LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY: BILINGUAL CODE-SWITCHING IN SPANISH-ENGLISH INTERVIEWS

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts
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Abstract

The relationship in a bilingual conversation between language choice and identity has been the subject of research in different disciplines such as sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and second language acquisition among others. The purpose of this research was to understand why and how language alternation occurs in bilingual interviews and its potential connection with identity. The data analyzed was from interviews from Proyecto Latino@, a previous research on Latin@ high school students’ experiences in schools and their academic engagement and/or disengagement. Participants’ narratives of their experiences indicated that code-switching is a result and a process of cultural adaptation. Code-switching in this research presented ways in which participants re-created their own concept of identity. Bilinguals of the Proyecto Latin@ portrayed a multiple identities construction –Spanish- English – when code-switching.

Keywords: code-switching, identity, Spanish-English language.
Acknowledgements

There are few individuals without whom this thesis could not have been completed. I would like to acknowledge my supervisor Dr. Ruben Gaztambide-Fernandez and to my committee member Dr. Julie Kerekes, for their time, dedication and helpful criticism regarding my work. Their input was really helpful to understand the construction and analysis of this thesis.

I am also indebted to my husband Eric without whom I would have not been able to complete this study. His support and patience were invaluable, his words and constant motivation helped me to keep focus on analyzing and writing. He patiently helped me and supported me throughout all my studies since I arrived to Canada.

Thank you also to my parents and brothers who kept me motivated to finish this thesis. It has been a really rich journey with periods of frustration and motivation. Their support and encouragement kept me working and lead me to the end.
Dedication

To my husband, Eric.

Gracias. Sin ti esto no hubiera sido posible, amor.

Je t’aime mon amour
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Chapter One: Rationale

Interviewer: Y ¿cuántos años tienes?
Juan: Me?
Interviewer: Tú. Uh huh
Juan: I’m eighteen.

1.1 Introduction

Bilingual interaction is an important aspect of language learning and a tool for cultural exchange between interlocutors. Commonly, bilingual conversation is full of language strategies that enhance meaning. One of these language strategies is the use of code-switching. Nowadays, this strategy is currently restricted, if not banned, in most second language classes and this may be detrimental to both the meaning conveyed by learners and the development of their second language skills. As a language teacher, I am interested in adequately leveraging the use of multiple languages in the classroom and in finding out how these can facilitate second language learning.

Research on code-switching has been extensive over the past forty years. Bilingual interaction has been studied in Spanish-English (Poplack, 1979); Italian and a dialect in Sicily (Alfonzetti, 1998); Russian-English (Angermeyer, 2005); French-Italian (Aslanov, 2000); Japanese-English (Azuma, 1997); Turkish-Dutch (Backus, 1992); Arabic-English (Bader, 2000); French-English (Heller, 1992); Chinese-English (Wei & Ching, 2000) and African dialects (Myers-Scotton, 1993) among others. Although code-switching analysis in these languages has been done, some of these investigations have left the meaning that it has in conversation behind. Some of them have focused their attention on the linguistic aspect of language shift, whereas others have concentrated on the cultural meaning these shifts have for participants. I will focus my attention on Spanish-English bilinguals in Canada, a language minority group.
Extensive studies on Spanish-English bilinguals in the USA have been done before. However, as far as I am aware, this is the first time this type of research on Spanish-English speakers have been done in Canada. In this view, studying code-switching would help second language teachers and social researchers comprehend two aspects of bilingualism: first, bilinguals’ language use in conversation and second, the meaning conveyed by speakers when alternating languages. Bilingual or multilingual investigation requires analyzing utterances at two levels, one analytical and another descriptive. The analytical level focuses on language alternation by participants while the descriptive level studies possible reasons for engaging in language alternation.

In this thesis, an analysis of participants’ use of code-switching will reveal an affiliation to their identity. Code-switching is employed by bilinguals in conversation and leads to a redefinition of personal identity for both types of participants: those born in countries where Spanish is the common language and those born in Canada.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

In this study, I will empirically investigate the oral production of Spanish/English bilinguals using data gathered through a larger research project. I will examine the reasons as to when, how, and why code-switching was present during the interviews that were collected for this project. I decided to analyze code-switching in conversations between bilingual participants because they emerged “naturally” during a bilingual dialogue about the experiences of Spanish-speaking students in schools. Because interviews are a social practice through which social meaning is conveyed, code-switching can be interpreted as part of that process. As suggested by Mishler (1991) “through language we describe objects and events, explain how something works and
why something has happened, express feelings and beliefs, develop logical arguments, persuade others to a course of action, and narrate experiences” (p. 67). For that reason, in the analysis of this thesis, I intend to demonstrate that bilingual code-switching, as a language strategy, is also a representation of processes of constructing identities that are closely linked to language.

The analysis in this thesis is based on bilingual dialogs extracted from the Proyecto Latin@\(^1\) research data. Proyecto Latin@ sought to examine the “schooling experiences and engagement processes of Spanish speaking students in Toronto” (Gaztambide-Fernández & Guerrero, 2010). In some interviews, both interviewers and interviewees took advantage of their bilingualism and used code-switching in different instances. This occurred while they were talking about their experiences with Spanish-speaking students in Toronto schools. Consequently, the analysis of code-switching in the Proyecto Latin@ conversations would help to better understand the relationship between code-switching and identity. Topics such as school, family, friends and identity are discussed and there is code-switching in numerous instances, prompting the question as to why they code-switch when covering these topics.

The fact that bilinguals in the Proyecto Latin@ research know both Spanish and English represents an opportunity to study how code-switching is related to processes of identities construction. Code-switching in these interviews is present in a natural manner because none of the participants, interviewers and interviewees, knew that their language use was going to be analyzed. These language switches became an important part of the research while analyzing the data. It was not something that the research set out to

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1 The word Latin@ is employed throughout this paper to reflect Latinos and Latinas participants, as used in the Proyecto Latin@ research. Instead of writing Latino/a, “@” at the end of the word Latin@ also entails gender differences.
explore initially. When I reviewed the interviews of Proyecto Latin@, I noticed that some participants were using both languages, Spanish and English, without any restriction on topics like school, family, friends and when they spoke about their cultural background. Therefore, it seemed possible that there was a relationship between participants’ reality and the language they chose for certain events.

Fishman (1965) states that language and ethnicity “are seen as the basic building blocks of human society” (p. 11). On that account, language is used as a way to construct and reinforce the beliefs and rules of each society. Zentella (2008) mentions that: “bilinguals display their gender, class, racial, ethnic and other identities by following the social and linguistic rules for the ways of speaking that reflect those identities in their homes and primary networks” (p. 6). Therefore, results from this study can be useful in conjunction with previous studies involving code-switching and identity. Bilingual people may use code-switching to represent community ties and acknowledge proximity to two or more speech communities (Zentella, 2008). Consequently, I can hypothesize that language use has strong connections with identity, but what happens with bilinguals? Does their perception of a society change when they learn its language? If so, what happens when they identify themselves with a second or third language? I believe that when bilinguals learn and live in a context in which they have to interact in their second or third language, it can force them to re-construct their own identities.

1.3 Research Goals and Research Questions

In this paper, I intend to explore in detail the speech produced in eight interviews that lasted for approximately 30 minutes. I examine the extent to which interviewers and interviewees alternated languages in the context of a research interview. Some studies of
code-switching have denied the relationship between code-switching and identity (Auer, 2005). However, it is crucial to continue investigating this particular area.

When analyzing language, there are three important components during code-switching: what is said, how it is said and when it is said (Fishman, 1965). In this research, I analyze the function that code-switching has in conversation and its relation to the social construct of identity. I investigate how bilinguals’ use of code-switching represents an identities construction characterized by the language alternation itself.

It is likely that Proyecto Latin@ bilinguals knew that learning a new language would create new possibilities of interaction with people who share this common language. Bilingual people possibly understand that they have gone through a process of re-identification in the new language, so they are able to think about themselves in two different languages. Trying to identify how bilinguals construct their identity in each language is at the root of this research. It is based on the following two questions: (1) How do bilingual Latin@s high school students and interviewers use code-switching as an expression of their identities, in interviews discussing high school students’ experiences as Latin@s in schools? (2) What does code-switching reveal about the relationship between different categories of identification?

1.4 Significance of Study

This study is significant in three ways. Firstly, analyzing narratives of conversations between bilinguals will contribute to understanding participants’ second language learning. In my opinion, code-switching could have to do with participants wanting to display a range of identities that are closely related to language use. The creation of these identities construction happens when people learn a new language. It is
reinforced when they move to the country where the language is spoken, when they spend several years in a second language environment and finally when they code-switch with other bilingual people.

Secondly, this study is interesting for second language researchers and teachers because it describes language use outside of the classroom among bilingual or multilingual people. If we understand the links between language and society and stop analyzing them independently, we, researchers and teachers, would comprehend participants’ concepts of identity boundaries better. Finally, analyzing language use would also help us understand the dynamics faced by immigrants and second-generation individuals when trying to integrate into a new culture.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The term *code-switching* is used extensively in linguistics. According to Alvarez-Cáccamo (1990), code-switching is an alternation of languages that occurs during bilingual conversations in which participants have at least one language in common. To clarify, bilinguals are individuals who are proficient in more than one language. Their proficiency in either language may vary according to skills in writing, reading, listening, and speaking (Wei, 2000). These language skills may allow them to engage in instances of code-switching. In the opinion of Wei (2000), when bilinguals share the same languages, changes from first language (L1) to second language (L2) can be present in conversations.

The data analyzed in this research is drawn from the larger Proyecto Latin@ research project, which began in 2009. Proyecto Latin@ was an exploratory research project that sought to understand the reasons behind Latin@ students’ underachievement and their high percentage of dropouts. The intention of the project was to better understand the experiences of Latin@ students and “the factors that affected their school engagement” from the students’ own perspectives (Gaztambide-Fernández & Guerrero, 2010). In some of these interviews, both interviewers and interviewees code-switched when speaking about different topics in the context of the interview. In this thesis, I argue that in the context of these interviews, code-switching is often a manifestation of the ways in which participants’ both consciously and unconsciously express their identity as Latino@ immigrants in the Canadian school context. Code-switching is perhaps an expression of participant’s constructing or constructed identities. It is an identity in
construction for those participants who were born in a Hispanic country, and immigrated to Canada; and it is a constructed identity for second generation Latinos living in Canada.

In addition, research indicates that bilinguals sometimes code-switch because certain words come first or are more available in one of the two languages at a given time (Moreno, Federneier & Kutas, 2002). Gardner-Chloros (2009) affirmed that when participants of a specific community use two languages in the same conversation, it is because they are “expressing group identity” (p. 5). When interviewers and interviewees take part in code-switching, it can serve as a way to facilitate communication because some words are more precise in either Spanish or English, or some words “come first,” even when these words do not have any relationship to a participant’s identity. Because the Proyecto Latin@ interviews were focused on questions of identity and school engagement, they provide a window into the relationship between code-switching and identities construction.

2.2 Defining code-switching

Sapir (1923) states that through language, we express our reality and “no two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality” (p. 4). Therefore, when a bilingual speaker decides to code-switch, it is possible that her or his identity is exposed. Of course, there are many other explanations as to why code-switching occurs. For instance, these explanations may include: lack of vocabulary in their second language (L2), favoring mother tongue or first language (L1), and the proximity to life experiences in a speaker’s L1 or L2. Regardless of the reason, because language use is often tied to a speaker’s social reality, considering the relationship
between code-switching and identity is crucial. However, first, it is important to understand what constitutes code-switching.

The first person to introduce the term code-switching was Hans Vogt in his article in 1954 Language Contacts (Auer, 1999; Nilep, 2006). Since then, the debate to reach a clear definition of the term persists. Over the past thirty years, researchers in sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics have been focusing on code-switching as a conversational event. During the 1950s and 1960s, the interest was mere linguistic; it was based on the language structure of the utterance. According to Nilep (2006), Vogt had a radical definition of code-switching, which he identified as a negative psychological phenomenon not directly related to language transfer.

