truly be themselves. Reported feelings toward codeswitching support findings by Sayer

Table 5. Attitudes of non-CS students

	Students who do not reportedly CS					
	Monolingual English-speaking home			Multilingual home		
	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)
CS is helpful for ESL students	72.9	14.2	12.9	62.0	6.3	0.0
Teachers should allow CS during school.	100.0	0.0	0.0	65.5	24.1	10.3
Students should avoid languages other than English during school.	14.2	24.5	61.3	17.2	20.7	62.1
The main reason why students CS is to exclude others.	29.1	20.6	50.4	34.4	13.8	51.7
Students learning English as a second language should be able to learn the language within 2 years of arriving in the U.S.	37.4	42.6	20.0	41.3	37.9	20.6

(2008) that promoted codeswitching as a means to greater expressive power.

Another notable finding is that the locations students identified as places where codeswitching occurs excluded content area classrooms. Only 28 (14%) of non-codeswitching students mentioned having observed codeswitching taking place in class, while 88 students (46%) specifically mentioned common areas such as the lunchroom, the bus or the hallways. When students were asked where and when they typically codeswitch at school, their responses were consistent with what their peers observed. Only three students said that they used codeswitching during class. Instead, many responses identified common areas as places of codeswitching. One student's description of when and where she codeswitched emphasized this point: "most of the time with friends, just to show them. Never in the classroom." This answer suggests that some level of perceived inappropriateness related to the use of codeswitching exists in the content area classroom, in line with what Canagarajah (2004) describes—that the only perceived *safe houses* available for students to freely use their linguistic resources are common, teacher-free spaces.

DISCUSSION

The attitudes toward codeswitching reported by students and educators in this study tend to support a sociocultural approach to understanding multilingual language practices and the future of acceptable forms of communicating and learning in schools. One of the most intriguing findings in this research is that students who reportedly used codeswitching at school did not necessarily speak a second language at home. In other words, this practice is not reserved exclusively for simultaneous bilinguals or those with equal fluency in both languages, nor is this phenomenon simply a fallback for those who lack proficiency in their L2. Instead, these findings may problematize the very concepts of "native speakers" and "second languages," drawing focus to the speakers rather than the languages being spoken (García, 2007). By prioritizing speakers instead of language ideologies, it becomes possible to better understand the expressive power of linguistic resources when they are fully used.

Interestingly, these students were more likely to support and recognize the benefits of codeswitching if they participated in the practice, regardless of linguistic upbringing. This suggests that the benefits of codeswitching may be available to more individuals than previously thought. Such results support previous research that argues for a more flexible interpretation of language use in order to encompass the broad nature of codeswitching practices (Conteh, 2007; Creese & Blackledge, 2010; García, 2007; Martínez, Hikida, & Durán, 2015; Otsuji & Pennycook, 2010; Stewart & Hansen-Thomas, 2016;).

These findings also highlight the instructional and social needs of linguistically diverse students and point to the need for a more in-depth look into practical and meaningful ways to systematically welcome codeswitching practices into public schools. Although most of the educators in this study expressed interest in learning how to best serve language-minority students (n=31), some of the responses suggested an outdated, language compartmentalization-based understanding of L2 acquisition, reinforcing the findings of Palmer (2009) and Escobar & Dillard-Paltrineri (2015). Similarly, educators' ideas concerning the nature of codeswitching reflected the findings of Martínez, Hikida & Durán (2015)—namely, that the practice may be often narrowly understood as a support to fall back on when language proficiency is lacking.

This study posits that educators' incomplete understanding of L2 acquisition is a significant factor contributing to often unattainable expectations for ESL students. Without frequent access to current training specifically focused on best practices for ESL and multilingual students, teaching practices will likely continue to be driven by misconceptions. In

kind, we might also assume that the cognitive and sociocultural benefits available to students through codeswitching would likewise remain limited. The following educator responses, for instance, echo traditional attitudes toward permitting codeswitching in school:

Excerpt 20:

In response to *do you think switching between English and another language is helpful for students learning English as a second language?*

> *Selected Response:* Might or might not
>
> *Explanation:* "I think only when absolutely appropriate should students be switching between English and another language."

Excerpt 21:

In response to *do you think that teachers should allow students to switch between English and another language while at school?*

> *Selected Response:* Probably not
>
> *Explanation:* "Why would we do that?"

At least some of the participating educators in this study seemed to consider it common sense to prohibit languages other than English in school. Others were more open to the idea, so long as it was deemed appropriate. These responses should raise concerns about who decides which languages are acceptable and when, as well as questions regarding how much training with multilingual language practices an educator should have before being given authority to make such a decision. It could be argued that there is too much at stake for schools to allow teachers the freedom to determine the permissibility of languages used in their classrooms. Regardless, these questions warrant further investigation in the field of education and policy relating to multilingual language practices.