In the 1970s, two major research projects were conducted. First, research was conducted on the syntactic phenomena of code-switching, focusing on the rules that determine how words are combined into phrases and sentences (Poplack, 1979). A second research project was conducted on the sociolinguistic phenomena of code-switching focusing on the relation between linguistic variation and social structures (Blom & Gumperz, 1972). This continued to expand the debate around the understanding of the term (Auer, 1998). An array of publications appeared in the 1980s and 1990s, which broadened the concept of code-switching and linked it to important “linguistic issues, from Universal Grammar to the formation of group identities and ethnic boundaries through verbal behavior” (Auer, 1998, p. 1). Attempts were made to create the most accurate definition of code-switching, which led to new understandings in the discussion of language use.
To define code-switching, it is important to understand what *code* means. As Gardner-Chloros (2009) explains, “code is understood as a neutral umbrella term for languages, dialects, styles/registers, etc” (p. 11). Not having arrived at an agreement on the definition of code-switching, Alvarez-Cáccamo decided (as cited in Heller, 2007) to reformulate the way researchers were analyzing code-switching. He explained that if “we think of language as practice, and put the speakers, not the system, at the centre of our analysis, then we have to wonder why we need a concept of autonomous linguistic systems at all” (p. 8). Therefore, he suggested replacing the term of code with the term *linguistic resources* to shift the focus from language being a system to placing the language as performance. Heller (2007) also supports this notion of linguistic resources: The contrast between linguistic resources understood as belonging to distinct codes itself served as the relevant resource, that is, as a contextualization cue in the sense of Gumperz (1982), or as indexical (Silverstein & Urban, 1996). This takes the development of linguistic resources a long way from any direct relationship between a language and a domain (or, even less, a community of speakers). (p. 12)

The notion of linguistic resources embraces social activities and the manipulation of codes by bilinguals in conversation. Alvarez-Cáccamo defines (as cited in Heller, 2007) code as a linguistic resource “which is socially distributed, organized certainly by speakers individually and collectively, but which do not necessarily ever have to correspond to some closed and wholly describable system” (p. 8). Therefore, code is not seen as a locked grammatical system, but one that moves and modifies itself by social interaction. Even though there is no single definition for the term code, I use the term as a synonym of language, which participants use to interact with each other. In this research,
the default codes (or linguistic resources) are Spanish and English. Understanding that these codes can and should also be understood as linguistic resources or languages, I will use the term code-switching in the widest possible definition, which is simply the alternation of languages during a conversation. The idea is not to refine the definition, but to explore the significance that this wide array of switches has for the participants. This would include what other authors’ label as borrowing, code-mixing, code-shifting, language alternation and mobilization of linguistic resources and applies to switches within a single or multiple turns. I chose to create this definition because for this research, it is important to note that code-switching is considered not only a linguistic element of bilingual speakers’ language, but also has a connection to participants’ identity. This will be illustrated in the coming chapters.

2.3 Defining identity

Language use plays an important role in understanding norms of interaction (Gumperz, 1982). Gumperz claims that “language differences serve primarily to mark social identity and are perpetuated in accordance with established norms and traditions” (p. 39). Barth and Bailey define (as cited in Heller, 2007) identity as:

a boundary that groups construct between themselves, rather than the characteristics of group members. (...) This formulation foregrounds the subjective, social reality of individual actors, in that it is their judgments and activities, rather than static characteristics of individuals, that serve to constitute categories. Social identity is a function of two subjective processes: ‘self-ascription’ -how one defines oneself- and 'ascription by others' – how others define one. (…) Analysis of identity thus revolves
around the questions of how, when and why individuals count as members of particular groups. (p. 258)

Understanding identity as a self category that creates boundaries helps me to develop an analysis of the dynamics that shape code-switching by the Proyecto Latin@ participants. In this thesis, I use identity as a way to represent individual beliefs in the dialogues. Participants display their identity when they talk about their experiences.

In his 2002 study, Bailey presents experiences that second generation Dominican Americans have of living in North America and how social stereotypes have influenced the interaction of this group with other racial groups, including Blacks, Whites, Asians, and other Hispanics. He understands identity as a term that circumscribes relations of power “everyday enactment of Dominican/Spanish identity through language thus represents a retention of symbolic power and decentering of American racial classification” (p. 11). Thus, code-switching could be a form of resistance and hegemony of groups with power.

In the opinion of Bailey (2002), language is directly related to identity, and language defines it in the sense that people's first language is the channel that categorizes them. He mentions that “identities are not reified dichotomies but rather involve multiple alignments and oppositions that are situational (...) vis-à-vis other individuals or groups. (...) [The] linguistic forms and varieties have ranges of metaphorical social situations that individuals exploit in particular contexts for particular ends in highlighting various aspects of their identities” (p. 99). Code-switching used in bilingual conversations could be a form of negotiating participants’ identity. As Garrett suggests (as cited in Heller, 2007) “studies in bilingual settings (...) have revealed the extent to which notions of
bilingualism are context-specific and ideologically mediated” (p. 236). Thus, I could argue that identity has a direct relation with space and time, which means that when somebody is born in a specific country, that person would identify himself as belonging to that space, and to the cultural practices associated with that location. However, there are cases where identity affiliation goes beyond a geographical location, as it is often the case for second generations of immigrants. Second generations have been taught by the previous generation (parents and other members of the community) to keep their social network (Wei, Milroy & Ching, 1992). As Mitchel mentions (as cited in Wei & Milroy, 1995) the objective of these social networks is to maintain community languages and “provide a meaningful framework of their day-to-day existence” (p. 138). Furthermore, it is not uncommon to find second generation people defining themselves as belonging to their parents’ social and cultural groups. A reinforcement of this network identification is the perception that others (people not belonging to their community) have about them, who identify them as others because their cultural practices are different. In these terms, language preferences mark a strong connection to their own identity, which could be analyzed in their conversations with people from the same background or people from different backgrounds.

Bailey’s (2002) study of second generation Dominican Americans explores the identity that second generation Spanish background teenagers have when interacting with White and Black people. Students declare that they have to switch communicative styles depending on who they were talking to. For instance, some of the Dominican American students interviewed explain how sounding very White or Black could lead to forms of punishment by other students. He suggests, “while switching to White English can serve
local discourse functions, it also suggests more global sociopolitical stances, attitudes, and understandings regarding language varieties and social identities” (p. 116). There is also the possibility that the alternation between languages marks specific group identity. Analyzing what, how, and in what contexts this code-switching occurs could lead to a greater understanding of social boundaries and identity affiliation.

Fishman (1965) highlights how multilingual settings allow bilinguals to make usage of their knowledge of these languages and alternate them for communicative purposes. He presents three factors that affect language choice: group membership, situation and topic. He explains that group membership can be associated with the linguistic choices that speakers make based on people they talk to (for example, a Black Latin@ who prefers to use AAVE (African American Vernacular English) when speaking with other Black people. The situation factor corresponds mainly to power relationships, which will have an influence on the language selection. For example, a Latin@ addressing teachers, family members or peers makes use of formal, semi-formal or informal language respectively. Finally, the topic alludes to speakers’ preference in one linguistic system when addressing certain topics in conversation. To clarify this, Fishman (1965) mentions, “the implication of topical regulation of language choice is that certain topics are somehow handled better in one language than in another in particular multilingual contexts” (p. 92). This relates to Bailey’s (2002) study on how second generation Dominicans consider themselves as Latin@, Spanish, or Hispanic. Code-switching, for instance, functions more than as a means of communication. Therefore, Proyecto Latin@, participants adapt their language choices to create group membership.
2.4 Code-switching in context

Usually code-switching is present in multiple scenarios among bilinguals and sometimes it is not easy to classify. In her study, Poplack identified (as cited in Romaine, 1989) three types of code-switching: a) Tag-switching, which refers “to minimal syntactic restrictions” such as I know, I mean, etc.; b) Intersentential switching, which refers to “a switch at a clause or sentence boundary” or ”between speakers turns” (p. 113). As Poplack mentions in his investigation with Puerto Rican bilinguals: “Sometimes I'll start a sentence in English y termino en español”; and finally, c) intrasentential switching refers to different types of switches “within the clause or sentence boundary” (p. 113). In addition, Poplack classifies code-switching in the following:

1. Full sentence: **Ella canta canciones insultando a los hombres.** That’s why you never heard of her.

2. Conjoined sentence: **Yo voy por todos estos sitios y** I was on 7th Avenue and Broadway.

3. Between major noun phrase and verb phrase: Years ago people **se iban a trabajar.**

4. Between verb phrase and object noun phrase: What ruined this people is **la vagancia de no hacer nada.**

5. Between verb phrase and prepositional phrase: **Tú quieres bailar** with a man; that’s your business.

6. Between verb and adverb: **Un americano me puede preguntar** very nicely, “**hace tiempo que yo te estoy viendo así y perdona que te pregunte.**”

7. Between noun and adjective: **Cojo mi garlic puro.**
8. Between determiner and noun: Because if you smash it with the pilón and spray it, you don't get that burning sensation.

9. Between auxiliary and verb: So... you take the ham... as they’re ablandado, ya que está un poquito hirviendo, tú le echas el hueso del jamón.

10. Single noun: La milk está en la mesa.

11. Interjection: There should be a stop with these kids where there should be discipline. ¡Contra! You know, open classrooms.

12. Tag phrase: I’m sorry, verdad, you know, anda, I mean, etc. (as cited in Becker, 1997, p. 6).

The above classification is an important way to frame the analysis of the data. This classification guided me as I examined the language use by interviewers and interviewees in Proyecto Latin@ research. As a second step, an interpretive analysis of these narratives allowed me to comprehend the process and relationship between code-switching and identity. Drawing on the literature discussed earlier, I assumed that language is directly related to people’s cultural backgrounds and group membership. In Dabène and Moore’s (1995) words “identification with a community language is probably the key factor in group strengthening and stabilization. Language can be invested and recognized as the guide to kinship-interpreted group membership, and as the open demonstration of it” (p. 23). They quote Fishman to argue that language plays a key role as “the supreme symbol system [that] quintessentially symbolizes its users and distinguishes between them and others” (p. 23).

Code-switching is often framed through theories of hierarchical models of grammar. These models seek to explain that when using both languages “the early
reliance on the first language, lexical-level links are stronger from L2 to L1 than from L1 to L2, and as a result of an early grip on meaning, L1 words have a stronger connection to concepts than words in L2” (Alvarez, Holcomb & Grainger, 2003, p. 2). As an example, when a bilingual person works in his/her second language, it is highly possible that s/he would feel more comfortable speaking about work in the second language, but when s/he speaks about family, s/he would rather use his/her first language instead. The revised hierarchical model (RHM) states that “L1 words have privileged access to conceptual memory and L2 words privileged access to lexical representations in L1” (Alvarez et al., 2003, p. 2), meaning that first language (L1) words are closely linked to experiences whereas second language (L2) words (when acquiring L2) would have more links to learning a second grammar.

Even though these models help describe, “how language is both comprehended (processed) in the brain and produced” (Gardner-Chloros, 2009, p. 117), they leave behind an important component: ‘the context’ and its influence on the interlocutor’s decision to code-switch, which is a vital factor for the current research. I find it important to recognize previous investigations on brain function and language, however, it is crucial to acknowledge that men and women do not experience things only across internal brain processes, but context plays a fundamental role in language practice and culture. In this analysis, I recognize the importance of the concept of hierarchical models. However, I pursue the understanding of code-switching as an event that may be connected to the process of identity.