In response, this study calls for public school systems to prioritize the needs of their students by providing educators with access to training that incorporates critical multilingual language awareness, as outlined by García (2015). By doing so, the worries exhibited by educators in this study may be replaced with a deeper understanding of the complex linguistic identities of their students and how they can be incorporated in the classroom. As demonstrated by Heller (2007) and further supplemented in this study, L1 avoidance serves to legitimize English as the only acceptable form of communication, while undermining the lived experiences of students with more complex linguistic repertoires. In contrast, when teachers better understand the complexities of multilingual language practices and L2 acquisition, they can more effectively re-establish the classroom as a safe house in which students may utilize their linguistic resources to perform their most true selves.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to explore language ideologies held by educators and students regarding codeswitching in a K-12 public school. Responses to the survey suggest that, in general, educators and monolingual students hold a variety of concerns and misunderstandings about multilingual language practices and are subsequently hesitant to recognize potential benefits of codeswitching during school. Responses also suggest a discrepancy between educator beliefs and reported practices regarding the education of ESL students. These findings emphasize educators' need for, and interest in, more extensive, research-based training in the areas of multilingual language use.

Participating students who used codeswitching at school were the most supportive of inclusive language practices and more positively regarded the practice as a learning support. This suggests that first-hand experiences of codeswitching may be more influential in understanding multilingual language

practices than being raised in a multilingual home. It should be noted that the sample size of codeswitching students was comparatively low and, therefore, serves as a limitation to this aspect of the study. More research would be warranted to determine the existence of a relationship between linguistic upbringing and perceived benefits of codeswitching.

In addition, findings from this study support the incorporation of linguistic studies into the public school experience for K-12 students. As our world becomes more connected and digitized, linguistic resources become more readily available for those outside of traditional speech communities. In this study, students who (n=7) were raised monolingually (n=7) were somehow able to access linguistic resources that enable them to codeswitch, suggesting an apparent availability of linguistic resources. Students today are already exposed to a more fluid understanding of language than their parents as they navigate social media (Androutsopoulos, 2013), advertising and music (Androutsopoulos, 2012; Sarkar & Winer, 2006), which could play a role in students' ability to access linguistic resources outside of their home. Findings from this study suggest that, in general, students who engage in the codeswitching practice may be more open to linguistic diversity in the school setting than their non-codeswitching peers and their teachers. For example, codeswitching students were the most likely to agree that teachers should allow students to codeswitch during school and that codeswitching is helpful for learning English (Table 3). As we redefine language, the need to educate students regarding the superdiversity awaiting them becomes paramount (Blommaert & Backus, 2011). If students are taught how language ideologies can marginalize language-minority groups, they may be more prepared to combat stereotypes and strive to promote a more inclusive, heteroglossic public school experience.

This study also reiterates the importance of schools as safe houses—places where students can feel comfortable using their full linguistic repertoires—and the role of linguistic expression in identity performance (Canagarajah, 2004). Student observations and reported accounts of codeswitching reflected Canagarajah's (2004) account of highly limited access to safe houses for multilingual students to perform their full identities. Despite the lack of perceived safe houses, multilingual students in the study still consistently reported that they feel comfortable when they are able to codeswitch during school. This underscores the need for public schools to modernize their understanding of L2 acquisition and multilingual language practices. As Cook (2001) emphasizes best, "without the distrust of the L1, there is no reason why students should not codeswitch in the classroom" (p. 418). Ultimately, in order to increase achievement for linguistically diverse students, a primary goal of school systems ought to be providing the training necessary to ensure that educators and students trust—and thereby legitimize—the linguistic practices of all students in public school.

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APPENDIX A

Educator Survey

1. Do you ever hear students at school switch between English and another language while speaking?
   - o Yes
   - o I'm not sure
   - o No

2. How would you feel if you heard students at school switching between English and another language while speaking? Please explain why you would feel this way.

3. What are some reasons why some students switch between English and another language while speaking at school?

4. Do you think switching between English and another language is helpful for students who are learning English as a second language? Explain why you think this.
   - o Definitely yes _____
   - o Probably yes _____
   - o Might or might not _____
   - o Probably not _____
   - o Definitely not _____

5. Do you think that teachers should allow students to switch between English and another language while at school? Explain why you think this.
   - o Definitely yes _____
   - o Probably yes _____
   - o Might or might not _____
   - o Probably not _____
   - o Definitely not _____

6. Students should avoid using languages other than English while at school.
   - o Strongly agree
   - o Somewhat agree
   - o Neither agree nor disagree
   - o Somewhat disagree
   - o Strongly disagree

7. Students who are learning English as a second language should be able to learn the language within two years of beginning school in the United States.
   - o Strongly agree
   - o Somewhat agree
   - o Neither agree nor disagree
   - o Somewhat disagree
   - o Strongly disagree

8. The main reason why students switch between English and another language while speaking is to exclude others from the conversation.
   - o Strongly agree
   - o Somewhat agree

- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Strongly disagree

9. Do you currently teach ESL students?
   - o Yes
   - o I'm not sure
   - o No

10. I allow ESL students to use her/his native language in my class
    - o Always
    - o Very often
    - o Sometimes
    - o Rarely
    - o Never