Some bilinguals show their ethnic affiliation when they interact with others and use code-switching. According to Fishman (1989) “ethnicity is linked to language” (p. 7)
and there are domains in which a speaker would prefer to speak one language over the other. Therefore, when looking for factors that trigger the usage of either language, he suggests, as mentioned before, that group membership, situation, and topic influence the appearance of code-switching. He states that “Obviously, since language can be used to express one’s identity, the identity imposed by one's group membership is a crucial factor in language choice. [...] The situation in which the interaction takes place has an important influence. [...] Finally, topic of conversation may influence the choice of language” (Appel & Muysken, 2005, p. 23). Furthermore, according to Garret (2007), when bilinguals “use particular linguistic resource in a particular context or at particular moment of interaction” (p. 234), they are also showing their identity. Yet, the challenge of how to interpret code-switching and how it reveals processes of identities construction remains a challenge, which is the focus of this thesis.

Two studies about child development carried out between the mid-1930s and the late 1940s observe that bilingual children alternate languages and note that nouns are the most common code-switches. In these two studies, the words used in Chinese-English and German-English conversations were words that did not have an exact equivalence in either language (Benson, 2001). Hence, two arguments may explain the use of one language over the other anytime in conversation. First, there is the possibility that certain words are better represented in one language than in another and that in a conversation, the need to transmit meaning rapidly and concisely may trigger the usage of either language. Secondly, participants may claim an identity, and code-switching is the method to represent this affiliation. In other words, the usage of two languages “rather than one, can act as group-membership symbols and demonstrate ethnic identity” (Dabène &
Moore, 1995, p. 24). It is possible that both interviewers and interviewees in Proyecto Latin@ chose to code-switch because they identify themselves with the topic of Latin@s. However, while this could be true for this thesis, at least five investigations show that this link between identity and language preference does not necessarily determine language use (Auer, 1998; Gardner-Chloros, 2009; Gumperz, 1982; Wei, 2000; Zentella, 2008).

Gumperz (1982) states that the “association between communicative style and group identity is a symbolic one: it does not directly predict actual usage” (p. 66). Zentella (2008) supports this perspective and mentions that language shift is not necessarily an invocation of identity relationship with one of the languages. Nevertheless, I cannot analyze language preference by just analyzing sentences and research has shown that structural-functional approaches have not been enough to demonstrate the choice made by speakers. It is important to broaden this discussion and understand the communicative interaction between participants. This view is supported by the sociocultural theory by Lantolf and Thorne (2006), which gathers evidence from various disciplines and that “has established strong connections between culture, language, and cognition” (p. 2). Bilinguals often perceive their own code-switching as a representation of their own “laziness” because they believe that some bilinguals are not willing to search for the right word in the language used in conversation (Gardner-Chloros, 2009). The intention of this research is not to support or reject those beliefs, but to analyze why and how code-switching occurs in the Proyecto Latin@ interviews. In addition, Milroy and Muysken (1995) state that “code-switching becomes available as a resource for the exercise of, or resistance to, power by virtue of its place in the repertories of individual
speakers, on the one hand, and of its position with respect to other forms of language practices in circulation, on the other” (p. 159).

Lantolf and Thorne (2006) explain the theory of emergent grammar. They mention that according to Hanks (1996) “interlocutors intentionally combine linguistic forms and contexts to produce utterances that give rise to specific local meanings” (p. 16). Rommetveit (1995) argues that people in conversation create and combine new linguistic forms that do not necessarily comply with the “rules” that govern the grammar of a specific language. Interlocutors adapt language to their needs and utterances are directly related with context and other interlocutors because our “experience of the world is not private but an intersubjective matter” (p. 11). A given event is expressed differently based on the person that talks about it. For example, the owner, the waitress, and a client would express the perception of a robbery in a restaurant differently if they were present at the time of the event. Consequently, when analyzing bilingual or multilingual conversations, factors such as participants’ common knowledge of both languages and an identity affiliation may influence code-switching.

This thesis is another attempt to closely analyze bilinguals’ use of code-switching and particular relationships with identity, specifically in the interviews collected by Proyecto Latin@ in 2009 in the city of Toronto. In this research, Spanish speakers identify themselves as Latin@, Hispanic, or Spanish. This characteristic as Latin@, Hispanic, or Spanish is sometimes shared by English speakers who identify themselves as Latin@ or as Spaniards. English speakers might identify themselves as Latin@ or as Spaniards for multiple reasons. The most common is their relationship with the Spanish language, possibly because one (or more) family member speaks Spanish because of
her/his cultural or national background. In the Proyecto Latin@, interviewers, at the beginning of each interview, gave the opportunity to the interviewees to set the language of conversation. This may have triggered a conscious or unconscious connection between identity and language.

In bilingual conversations where Spanish and English are the common languages, for each participant, it is expected that one of the languages would be dominant and the other would have a secondary role in a conversation. In the data from Proyecto Latin@, bilinguals seemed to prefer to use code-switching when speaking about identity. Of course, I cannot assume that all code-switches are connected to some process of identities construction; they could have a simpler explanation of language use. In the opinion of Gardner-Chloros (2009):

It is doubtful whether there is, or could ever be, a reliable way, in adults or in children, of distinguishing “deliberate” from non-deliberate CS except in a small minority of cases […] At one end of the scale, some instances of CS appear to be “slips of the tongue,” and at the other end scale, some switches have a very clear conversational function, for example addressee specification, or following the we code/they code pattern. In between the two extremes lie the majority of CS utterances, where it is unproductive to ask the question why? And expect to find an answer based on personal intentions (p. 145).

Therefore, there are certain code-switches in the data from Proyecto Latin@ that are not as relevant as others for this thesis. This is the case of the following example in a conversation between Carolina and Aurelio. Carolina asks him for some suggestions he might provide to teachers to make him feel better at school. Aurelio suggests that teachers should be more patient and also clearer about the work students have to do while in class.
He explains that sometimes teachers give students work, but do not explain what they have to do:

Carolina: What do you mean the work but not explain?

Aurelio: Like, they just…bueno, [well], History I have right now.

Carolina: Okay tell me.

Aurelio: Uh he just opens the book, tells us go to tal y tal [so and so] page y hagan el número tal y tal. [and do number so and so]

Carolina: ¿Y qué pasa? [and what happens?]

Aurelio: Basically, you got to find out what you got to do.

Besides knowing that Carolina made an intersentential switch from English to Spanish, it becomes difficult to draw other conclusions from this example.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter covers the main definitions employed in this thesis. Code-switching is defined in the broadest sense, to include all switches between English and Spanish. Code-switching within turns and between turns, as well as borrowings are all part of code-switching in this thesis. In addition, identity is considered as the perception that an individual has in relation to the group she/he belongs to.

Another section of this chapter presents a classification of various constructions of code-switches. These are the examples categorized by Poplack (1980), which works as a reference for the analysis of the data. Code-switching can also be categorized as tag-switching, intersentential switching, and intrasentential switching. Moreover, I have exhibited and reviewed various elements of context that may have an influence on the
production of code-switching such as group membership, topic and physical environment/location. As a final remark, it is important to keep in mind that code-switching may work as an identity construction strategy for new immigrants in the Canadian context and as illustration of the constructed identity for second generation Latin@s in Canada. This is what will be presented in the following chapters.
Chapter Three: Method

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the study design and describes the main areas such as the research focus, research context, participants, data collection and data analysis procedures.

3.2 Models to analyze code-switching

Different models create different interpretations, and trying to create a model to better analyze language changes has been part of the discussion of code-switching. As an example, Blom and Gumperz’s (1972) famous model of “situational switching” versus “metaphorical switching” was commonly used in the 1970s. Situational switching is understood as the change of code that is directly influenced by the context, whereas metaphorical switching remains a decision that participants make to code-switch at a specific time during conversation. For Myers-Scotton and Ury (1977):

Situational, includes shift for topic and metaphorical, includes shift for emphasis.

Situational switching depends on the societal consensus that a particular linguistic variety is allocated to a particular cluster of topics, places, persons or purposes. A code-switch symbolizes a switch in cluster. Metaphorical switching also depends on societal agreements as to the allocation of the codes. However, metaphorical switching depends for its effect on a departure from the societal consensus on code allocation. As such, it is used to draw attention or to emphasize. (p. 5)

In the 1980s, this model was strongly questioned by Auer (1984) because of its lack of clarity in defining the term situation. In response, he proposes a new technique to analyze code-switching. He uses ethno-methodology and conversation analysis to frame a
new conversation-analytic approach to code-switching. According to Auer (1999), in this model proposes “the meaning of code-switching must be interpreted with reference to the language choice in the preceding and following turns by the participants themselves” (p. 157). In addition, he mentions that participants in conversation generate frames and these frames sometimes change and at other times remain the same with each turn taking. Therefore, the role of language researchers is to focus on “the members’ procedures of arriving at local meaning of language alteration” (as cited in Auer, 1999, p. 157).

In the mid-1990s, Myers-Scotton proposed (as cited in Auer, 1999) the markedness model. This model has been the most influential in code-switching analysis. It focuses on “the analyst’s interpretation of bilingual conversation participants’ intention, and explicitly rejects the idea of local creation of meaning of linguistic choices” (p. 157). This model has been very powerful because it seeks to explain the social motivation that triggers participants to code-switch. In this model, Myers-Scotton implies (as cited in Wei, 2000) that “for the speaker, switching is a tool, a means of doing something (by affecting the rights and obligations balance). For the listener, switching is an index, a symbol of the speaker's intentions. Therefore switching is both a means and a message” (p. 142). According to this theory, the speaker tends to mark the linguistic code in conversation. These verbal interactions are commonly analyzed through discourse analysis. Agar (1994) suggests analyzing language and culture as a mixed activity and proposes the term languaculture (p. 60), in which communities of speakers create meanings that have a specific goal and are mediated by language (Agar, 1994; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). Along this line, Stroud (1998) points out the need to analyze conversational code-switching in relation to the social life of participants.
Cultural background is an important aspect of participants’ social life and a significant element of context in which discourse takes place. This is why Proyecto Latin@ participants provided limited characteristics such as their background, gender, age, and first language, which are taken into consideration as part of the analysis. Previous studies have tried to explain the use of code-switching through conversation analysis, discourse analysis, and other methodologies. For this research, I have chosen to use narrative analysis because it also incorporates elements of the context and larger language events in order to ascertain meaning.

As Riessman (2008) states, there is no consensus about what the term narrative means. She briefly defines it this way:

In everyday oral storytelling, a speaker connects events into a sequence that is consequential for later action and for the meanings that the speaker wants listeners to take away from the story. Events perceived by the speaker as important are selected, organized, connected, and evaluated as a meaningful for a particular audience. (p. 3)

In order to understand the connections between language and identity for this thesis, narratives will facilitate the analysis of what is said and how each interlocutor presents it. Participants are considered active builders of their reality through their speech. Thus, participants tell their own stories when interacting with others. Even though the interviewer is usually the person asking, sometimes s/he tells his own story to engage students in conversation. The notion that narratives are co-constructed is one of the principal reasons for analyzing the utterances of both, interviewers and interviewees in this research.
3.3 The content of the Proyecto Latin@ interviews

The aim of Proyecto Latin@ was to understand Latin@ students’ own perspectives on school engagement and achievement. Among Proyecto Latin@ participants, there are many who only speak either Spanish or English. Of those who speak more than one language, some speak Spanish as their first language (SL1) and English as their second language (EL2), others speak English as their first language (EL1) and Spanish as their second language (SL2), and yet others speak other languages besides Spanish or English as their first language (e.g. Portuguese, PL1). In the interviews, I noticed that when the interviewer was monolingual, code-switching was not present. For this reason monolingual participants are not considered. One of my assumptions is that participants would prefer to switch if they knew their direct interlocutor speaks the same languages.

The aim of this study is to analyze the narratives in which code-switching is present in order to understand when and how it occurs, what function it has in conversation, and finally, whether the code-switching is related in any way to the construction of identities in relationship to language among participants. I account for the time that participants have been living in Canada because, in the conversations, students who use code-switching the most are the ones who have lived in this country longer than one year. For this reason, I chose students that had lived in Canada for at least a year.

When collecting data, researchers utilize different instruments to focus the participant’s attention on questions during interviews, such as tests, pictures, videos, etc. While many scholars have explained that one of the biggest problems when analyzing code-switching is that in previous studies, the data has been collected in unnatural situations (Lipski, 1985, p. 1), researchers continue to collect elicited data that way due to
time constraints and for convenience. In Proyecto Latin@ research, however, the appearance of code-switching was not deliberately forced by the interviewers because the primary objective of the research was not to analyze code-switching. A protocol of the interviews in both languages is presented in Appendix A (in English) and Appendix B (in Spanish). Interviewers at the beginning of each interview asked students to choose which language they felt more comfortable speaking. Often times, students chose to speak in one language, but later on in the conversation, they code-switched. Consequently, these examples collected in the narratives provide examples of code-switching that can be considered relatively natural, at least within the artificial context of an interview.

3.4 Research focus

In the second chapter, I presented a review of the literature and existing concerns about the relationship between language use and identity. Code-switching research suggests people alternate languages because of personal motivation. However, there is not enough inquiry on this type of analysis. Consequently, I decided to explore changes produced in discourse and possible reasons or motivation for participants to code-switch at certain times and not others. Analyzing the interviews from Proyecto Latin@ in which ethnic identification was a focus has an advantage and a disadvantage at the same time. The relationship between code-switching and identity in some instances could be obvious, whereas there are other instances in which this relationship would be more related to the context of the research itself.
3.5 Research context

The research took place in Toronto, Canada. The interviews were done in both languages, Spanish and English. The recordings were transcribed and I reviewed them to confirm that there were no parts of speech missing.

According to Becker (1997), we must account for three factors in order to analyze conversations between interviewers and interviewees and determine when, how, and why bilinguals code-switch. The first factor is a structural linguistic factor that seeks “structural interaction of the two grammars and the syntactic form of code switched utterances” (p. 4). The second factor is an internal psycholinguistic factor that analyzes “internal factors triggering the code switch, both conscious and unconscious” (p. 4); and the last factor is the external social factor that searches for “external contextual and situational factors triggering the code-switch” (p. 4). Structural factors are categorized into: tag-switching, intersentential switching and intrasentential switching. With regard to internal psycholinguistic factors, the analysis is more complicated because of the difficulty to approach all interviewees after one year of having collected the original data. Therefore, questions about their linguistic choice in specific times of conversation were not part of this research. To compensate for this, the use of narrative analysis allowed me to place code-switching in the context of different events experienced by the participants from the Proyecto Latin@. This gave me access to long turns, which helped me frame the context in which code-switching was being used. Finally, social factors are outlined based on questionnaires answered by the students at the time of the interviews, and the personal questions I asked interviewers after Proyecto Latin@ research had finished.
3.6 Participants

This section outlines some background information on participants in Proyecto Latin@ research, as well as how the recordings were selected. At the end of this segment, more detailed information on participants (interviewers and interviewees) chosen for this study is presented. Students were asked to fill up a questionnaire with some personal information. A sample of questionnaires for individual interviews is found in Appendix C (English version) and Appendix D (Spanish version).

3.6.1 Proyecto Latin@ participant's background

Participants in the Proyecto Latin@ research varied in terms of both language and background characteristics. Some were born in countries where Spanish is categorized as the national or first language and they lived there for more than 10 years and were considered fluent speakers of Spanish. Others were born in countries or regions where English is the first language and they reckon English as such but identify themselves as Latin@ because one of the parents speaks Spanish as a first language or because it is the language used at home.

Participants from Proyecto Latin@ research were 33 high school students, 16 males and 17 females who at the time of the interview were registered in 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th grades along with five interviewers, two males and three females. The interviews were carried out during Spring 2009 in six public schools in the city of Toronto. Two types of recordings were done with these students, one-on-one and focus group interviews. However, for the purpose of this thesis, the focus group interviews were not considered because it was difficult to clearly identify on the transcript who was speaking at each turn.
Students’ and interviewers’ backgrounds varied. Seven students and three interviewers were born in Canada, and 26 students and one interviewer were born in countries where Spanish is spoken as the first language. There was another interviewer born in the USA. Students’ ages ranged between 16 and 22 years old while interviewers’ ages ranged between 26 and 37 years old. There was a previous ethics protocol established by the Proyecto Latin@ research. A project description is presented in Appendix E (in English) and Appendix F (in Spanish).

3.6.2 Recordings’ selection criteria

My data was collected by the Proyecto Latin@ team. There were six high schools involved in the research and most participants were in grade nine or higher. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed. I went through thirty-three transcripts and recordings once more to confirm the quality of the previous transcripts. I then highlighted all the parts of the 33 narratives where interviewers and participants code-switched, and I selected the interviews in which these switches were present in different instances of the dialogue to have enough data to analyze. After checking and categorizing the signed forms from participants, I asked interviewers for additional personal information. Gathering this data was useful to compile enough background information for both interviewers and participants.

Out of the 33 interviews, which involved 38 participants (five interviewers and 33 interviewees), eight interviews reasonably satisfied the requirements for this research, as outlined below. These eight interviews involved eight students and three interviewers. I also wanted to have at least three interviewers with different experiences in language learning. Out of the five interviewers, three had the qualities I was looking for. On that
account, Carolina, Víctor and Roberto were the perfect candidates. Carolina was born in Canada and spoke Spanish and English since she was four years old. Before that age, she only spoke Spanish. Víctor was also born in Canada and spoke only English until he learnt Spanish in his teenage years; finally, Roberto was born in Puerto Rico and spoke Spanish most of his life. He started to learn English when he was very young, but only started practicing it after he finished high school. Consequently, after counting the switches in each of the interviews where these interviewers were present, I noticed that the minimum switches present were eight times in a 30-minute interview. This became the minimum quantity of switches for this research. In this study, the conversations in which participants did not code-switch, were disregarded from the start.

The other requirements considered for this research are that first, basic personal information about those involved in the interview had to be available. Details such as country of origin and first language were taken into account. Secondly, as part of the Proyecto Latin@ criteria, students were registered in grades 9 to 12. Finally, interviewers and students must have some knowledge of both languages. An advanced proficiency in either language was not a critical requirement for selection. However, code-switching had to be present in the conversation at least eight times to analyze the different types of code-switching present and ensure they are not just borrowings. Two participants did not provide details of their parents’ backgrounds, their ages, or age when they started to learn the second language, for example. They were nonetheless taken into consideration because their interviews were rich in samples of code-switching. Obtaining more detailed background information on participants was impossible given that I had no means of
contacting them again, especially students who were registered in grade 12 at the time of the interview, as they are no longer at the school.

The average length of the 33 interviews is twenty-eight minutes, the shortest is thirteen minutes and the longest, carried out by one interviewer and two students is one-hour and twenty-four minutes. For this thesis, only eight interviews had significant samples of code-switching. In total, I analyzed three hours and forty-six minutes of recordings.

3.6.3 Description of participants

In this section, I provide a description of each participant. First, I present the eight students involved in the interviews analyzed. The information about their backgrounds, parents’ backgrounds and languages of preference is summarized below. In total, there are three females in this group: Fedra, Ana, and Mónica, and five males: Ernesto, José, Iván, Aurelio, and Felipe. Pseudonyms are used to preserve the anonymity of the participants. After that, I provide some background information on the three interviewers involved in the interactions under analysis. Facts about their preferred languages, countries of birth, and ages are presented.

Students

Fedra Fierro

Fedra is a 9th grader from Mexico. She arrived in Canada in 2007, two years before this interview. The information about her parents is limited. She mentions that her mother is a homemaker who did not finish high school, neither in Mexico nor in Canada. Her father works as a cleaner, and she did not provide any details about her father’s
schooling. She wants to finish high school and go to university to be a nurse. The language spoken at home is primarily Spanish.

**Ana Ardila**

Ana is a 9th grader from Mexico. She was 14 years old when she arrived in Canada and for the last two years she has been learning English. In Mexico, she was about to start “la prepa” which is the equivalent to the 10th grade in Canada. Her family moved to Canada and she was registered in eighth grade in one public school in Toronto, because of her lack of proficiency in English. This decision led her to become unmotivated, and as a result she left school for two years. At the time of the interview, she had decided to return to school and continue with her studies. However, when she started grade eight again for the third time, she noticed that her classmates were three years younger than her. With regard to her family, both parents are from Mexico and completed university there. In the personal questionnaire, she did not specify what professional careers her parents pursued. In Canada, her mother works in cleaning and her father is in the construction industry. She mentioned that the preferred language at home is Spanish.

**Mónica Martínez**

Mónica is a 12th grader born in Argentina. She arrived in Canada when she was 17 and has studied and practiced English for the last two years. Her parents are from Argentina as well. Her mother finished high school, but did not pursue a professional career in Argentina. In Canada, her mother has two jobs, acting as a secretary and a housekeeper. Her father completed college in Argentina and works as a technician in Toronto.
**Ernesto Franco**

Ernesto is the only participant with learning disabilities in this group of students. He was born in 1990 in Canada and learnt Spanish during the first few years of his life. For whatever reason, he does not mention in the interview that his family decided to move back to El Salvador in 2000. There, he studied in Spanish only until 2006 at which point his family decided to move back to Canada once more and he had to learn English again. He is a 12th grade student with high aspirations. Even though he has been diagnosed with learning disabilities in both countries and placed in Special Education classes, he managed to move to academic classes in which only the students who are not in special education classes are allowed. When he finishes high school, he wants to pursue a university degree in theology. At the time of the interview, he was 19 years old and had been re-learning English for the last three years. Unfortunately, I do not have information on his parents’ background.

**José Jimenez**

José is a 12th grader originally from Ecuador. He came to Canada with his family in 2005. At the time of the interview, he was 18 years old and had been learning and practicing English for the last four years. Both parents were born in Ecuador and are mechanical engineers working full time in Toronto. The language mostly spoken at home is Spanish. In the interview, José decided not to make use of the Spanish language even though the interviewer changed between languages in different instances.

**Iván Iglesias**

Iván arrived in Canada in 2003 when he was 10 years old. He is a 10th grader who has been learning and speaking English for the last six years. His parents are from
Argentina and primarily came to Canada because of the economic crisis in their country in 2002. His mother completed university in her home country and works as a research coordinator in Canada. His father finished college in Argentina and works as a website developer in Canada. The language spoken at home is Spanish. The interviewer, Carolina, is a Canadian born Spanish speaker so she speaks both languages fluently. Both Iván and Carolina code-switch multiple times during the conversation.

**Aurelio Arango**

Aurelio is a 10th grader who arrived in Canada in 1996. He was four years old when his family immigrated from the Dominican Republic. At the time of the interview, he was 17 years old. He has been practicing English for the last thirteen years. His mother is from El Salvador and works full time at the Toronto airport. His father is originally from the Dominican Republic and studied at the university there. In Canada he works full time in cleaning. Aurelio mentioned that the language spoken at home is primarily Spanish. His English and Spanish skills are very advanced and he communicates in both languages fluently.

**Felipe Fernandez**

Felipe is the only student in this group who has been living in Canada for his entire life. Unfortunately, he did not complete all the information asked prior to the interview. He is a Canadian-born 12th grader. His parents are Ecuadorian. He mentioned in the interview that his Spanish skills are not as strong as his English.
Interviewers

Roberto Rey

Roberto was born in 1971 in Puerto Rico. He started to learn English at the age of five when he was in kindergarten. He identifies Spanish as his first language. He mentioned that he finally became comfortable with his English skills when he was 15 years old. His mother lives in Puerto Rico and speaks to him only in Spanish. His father has been living in the United States for nearly twelve years and is a university professor who speaks to him mostly in Spanish. He has been speaking English and Spanish for over thirty years. He speaks both languages with his parents, siblings and other Spanish speakers. The fact that his wife does not speak Spanish obliges him to speak in his second language at home. At work most of the time, his colleagues only speak in English. Therefore, his language skills in his second language (English) are very strong due to a complete immersion in the second language culture.