11. I instruct ESL students to speak in English when they are in my class.
    - o Always
    - o Very often
    - o Sometimes
    - o Rarely
    - o Never

12. I issue punishments when students do not speak English in my class.
    - o Always
    - o Very often
    - o Sometimes
    - o Rarely
    - o Never

13. I provide materials for ESL students in their native languages.
    - o Always
    - o Very often
    - o Sometimes
    - o Rarely
    - o Never

14. I consult the ESL teacher about best practices for teaching ESL students.
    - o Always
    - o Very often
    - o Sometimes
    - o Rarely
    - o Never

15. I have adequate training to work with ESL students.
    - o Strongly agree
    - o Somewhat agree
    - o Neither agree nor disagree
    - o Somewhat disagree
    - o Strongly disagree

16. I am interested in receiving more training in working with ESL students.
    - o Strongly agree
    - o Somewhat agree
    - o Neither agree nor disagree
    - o Somewhat disagree
    - o Strongly disagree

17. Have you received training in teaching language-minority/ESL students? If yes, please describe the type of training, (i.e., inservice workshop, college coursework)
    - o Yes _____
    - o No

18. Is English your native language? If not, please indicate your native language(s).
    - o Yes
    - o I'm not sure
    - o No _____

19. Do you speak a second language? If yes, please select your highest ability level obtained.
    - o Beginner
    - o Intermediate
    - o Advanced
    - o I do not speak a second language

20. How many years have you been a public or private school teacher (including this year)?
    - o 1-3 years
    - o 4-7 years
    - o 7-10 years
    - o 10+ years

21. Please select your gender
    - o Male
    - o Female

APPENDIX B

Student Surveys

1. Do you ever switch between English and another language while speaking at school?
   - o Yes
   - o No

Start of Block: Non-codeswitching Student Block (Answer "no" to question #1)

2. Do you ever hear other students at school switch between English and another language while speaking?
   - o Yes
   - o I'm not sure
   - o No

3. When and where do you typically hear other students switching between English and another language while speaking?

4. How would you feel (do you feel) if you heard other students at school switching between English and another language while speaking? Please explain why you would feel this way.

5. What are some reasons why some students switch between English and another language while speaking at school?

6. Do you think switching between English and another language is helpful for students who are learning English as a second language? Explain why you think this.
   - o Definitely yes _____
   - o Probably yes _____
   - o Might or might not _____
   - o Probably not _____
   - o Definitely not _____

7. Do you think that teachers should allow students to switch between English and another language while at school? Explain why you think this.
   - o Definitely yes _____
   - o Probably yes _____
   - o Maybe _____
   - o Probably not _____
   - o Definitely not _____

8. Students should avoid using languages other than English while at school.
   - o Strongly agree
   - o Somewhat agree
   - o Neither agree nor disagree
   - o Somewhat disagree
   - o Strongly disagree

9. Students who are learning English as a second language should be able to learn the language within two years of beginning school in the United States.
   - o Strongly agree

- o Agree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Strongly disagree

10. The main reason why students switch between English and another language while speaking is to exclude others from the conversation.
- o Strongly agree
- o Somewhat agree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Strongly disagree

11. Do you speak a second language? If yes, please indicate your highest ability level obtained.
- o Beginner
- o Intermediate
- o Advanced
- o I do not speak a second language

12. Do you speak a language other than English at home? If so, please indicate which language(s).
- o Yes _____
- o I'm not sure _____
- o No _____

13. Please select your gender
- o Male
- o Female

14. Please select your grade level
- o 6
- o 7
- o 8

Start of Block: Codeswitching student block (Answer "yes" to question #1)

2. Which language, other than English, do you speak at school?

3. When and where do you typically switch between English and another language while speaking at school?

4. How do you think other students feel when they hear you switching between English and another language while speaking at school?

5. What are some reasons why you switch between English and another language while speaking at school?

6. How do you feel when you mix languages while speaking?

7. Do you think switching between English and another language is helpful for students who are learning English as a second language? Explain why you think this.
- o Definitely yes
- o Probably yes

- o Might or might not
- o Probably not
- o Definitely not

8. Do you think that teachers should allow students to switch between English and another language while at school? Explain why you think this.
- o Definitely yes _____
- o Probably yes _____
- o Might or might not _____
- o Probably not _____
- o Definitely not _____

9. Students should avoid using languages other than English while at school.
- o Strongly agree
- o Somewhat agree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Strongly disagree

10. Students who are learning English as a second language should be able to learn the language within two years of beginning school in the United States
- o Strongly agree
- o Somewhat agree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Strongly disagree

11. The main reason why I switch between English and another language while speaking is to exclude others from the conversation.
- o Strongly agree
- o Somewhat agree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Strongly disagree

12. Do you speak a language other than English at home? If so, please indicate which language(s).
- o Yes _____
- o I'm not sure _____
- o No _____

13. Please select your gender
- o Male
- o Female

14. Please select your grade level
- o 6
- o 7
- o 8