Víctor Vela

Víctor was born in Canada in 1983. At the time of the interview, he was 26 years old. He considers English as his first language and feels more comfortable speaking in English than in Spanish. He learnt Spanish as a teenager and took formal classes when he was 15 years old. He has studied Spanish for just over 10 years, but only started to practice it in the last two years. Even though both of his parents speak Spanish fluently, the primary language spoken at home is English. His mother has a Russian Jewish background and his father is of Jewish, Colombian, and Spanish background. He mentioned that only his father’s side of the family speaks Spanish, but he does not have
close contact with either side of the family so he can not practice his second language much.

**Carolina Castro**

Carolina was born in 1979 in Canada. She primarily spoke Spanish at home until she started junior kindergarten at the age of four. Then, at school, she learnt English and it became her primary language of interaction aside from family situations. Her mother finished high school in Toronto and is a housewife. Her father went to college and studied accounting. He works full time in his field. She uses Spanish with her parents most of the time; with her younger sister, they alternate languages, and with her brother, she only speaks in English. Her parents are from Ecuador and her siblings were born in Canada. She practices Spanish with her family and at work now that she teaches Spanish in a high school in the city of Toronto. With her daughter, she also speaks and reads with her in Spanish. She is a fully bilingual speaker; she switches from one language to the other without much effort.

### 3.6.4 Participant L1-L2

Some of the participants of the Proyecto Latin@ clearly identified their first language. This was the case of José, Mónica, Iván, Ernesto, Ana, Fedra and Roberto who identified Spanish as their first language. On the other hand, Aurelio, Felipe, Carolina, and Víctor mentioned that they felt more comfortable speaking in English than in Spanish. However, out of the latter group, Aurelio and Carolina sounded very comfortable speaking in both languages. During their conversations, they also sounded more clearly in their second languages than Felipe or Víctor. However, it is difficult to
really evaluate each participant’s language proficiency because there was no previous language testing.

The table below presents the country and the year all participants were born, their first language, their age at the time of the interview, the grade they were in (for students), the age when they started to learn the second language, the time they have spent learning the second language, and finally the time they have lived in Canada.

Table 1. Interviewers and participants: Background information

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<th>INTERVIEWERS</th>
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<td>Fedra Fierro</td>
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Note: (*) From 1990 until 2000 he lived in Canada. Then, he went to El Salvador until 2006. (**) Came back to Canada in 2006. (*) N/A. Not Applicable. They are the interviewers. (**) N/A. Not applicable. These participants were born in Canada.

3.7 Study components

The study has four components: completion of recordings and transcripts; identification of code-switches present in conversations between Proyecto Latin@ researchers and high school students; comparison between the code-switching samples presented by Poplack (1980) and the ones presented in this natural data; and finally, an analysis of language use and its relation with identity.
After selecting the interviews, I categorized fragments of each interview in which participants code-switched from English to Spanish or Spanish to English. Code-switching is categorized as tag-switching, intersentential switching, and intrasentential switching. As mentioned before, tag-switching occurs when participants bring words from one language while speaking another language; intersentential switching occurs when participants make changes between the clause or sentence boundary, and finally, intrasentential switching occurs when participants switch within the clause or sentence boundary. The topic of conversation is taken into account to better understand the links between what they say, the code-switching used and their ethnic identification. Finally, I analyzed the context and its connection with the utterances produced.

The next three chapters report on the analysis of code-switching in the Proyecto Latin@ interviews. The narratives show three common themes touched on by participants. The themes are: 1) talk about school experiences, 2) talk about events outside of school, and 3) talk about ethnicity. Each theme has a sample of code-switches employed and its relation to ethnic identification. This separation is necessary for organizational purposes when analyzing the data. It is important to mention that these themes overlap with each other. Therefore, there would be examples that could fit in other themes besides the one in which they are exposed. Because of the quantity of examples, they are only used once. These themes are discussed with reference to the research questions, however, because they are so interrelated, addressing each question separately is not a helpful strategy. Consequently, the results presented as a whole is more appropriate.
I noted instances in which code-switching seemed to be a matter of convenience, convention and classification/reiteration. A sample of convenience: “They do mucha [much] blah-blah-blah ‘much blah-blah-blah’”. When code-switching was a matter of convention: “Por ejemplo también estuve en ESL, y el grupo era muy grande, de muchos países, habían muchos Argentinos también.” [as an example I was in ESL, the group was very large, people from different countries, there were lots of people from Argentina as well.]. Finally, for the purposes of clarification/reiteration: “Iván, este décimo. Grade Ten”. For readers who do not speak Spanish, each excerpt is presented first as it was said, and then with the sections in Spanish translated, as follows:

Pues al principio, yo quería estudiar música pero después Dios me cambio los planes y ahora me voy a ir a estudiar a Waterloo² a un Bible College por un año, y luego, I will see what happens.

Well, at the beginning I wanted to study music but God changed my plans and now I will go to study in Waterloo at a Bible College for a year. Then, I will see what happens.

Bold words represent when participants speak in Spanish. Non-bolded words represent when participants speak in English. This is followed by a translation into English in italics, with bold letters representing the text that was originally in Spanish, this time translated, and non-bolded letters in original English.

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² Waterloo is left not bolded because the pronunciation of the student was in English and not in Spanish.
Chapter Four: Code-Switching To Talk About School Experiences

Let’s talk a little bit more about your experiences here in [school’s name] and that’s what I want to know. ¿Cómo es ser un estudiante Latino aquí en [school’s name]?  

4.1 Introduction

One of the most common themes around which participants code-switch, is when they talk about school experiences. In this chapter, I demonstrate that code-switching can be understood as part of the process of constructing a school-related identity that is particular to the English-speaking context of Toronto. Students who have been in Canada for more than two years, interacting with classmates, teachers, and other people in English develop an identity as English-speaking students. However, this development sometimes conflicts with their identities as Spanish-speaking Latin@s. For participants who were born in Canada and have a Latin@ background, many aspects of their Latin@ identity are exposed when interacting with Latin@s who are new to the country.

This chapter is divided into two main parts. The first part offers examples of words used by participants to describe school, interactions with teachers, and how they envision a better school. The second part displays participants’ code-switches employed in relation with their future, such as additional educational and work perspectives. Many of the examples provided could be used to illustrate other sections, but they are not repeated here, in an attempt to focus the discussion.

4.2 Words to describe school

According to the literature, nouns are the most common word switched by bilinguals (Auer, 1998; Myers-Scotton, 2006; Poplack, 1979). In some of the exchanges

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3 Translation: Let’s talk a little bit more about your experiences here in the school and that’s what I want to know. ¿How is to be a Latino student here in this school?
in the data, participants borrowed single words that were often nouns. The first example of code-switching in which nouns are employed is the conversation between Carolina, the interviewer, and Ernesto, the interviewee. Ernesto is a student categorized with learning disabilities that code-switches while speaking about his experience in a previous school:

**Excerpt 1**

> en El Salvador, yo estaba en grado siete yo no estaba en grado, grade nine y cosas así, entonces (...)\(^4\) cuando entré a la escuela no había nadie que conocía, entonces (...) sonaba las, las alarmas como así, ya, y vienen toda la gente caminando y yo diciendo: "¿qué esta pasando?" y entonces, (...)\(^*\) yo me sentía asustado porque, (...)\(^*\) nunca había visto eso en mi vida que todo el mundo salía de la clases y se iban por otros lados así. Y yo tenía el timetable diciendo: “¿cómo se lee esto?

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\(^4\) Note: This student has a tag: “¿Cómo se dice?” [How do you say...?] It was removed to make it easier to follow the utterance and replaced with (...)\(^*\)
The two nouns he uses are school-related, “grade nine” and “timetable”. These changes according to Poplack (1979) and Scotton’s (1988) observations lay more in the “language internal factors rather than the social factors” (Gardner-Chloros, 2009). Consequently, trying to understand how code-switching is related to the process of constructing an identity, I have to analyze the context in which these nouns are uttered. In order to refer to specific aspects of his schooling experience in Canada, Ernesto uses words in English rather than in Spanish, even as he uses the equivalent words in Spanish to describe his experience in El Salvador, such as “grado” instead of “grade.” This suggests that as Ernesto develops a student identity in the Canadian context, he associates English with that experience, separating his own perception as a student in El Salvador from his emerging additional identity as an immigrant student in Canada through his use of language.

Another example of code-switching involving nouns is the conversation between Carolina, the interviewer, and Iván. Their conversation has been carried out in both languages in different instances. Iván’s mother tongue is Spanish, and in this part of the interview, he speaks about one class, which helped him improve his English language skills after his family arrived in Toronto. In Excerpt 2 Iván says, “por ejemplo, la primera escuela donde yo fui para hacer mis estudios, había un ESL program. Y me ayudó” [for example, the first school I went to, there was an ESL program. This program helped me]. ESL is used in Anglophone countries to denote people who study English as a Second Language. The borrowing of the acronym from the English language is consistent with other analyses of code-switching. In Romaine’s opinion (1989), there are words that “are particularly common in cases of so called ‘immigrant bilingualism’”
This happens because bilinguals moving to a new setting experience a change not only in cultural patterns, but also in the local language used to describe realities in a certain manner. Consequently, words such as ESL are linked to the English community and make reference to a specific concept. Learning to use these words, even in the context of a conversation in Spanish, points to the role of language in the process of becoming socialized into Canadian schools.

Besides borrowing of single words, code-switching is also present in more complex changes in single turns. This is the case in the following section in which participants speak about their experiences at school. In **Excerpt 3**, Ana, a Mexican immigrant student, talks about a previous school. The interview has been mostly in Spanish, and in this turn, she expresses that her experiences in the other school were very different because, first of all, “**era, es una escuela bien grande**” [**it was, it is a big school**] and secondly, “**no conocía a nadie y todos solo hablaban inglés**” [**I did not know anyone and everybody spoke only in English**]. She continues to say that she had many classes and that it was very challenging for her to be a good student because she couldn’t understand them.

“**Así, tener que estar cambiando de salón a salón a salón. Yo me confundía mucho. Pero pues, realmente no tuve mucha experiencia allí porque solo fui como, como unas, en total podrían ser ¿Como tres semanas? Entonces, no fui casi nada de días. I almost never went there**” [**like that, having to change classroom each time. I got confused many times. Really, I did not have many experiences there because I only went there like three weeks? So, I went only for a few days. I almost never went there**].

In this section, Ana speaks about her experience of being a new immigrant student without the command of English. She uses Spanish to explain her frustration about the
fact she did not understand the dynamics of the school setting. Finalizing the turn, she code-switches into English, describing the outcome of the experience in the very language that posed the challenges she describes, rather than in Spanish. This code-switching at the end of the sentence describes her intentions of not going to school in English, as if her perception of an immigrant “drop out” is constructed in English rather than in Spanish.

In Excerpt 4, Ernesto speaks about his experiences as a Special Ed. student in mathematics class: “Por ejemplo, las matemáticas si estas en Special Ed. Cuál es dos por dos, o las multiplicaciones o las divisiones o cómo contar dinero” [for example, Mathematics class if you are in Special Ed. [teachers will ask you] what is two times two? Or they will ask you about multiplications, divisions or how to count money]. Ernesto utilizes “Special Ed” as an ad hoc borrowing from English. This borrowing as Auer mentions (as cited in Heller, 2007) is likely employed because it can be part of “words, which are habitually used by a certain speaker or even in a bilingual community” (p. 327). Being in a Canadian school and habitually called a “Special Ed.” student, Ernesto has found it more fitting to bring this word into conversation because it is regularly used in English. He continues in Excerpt 5 saying “eso yo ya sabía cómo hacer esas cosas. (...) A mi me aburría muchas cosas de eso, (...) a mi me gusta más challenging cosas como la química o biología” [I knew how to do these things already. I was bored with so many things, (...) I like more challenging things, like Chemistry, or Biology]. He alternates languages as a way to demonstrate he can do “challenging” things in the Canadian context as a Special Ed. student. The fact that he speaks about school
experiences in both languages is a sign of his identity construction as an English and a Spanish-speaking student.

Further in the dialogue, in Excerpt 6, Ernesto talks about his younger brother, who is also a Special Ed. student, and who decided to leave school because of his difficulty concentrating and understanding all classes and assignments: “que él (...) escogiera las clases que él quiere también, lo que él le gusta (...) pero lamentablemente no se pudo hacer las cosas So, él ahorita dropped out. So, ahorita no está en la escuela” [that he (...) would be able to choose the classes he wants, classes he likes (...) but unfortunately it wasn’t possible, so, right now he dropped out. So, right now he is not at school]. Ernesto uses “dropped out” to mention that his brother abandoned school. The expression “to drop out” is more common to him as a high school student in the Canadian context than “desertar”, the equivalent expression in Spanish, which he might not know. Ernesto chooses an English word to describe a choice that high school Canadian students have. This choice is specific to his experience as a student in the Canadian context. It is interesting to note that for Ernesto, there seems to be an association between the words “Special Ed” and “drop out,” particularly when talking about his brother.

The next excerpt presents participants who are fluent in both languages and who code-switch several times in only one turn. In the following excerpt, Carolina, the interviewer, asks Aurelio about his experiences at school, to which Aurelio responds:

Excerpt 7

like a veces... I don't know. In Science, last semester yo, bueno, nunca he sido bueno para el Science, pero yo lo comencé estudiando bien ahí en España. Y lo entendía. Entonces ahora vine aquí y no, no me enteraba de nada, entonces I
was, I was asking and sometimes I wouldn’t get it. I was kind of slow for that...and like you know what just sit down and try to find, try to find out what you can do, or ask somebody else. **Entonces por eso es que ya después como que no,** I didn’t start like asking teachers.

*like sometimes ... I don't know. In Science, last semester *I, okay, I never have been good at* Science, *but I started studying it in Spain. I used to understand it. So, right now I am here, and I was not able to understand anything, therefore I was, I was asking and sometimes I wouldn’t get it. I was kind of slow for that...and like you know what just sit down and try to find, try to find out what you can do, or ask somebody else. So, that is the reason that after like I didn’t start like asking teachers.*

Code-switching in an intrasentential switch, besides denoting highly advanced language skills in both languages (Romaine, 1989), seems to create special meanings. Aurelio starts to speak in English and initiates his turn with “like” then he switches to Spanish and continues with “*sometimes.*” However, he doubts and decides to speak in English saying “I don't know. In Science, last semester.” Next, he reveals a personal attribute “*I, okay, I never have been good at*” in Spanish. Aurelio mentions this in Spanish because it is closer to his personal experiences, which supports one of the theories about code-switching proposed by Dewaele (2004) and Pavlenko (2004-2005). The theory suggests (as cited in Gardner-Chloros, 2009) that “emotional factors have a
considerable impact on how one learns, remembers and uses languages. Switching to an L2 may serve a distancing function or allow the speaker to avoid anxiety-provoking material, whereas the L1 elicits more personal involvement” (p. 123). He does not only express an emotion when saying he is not good at something, but he mixes it with his current school reality saying “Science” in English.

This is an example of how he negotiates his identity as both an English-speaking student and a Spanish speaker. He continues in English to present his experiences in a Toronto high school “I was, I was asking and sometimes I wouldn’t get it. I was kind of slow for that...and like you know what just sit down and try to find, try to find out what you can do, or ask somebody else.” When Aurelio chooses to speak in Spanish or in English, he also uses the pronoun “I” to speak about two events of his past. One, when he was in Spain, and another, when he arrived in Canada. When he speaks about either event, he chooses to switch languages, which is a representation of how each language is associated with different experiences and identities.

Code-switching could be present within a turn or between turns. This is the case in the next excerpt in which participants speak about their teachers and code-switch between turns. The following fragment is from the dialogue between Carolina, the interviewer, and Aurelio. The conversation has been carried out in both languages. In this particular turn, Carolina asks Aurelio, in Spanish, about teachers in his previous school. In Excerpt 8, she says “también mencionaste, que no, no te gusta o no quieres o no lo haces, preguntar a tus profes por ayuda. Y eso va al, eso va, bueno te voy a preguntar por qué, pero antes de eso te voy a preguntar ¿cómo son los maestros aquí?” [you mentioned that you do not like or you don’t ask your teachers for help. And that’s
going to, well, I will ask you why, but before that, I will ask you, how are teachers here?]. Aurelio answers in English “Impatient, seriously” changing the language of interaction. The question here is why does Aurelio decide to shift from Spanish to English to describe his teachers? Aurelio has been schooled in Canada his entire life and the language of interaction with most of his teachers is English, which is the common language of interaction in Toronto schools. Therefore, Aurelio has an English-speaking school identity since he has had experiences with English-speaking teachers in the city of Toronto since he was a child.

The following two examples show the interviewee, Iván, speaking about teachers who motivated him and others who did not. The utterances prior to and following this turn are in Spanish. In Excerpt 9, Iván talks about his music teacher as a good teacher: “le gusta la música y my music teacher, he teaches jazz music and he’s cool. He’s a good guy, a really good guy” [he likes music and my music teacher, he teaches jazz music and he’s cool. He’s a good guy, a really good guy]. Iván begins in Spanish, describing his teacher’s taste for music. Iván uses Spanish to present a characteristic not only about his teacher, but also about himself. His teacher likes jazz and Iván mentions that his teacher is “cool.” However, to continue with his teacher’s description, he decides to change to English. He is describing someone he knows from the school environment. Therefore, Iván has acquired a Canadian school identity, which helps him describe people and events in his second language. This elicits his process of becoming a Canadian student, whereas when he speaks about things he likes, he does it in Spanish.

In the following Excerpt (10) Iván speaks about people in his second language, in this case, some of his teachers. He mentions that some teachers did not make him feel
welcome in school: “uno, por una cosa es porque cuando decís, cuando, o bueno...

Cuando preguntan una pregunta y vos pensás, decís la respuesta, y dicen: ‘No’.
like just flat out loud, say: ‘No, you got it wrong’” [first, for one thing when you say, well, right (...) When they ask you something and you think about it, then you answer and they say: ‘No’ like just flat out loud, they say: ‘No. You got it wrong’]. In this utterance, Iván uses Spanish in order to speak about a personal experience. When he ends his sentence, he recalls one of his teachers saying: “No. You got it wrong,” using English to utter the words that he recalls from his teacher

This example suggests that emotional factors are involved when people code-switch. Speaking about emotions in their mother tongue and about foreign experiences in their second language points to the notion that code-switching is part of the process of negotiating contrasting experiences and an English-speaking school identity for immigrant Latin@s.

There are other examples of code-switching in which participants answer a question from the interview about what advice they would give to teachers. This is the case of Excerpt 11. In this excerpt, Ernesto speaks about mathematics class; this conversation has been mostly in Spanish. He mentions that this teacher speaks very fast and suggests not only to this particular teacher, but all teachers: “otra sugerencia es para todos es que, para slow it down cuando están hablando muy rápido, porque algunas veces, muy rápido hablan y cuesta aprender” [another suggestion for everyone is to slow it down when they speak fast because they speak very fast and it is difficult to learn].

Ernesto speaks in Spanish about his personal experience, which presents his constructed identity as a Spanish student. Then, he switches to English as if he wants his teachers to
understand him saying “slow it down.” These words show his Canadian English-speaking
school identity because he wants his English-speaking teachers to understand him.
Having talked about his teachers, Ernesto opens the discussion about how students
envision a better school.

The dialogue below presents the discussion between Carolina and Iván in which
Iván also mentions that it is important that teachers “slow it down”:

Excerpt 12

Carolina: ¿Y, tendrías algún consejo para los profes para apoyar bien a los
estudiantes Latinos o a otros estudiantes?

Iván: No. Um, don’t be mean.

Carolina: Don’t be mean?

Iván: Yeah.

Carolina: ¿Algo más?

Iván: If you know that there is an ESL student, slow down.

(…)

Iván: Tengo un amigo, que va a una clase de ESL, se confunde mucho, se
confunde con muchas cosas porque, y yo, lo que yo pienso es que la
profesora va muy rápido. Después hay otros en mi clase de ciencia que
son ESL pero me parece que la maestra no lo sabe.

Carolina: ¿Por qué te parece así?

Iván: No sé, nada más, no sé. Quizás porque tratan a todos los estudiantes,
todos los alumnos como completamente iguales. Y bueno, tienen que
entender que algún, algunos de esos alumnos son, tienen dificultad.
Carolina: *Do you have any suggestions for your teachers, so they can support you? Or they could support other Latino students?*

Iván: No. Um, don’t be mean.

Carolina: Don’t be mean?

Iván: Yeah.

Carolina: *Anything else?*

Iván: If you know that there is an ESL student, slow down.

(...)

Iván: *I have a friend who goes to an ESL class, he gets confused a lot with so many things because what I think is that the teacher explains very fast. There are other students in my Science class who are ESL, but I think the teacher doesn’t know.*

Carolina: *Why do you think that?*

Iván: *I don’t know. Perhaps, because teachers treat all students as if they were the same. Teachers have to understand that some students are, some students have difficulties.*

Carolina asks Iván in Spanish about his teachers, but Iván answers in English: “No. Um, don’t be mean”. As noted earlier, Iván also uses English to say what he would like to say to his English-speaking teachers, “don’t be mean.” Certainly, Iván has acquired an English-speaking student identity because he can speak about school events in both languages. Iván also does not follow the interviewer’s language choice, answering in
English. Carolina follows Iván’s language choice, asking him to clarify. He once again switches to English to articulate the message he wants to give to his teachers: “If you know that there is an ESL student, slow down.” This excerpt illustrates two points. First, students use English to speak to and about their teachers; and second, students use English to refer to aspects of their schooling that are specific for the Canadian context. This type of code-switching is very common in the data from the Proyecto Latin@.

4.3 Words to talk about future and beyond schools

Thinking about their future, participants also mention what they would like to do after finishing high school. This section focuses on their goals for the future. The following excerpt talks about Aurelio’s goals. The conversation between Carolina, the interviewer, and Aurelio was in both languages. Carolina asks him what motivates him to continue being enrolled in school:

**Excerpt 13**

Aurelio: Like *A mi me gusta la mecánica* so, *es la única razón por que más vengo*. *Porque* I want to pass that class *y el otro año si es que, bueno* I think I’m going to stay anyways, *quiero seguir haciendo eso y*, and my class for next year I picked two, two auto credits. *Y en la tarde iba a ser Co-op* at a mechanic too. So yeah.

Carolina: So, y, y ¿cómo que piensas con eso, cómo es que te motiva?

Aurelio: **Entonces me, me dan ganas como** like, I really want to graduate. I really do. **Entonces, si** I’m like if, **si yo quiero ser un mecánico** I’m going to have to still need [inc.]⁵, like my English and all that **entonces**, I

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⁵ Note: “Inc.” means incomprehensible.
try to work on all those skills **asi ya cuando** I graduate maybe go to a College **a terminar mi carrera** and get into work.

Aurelio: **Like I like mechanics so, it is the reason of why I come to school.**

*Because I want to pass that class and in Fall next year, if I... well I think I’m going to stay anyways. I want to continue doing that and, and my class for next year I picked two, two auto credits. And in the afternoon I was planning to take Co-op at a mechanic too. So, yeah.*

Carolina: **So, and, and what do you think about that, how does that motivate you?**

Aurelio: **So, I feel like,** like, I really want to graduate. I really do. **So, yeah I’m like if, if I want to be a mechanic** I’m going to have to still need [inc.], like my English and all that so, **I try to work on all those skills so when I, I graduate maybe go to a College to finish my career and get into work.**

In this example, both participants code-switch several times within turns, demonstrating their fluency in both languages. In this portion, Aurelio speaks about personal interests and his plans for the future. Aurelio’s use of language suggests that he is a highly advanced speaker in both languages, because he is able to competently change from one language to another in single turns while respecting grammar in both languages. Aurelio moves perfectly from one language to the other without making grammatical mistakes. He is able to maintain two languages in a single turn, which facilitates the
transmission of his message. This is one of several examples from Carolina and Aurelio’s conversation. This example presents how speakers negotiate their identity when code-switching, as they are fluent in both languages. They have achieved a comfortable constructed identity not only in the school environment, but when they talk about future plans. This is noticeable because they do not hesitate to jump from one language to another and still convey the message they want. Both participants show a strong English and Spanish identity.

Beyond their experiences in school and their educational future, some students from the Proyecto Latin@ research, also talk about working to help their parents economically. Excerpt 14 shows Ernesto speaking about his current part-time job. The conversation has been in Spanish. Close to the end of this turn, he says “ten hours” in both languages “ahora si estoy trabajando solo ten hours así, diez horas (…), diez horas a la semana” [right now I am working only ten hours, ten hours (…) ten hours per week]. Ernesto utters “ten hours” in English to reflect his current reality, working ten hours in the city of Toronto. Consequently, Ernesto has not only a Canadian English-speaking school identity, but he also demonstrates he can code-switch when speaking about realities that happen outside of school. This example shows an adaptation to the Canadian society in which high school students sometimes have to work to help their parents. Other students simply do not want to finish high school and want to sign up in low paying jobs. This is the case of Ana, who uses similar code-switches as Ernesto. The interviewer asks her about jobs that she, as a student, could do without a high school diploma. In response, Ana explains:
Excerpt 15

Pues yo la verdad no sé si, o sea es que a mí, en la persona no me gustan trabajos de oficina o trabajos así, me gustan pues más físicos o lo que sea algo más interactivo. Entonces pues no sé, también podría hacer como bartender, waitress, yo no sé si eso necesitas tu high school diploma creo que no o ¿si?

Well, I truly don’t know, in other words for me, I do not like office jobs; I like more physical jobs or something more interactive. So, I really don’t know, I could work as well as bartender, waitress, I don’t know if to work like that you need a high school diploma I think I don’t, right?

In this turn, Ana borrows from the English language “bartender”, “waitress” and “high school diploma,” to describe the types of jobs that a non-professional person could get in the city of Toronto. These words can be categorized as contextual words because Ana uses them to explain her Canadian reality. It is not uncommon that high school or university students get these types of jobs because of the low qualifications needed to get hired. Ana speaks about things she might become. Naming them in English suggests that she is thinking of those jobs as being embedded in the English-speaking community. This usage of code-switching when talking about current and future goals demonstrates an understanding that these immigrant students have of their new reality in the Canadian society; this reality is described using English words.
The final example of this section, Excerpt 16, presents the interviewer, Víctor, asking Fedra about her plans in Spanish. In this turn, Fedra mentions she would like to study to be a nurse and work in a hospital in downtown Toronto: “en el hospital de Rogers. Es uno que está, en, por downtown” [at the Rogers Hospital. It is located downtown]. As in previous examples in this section, Fedra speaks about her career and job goals. This example shows the process of integration Fedra is having in Canadian English speaking society. This borrowing is used here to identify a specific location in the city of Toronto. This shows she is aware of non school-related places, illustrating an English-student identity and an immigrant identity. Overall, these simple switches point to different processes of identities construction that are manifested with language alternation.

4.4 Conclusion

Chapter four focuses on the different language strategies participants used to carry a conversation about their personal experiences. Two basic themes became visible in this chapter. The first theme has to do with the description of the school environment. Some switches were simple words, such as nouns, borrowed from one language to the other, particularly words which are specific of certain language communities and cannot be translated into other languages. Other words have been learnt and have meaning only in the school context. Therefore, students use them to speak about their current reality. It shows the evolution of the English-speaking student identity in the Canadian context.

The second theme focuses on the code-switching participants used to talk about their future. For bilinguals who were born in Canada, code-switching displays their constructed English-Spanish identity when they are able to move from one language to

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6 Rogers was pronounced in English.
another without hesitation. Also the relationship between interlocutors prompts code-switching because both are able to alternate languages without any restrictions.
Chapter Five: Code-Switching To Talk About Experiences Outside Of School

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I presented how immigrant students construct a student identity in the city of Toronto. Students are learning that the local language is used to describe new realities that they are experiencing in the Canadian context. More examples about how immigrant Latin@s establish their identity as Canadian-English speakers is presented in this chapter. Whereas Chapter four focused on the constructing or constructed student identities at school, Chapter five focuses on these forms outside the school environment.

Throughout the Proyecto Latin@ research data, interviewers and interviewees use code-switching when talking about intimate experiences. For example, code-switches often occur when participants speak about family, friends, and their immigration experience. In this chapter, I demonstrate a contrast between participants who are immigrants to Canada and are in the process of establishing an immigrant identity, and participants who were born in Canada and who are in the process of constructing and reinforcing an identity as Spanish-speaking Latin@s.

This chapter is organized into three subsections. The first contains a discussion about the immigration experiences of the students who relocated to Canada. The second presents the code-switches in which participants talk about their friends and peers. Finally

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7 Translation: First I told them “Hi, hi, my name is Iván and I come from Argentina.” And almost right away they think: “Oh, Argentina is poor” What’s up with you? I am not poor! I am like you!
the third and last section discusses code-switching among participants speaking about family and relationships.

5.2 Immigration experience

One topic in which participants code-switch, is when they talk about their immigration experience. In Excerpt 17, Iván explains how he went through a tough situation when he arrived in Canada “porque una vez que, a mí, yo, yo, I experienced it. Yo vine acá a Canadá y yo pensaba que, soy el único que habla Castellano” [because once that, to me, I, I, I experienced it. I came to Canada, and I thought I was the only one who spoke Castilian]. Iván talks about a belief he had when he arrived in Canada. He uses English to establish his experience as an immigrant by declaring; “I experienced it.” He then continues in Spanish to describe how he thought he would be the only one speaking in Spanish, which remains an important component of his constructed Spanish identity and as constructing immigrant identity from Argentina. He reiterates how he experienced loneliness by repeating the pronoun three times, twice in Spanish and once in English. This repetition of the pronoun in both languages is suggestive of the way he constructs parallel identities with both languages. This alternation of languages in the context of discussions about the broader immigrant experience is an important part of the process of constructing multiple immigrant identities.

For instance, Latin@ students have encountered people who judged them. Some of the stereotypes about Latin@s discussed in Proyecto Latin@ interviews are the common beliefs of non-Spanish speakers. Some of these beliefs portray Latin@s as lazy, gardeners or cleaners. In the first example, the dialogue has been carried out mostly in Spanish. Ernesto explains why it is important to teach others about the Latin American culture:
Excerpt 18

para que miren ellos que nosotros no somos o sea bad people o sea, por ejemplo algunos veces nos dicen que somos haraganes o algo o otras veces nos dicen que somos no, no aprendemos bien las cosas.

so people can understand that we are not bad people so for example, some people say we are lazy or that we do not learn things so well.

Ernesto uses English to express what he believes English speakers think of Latinos as “bad people”, which is also a context specific stereotype, often expressed by English speakers. His usage of these words in English rather than in Spanish presents an adaptation to the Canadian English society, which identifies Latinos with certain characteristics. Using English allows him to distance himself and his personal beliefs from this biased representation of Latin@s and it reaffirms his immigrant identity.

Another example about an immigrant identity construction is the following words from Iván. In Excerpt 19, I identify an example of code-switching and its relation with what other people think about what it means to be Latin@. The interviewer asks Iván about his experiences as a Latin@ student in that particular school. Iván mentions that his family decided to move to Canada because of political and economic reasons. He explains that at school, people judged Spanish speakers because they are not well aware that Latin America is not only one country with one culture, but multiple countries with multiple cultures. He says, “for one thing, you have to make people understand that you speak Spanish, but you don’t come from a really impoverished country. Like, because,
the main reason that we moved to Canada was because, economic in Argentina, en Argentina, la crisis económica” [in Argentina the economic crisis]. Having lived and attended school in Canada for more than six years, Iván is able to speak in both languages fluently. Iván uses English in the first part of this turn, as a way to “make people understand” that somebody who speaks in Spanish does not necessarily come from an impoverished country. However, he code-switches and repeats the reason why his family moved to Canada in Spanish “in Argentina the economic crisis.” He uses Spanish to describe an important event in his life that is connected to his identity and memories of leaving Argentina. This illustrates the notion that code-switching is often related to the language associated with particular identities and experiences.

5.3 Friends and peers

In addition to their experiences of immigration, participants also use code-switching to talk about their friends and peers. This section talks about Latin@ identity and other students in high school. The first excerpt of this section is from the interview between Carolina and Felipe. In this part of the dialogue, the topic focuses on participants’ perception as Latin@s in Toronto. Their conversation has been carried out mostly in English, which is both participants’ forte according to the questionnaire filled prior to the interview. Felipe, the interviewee, has been living in Canada since he was four years old. He moved to Spain for a short period of time, but never mentions for how long. Felipe expresses that in his school they need more Latin@ students to create support for each other. In Excerpt 20, Felipe mentions “That’s why, because to be honest, it’s too much mayates. And especially they do too much blah-blah-blah.” Then, the interviewer asks “¿Qué es mayate?” [what does mayate mean?], and he responds
“¿Mayate? Negro” [mayate? It means Black]. Throughout the whole interview, Felipe does not use much Spanish, but to refer to Black people; he employs Spanish rather than English.

His borrowing of the word “mayate,” a derogatory term used by Mexicans and Mexican-Americans to refer to Blacks, reflects, on the one hand, an association between Felipe’s perception of Black people and his identity as a Spanish-speaker. While “mayate” does not have an exact translation into English, it also serves as a way to avoid using equivalent words in English that might carry a stronger association with racism. In a sense, the word “mayate” operates as a strategy for concealing racism from English speakers, yet at the same time, it illustrates something important about Felipe’s identity as a Spanish-speaker and his perception of his peers, as he further explains his relationship with black students.

In Excerpt 21, Felipe continues talking about his Black friends in Spanish: “I have negro [Black] who’s bueno [good], negro [Black] who’s malo [bad].” Felipe code-switches back and forth between the two languages as he tries to clarify his bonds with his black friends and positions himself as non-racist, even as he communicates negative feelings about Blacks. These changes are interesting because they follow the grammatical structures in both languages, which means Felipe is able to code-switch while respecting the rules in both languages. This suggests that Felipe, even though he has been raised in a Canadian city, has kept his family’s heritage language. The fact that he uses “negro”, “bueno” and “malo” in Spanish displays a constructed identity in both languages.

The final example for this section is Excerpt 22. Carolina asks the interviewee about his school friends who were born in Canada: “What about, tus, tus amigas, your, 

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8 This definition was taken from an Urban dictionary on-line. See references for more information.
your friends, the ones who were born here? Are they in the Spanish club too?” In this turn, Carolina uses “tus amigas” in Spanish, which suggests the observation that bilinguals use their mother tongues to talk about personal and intimate relationships (Pavlenko, 2004). Pavlenko suggests that there are some languages that offer second language learners a way to express themselves more fluently than in their mother tongues. This suggests that using Spanish for Carolina to refer to friends might be a strategy to show closeness to the interviewee. Participants’ preference to show closeness when choosing one language over the other is supported in the following section, in which they favour speaking about their families in their mother tongues.

5.4 Family and relationships

In the next example, Felipe talks about two friends he has who are living in Puerto Rico. He mentions that they have a very close relationship and he refers to them as sisters. In this section, the interviewer asks him to speak about his motivation to continue school.

Excerpt 23

she says like: ‘I’ll try my best’. I’m like: ‘Just do it. Don’t do it for me. You know. Just do it for your family. Do it for yourself’. (…) and especially, I have like, friend who’s like an hermanita [little sister] for me, they’re, they dropped out this year and I told her, ‘Please go to (…), one of them, one of my hermanitas [little sisters], she’s from Puerto Rico, and she said to me: ‘Oh I want you back to school’. So I got back to school for her. So she’s the one who kept pushing me.
Felipe refers to his friends first as “little sister” “hermanita” and then, he repeats it in the plural form as “little sisters” “hermanitas” in Spanish. The meaning of the word “hermanita” or “hermanitas” seems to be significant for him because he decides to speak about them in Spanish rather than in English. According to Felipe, he feels more comfortable speaking in English. However, to refer to his Puerto Rican friends, he switches the noun ‘sister’ in English for “hermanitas” in Spanish. As stated by Auer (as cited in Heller, 2007) “language choice often ties up with individual histories of interaction” (p. 27). This code-switch has two explanations: a cultural connection and intimacy. There is a cultural connection as he can speak with “his hermanitas” in Spanish rather than in English. Another explanation can be regarded as a form of intimacy. The word “hermanita” has a connotation of deep caring and intimacy, which he chooses to relate and describe in Spanish. The fact that Felipe uses these words in Spanish rather than in English represents Felipe’s identity not only as an English speaker, but also as a Spanish speaker.

Another example of relationships is a part of the dialogue between Carolina and Aurelio. As mentioned before, the conversation was in both languages. In this upcoming excerpt, they talk about people who abandoned school.

**Excerpt 24**

Carolina: Okay. so we already talked about that. ¿Tu conoces a otra persona que ha pasado lo mismo o que esta pasando por lo mismo? /leaving school/

Aurelio: A bueno, my cousin.

Carolina: Okay, what’s going on with him or her?
Aurelio: Well, he dropped out pero eso fue porque él se metió en bobadas like he started getting into gangs and crap like that. And pero él lo dejó más por los amigos. O sea él se dejó influenciar por los amigos.

Carolina: Okay. So we already talked about that. Do you know another person that has gone through the same situation? [leaving school]

Aurelio: Oh, well, my cousin.

Carolina: Okay, what’s going on with him or her?

Aurelio: Well, he dropped out, but it was because he starting to do silly things like he started getting into gangs and crap like that. And but he left school more because of his friends. Therefore, he was influenced by his friends.

In this dialogue, Carolina starts the sentence in English and finishes it in Spanish. She initiates the talk by saying that they have spoken about that topic before, and then for the next sentence she changes to Spanish as she attempts to get closer to Aurelio and asks about his personal experiences and school choices. Then, Aurelio starts his turn in Spanish and finishes it in English when referring to his relationship with his cousin. He says: “Oh, well, my cousin.” The first two words are in Spanish, and then he switches to English to talk about his cousin, who also lives in the city of Toronto, where he speaks English. Answering the next question, Aurelio says in English “Well, he dropped out” The expression “to drop out,” as explained in the previous chapter, is usually used in the interviews in English, as it is part of the lexicon associated with school experiences in the
English context of Toronto high schools. Therefore, this is an expression that is school-related in Canada, reflecting an immigrant identity.

Later in Excerpt 25, Carolina asks Aurelio in English, what makes him come to school, to which Aurelio responds in Spanish “mi abuela” [my grandmother]. Carolina asks him how he feels about his grandmother supporting him from the Dominican Republic, to which he answers “me siento más relejado más, more relaxed. So, I actually listen to her” [I feel more relaxed more, more relaxed. So, I actually listen to her]. He expresses in Spanish that he feels more relaxed knowing his grandmother supports him. Aurelio refers to his grandmother in Spanish, which reflects the intimacy of their relationship. He says his grandmother in Spanish because that is the language used in interactions with her. When talking about himself, he mentions “I listen to her”, he does it in English perhaps because he thinks about himself in English rather than in Spanish. These two examples, the one in which Aurelio refers to his cousin in English, and to his grandmother in Spanish, are experience-related. Aurelio has grown up with his cousin in the Canadian context, which makes him talk about his cousin in English, whereas when he speaks about his grandmother in Spanish; she still lives in the Dominican Republic and he talks to her in Spanish. It is difficult to establish what language is the dominant language for Aurelio because he can speak fluently about family members in two different languages, but we can say Spanish and English identities are related to his immigration experience when coming to Canada.

5.5 Conclusion

Chapter five’s purpose is to underscore the code-switches that occurred when participants talk about their friends, peers, family and immigration experience. In the first
and second sections, it is noted that there are words, which are better used in one language rather than in another because they convey closeness to the speakers’ experiences and create rapport. This chapter also reveals the connections between the speakers’ past or present experiences with another person and language choice. It seems that when speakers interact with certain people in a specific language they would try to reconstruct the conversation in that language. Of course, this would be true in bilingual conversations, in which both speakers share the same languages. Finally, code-switches can appear when speakers talk about events in their past or present lives. Speakers prefer to present events in the language that were used when the event took place. They do this to show the bilingual listener that there is a difference in the perception of events. Consequently, a relation between events and language choice could introduce a new perspective of bilinguals’ own identities construction. This re-evaluation of self-identities will be explored in the following chapter.
Chapter Six: Code-Switching To Talk About Ethnicity

Pues no sé, a veces es difícil porque, no sé; como mi cultura es muy diferente a esta, mi sentido del humor es muy diferente a los canadienses, entonces es medio difícil like to fit in sometimes. But I try. I’m not going to be like “I’m a Latino student, I’m not going to like fit in with them.”

6.1 Introduction

The previous two chapters focused on the code-switches that exhibit both constructed and in construction identities that participants of the Proyecto Latin@ display when talking about Canadian schools, family, peers and immigration. Whereas the last two chapters talked about how participants use language to express their new realities, this chapter presents code-switches elicited by participants while defining or describing their ethnicity. This is another discussion topic during which participants code-switched often. In this chapter, I will argue that this happens as part of the process of identifying not only as Latin@ (or not), but also about coming to understand themselves as immigrants. Latin@ in Spanish means Latin, but in English, it refers more exclusively to persons or communities of Latin American origin living in the USA. The term Latin@ is relevant for the Participants of Proyecto Latin@ because it is a term that refers to their immigrant statuses. Because of this new denomination, participants produce a new personal definition of what it means to be Latin@. They negotiate their identities in the Canadian context of Latin@nness.

9 Translation: Well, I don’t know, sometimes it is difficult because, I don’t know; my culture is very different than the Canadian culture. Mi sense of humour is very different than the Canadians, so it is difficult like to fit in sometimes. But I try. I’m not going to be like ‘I’m a Latino student I’m not going to like fit in with them.”

10 This definition was taken from the encyclopaedia Britannica on-line. See references for more information
This chapter is divided into two sections. In the first section, I present the code-switches that occur when participants identify themselves as Latin@s. In some instances, some terms are contested during the interview and present how code-switching emerges in the negotiation of the meanings attached to being Latin@ in the interviews. The second section displays how interviewers use different strategies to diminish the pressure of their presence in the interview in order to get as much information as possible from the interviewees. It also shows interviewers’ interest in the notion of what it means to be Latin@.

6.2 Words to be identified as Latin@

6.2.1 Identity

Bilinguals sometimes express their ideas in both languages in a single turn. The following Excerpts present examples of these code-switches. Carolina and Aurelio’s dialogue was carried out in both languages. Carolina asks Aurelio to describe himself. He answers that while living in the Dominican Republic, he was more active and happier, but since he moved back to Canada he feels unmotivated. This has had repercussions on his motivation to learn at school. Then, Carolina asks him to describe his ethnicity.

Excerpt 26

Carolina: y ¿cómo te describes en tu etnia, ethnicity?

Aurelio: What do you mean, like?

Carolina: Like ethnicity, for example me: Latina, ecuatoriana, like how would you describe yourself?

Aurelio: Dominicano.

Carolina: Dominicano. Anything else?
Aurelio: **Domini.**

*Carolina:* and how do you describe your *ethnicity,* *ethnicity*?

*Aurelio:* What do you mean like?

*Carolina:* Like *ethnicity,* for example *me:* **Latina,** **Ecuadorian,** like how would you describe yourself?

*Aurelio:* **Dominican.**

*Carolina:* **Dominican.** Anything else?

*Aurelio:* **Domini.**

Carolina finishes her question translating the word “ethnicity” from the Spanish word “*etnia*”. This code-switch makes a parallel representation of the word in both languages. Carolina wants to make it clearer for the interviewee what the term means in both languages. In the next turn, Aurelio asks her in English to be more explicit with her question, and Carolina answers clarifying in Spanish: “me **Latina,** **Ecuadorian**”. She then changes back into English to formulate an additional question. In this example, Carolina chooses to present her identity in Spanish, which is how she defines and represents herself. Using Spanish to express her Latin American background shows her Latin@ heritage identity, even though she was born in Canada. According to Bailey (2007) “an analysis of identity revolves around the questions of, how, when and why individuals count as members of particular groups” (p. 258). Thus, when Carolina, a
Canadian with an Ecuadorian background, positions herself as “Latina, ecuatoriana”, it symbolizes her strong identity as Latina along with her Canadian identity.

The conversation continues and Aurelio speaks about his ethnic background. Aurelio arrived in Canada when he was four years old. He has been schooled in English and his friends are mostly English speakers, according to what he mentioned previously in the interview. He describes himself with the Spanish adjective “Dominicano”.

Aurelio’s identification as “Dominicano” instead of “Dominican”, points to his association of Spanish language with his Dominican identity. Then, Carolina repeats “Dominicano” in Spanish, making a statement that shows a connection with Aurelio’s language choice, but interestingly she code-switches to finish her turn asking in English: “Anything else?” Finally, Aurelio, as he does in his previous turns, just answers with a Spanish idiom “Domini”, a diminutive that brings him closer to his own Latino heritage.

I believe that there are three layers of proximity to the term “Dominican” used by Aurelio. One, that it is in English, “Dominican”; another closer, which is in Spanish, “Dominicano”, and equally close is the diminutive which is also in Spanish, “Domini”.

In this example, Carolina and Aurelio feel comfortable speaking in both languages about their identities. According to Romaine (1989) and Poplack (1979), bilinguals that use intrasentential changes are the most fluent bilinguals because it requires great syntactic changes and their competence is directly related with the fact that they switch languages. These two participants show their competence in Spanish and English and their identities with both languages when code-switching.

In the next example, Excerpt 27, from the same conversation, Carolina, starts speaking in English and finishes in Spanish. She changes into Spanish to ask Aurelio
about his experience as a Latino student in a school in the city of Toronto. As she changes both language and topic, Aurelio’s answer is full of all the code-switching categories I have presented before. The fact that Aurelio is an English dominant speaker might prompt the utilization of certain words in one language instead of the other. His strong identification with both languages is corroborated when he is able to express emotions in English and Spanish: “because sometimes people are not kind, like, I am the type of person that has good relationship with everybody. But if they provoke me, I get mad and I.” Then, suddenly he moves to English to express his feelings and says: “I get mad and pissed. And people don’t really, don’t get along with Latinos like”. In his turn, Aurelio shows his good command of both languages when he code-switches to speak about one event, illustrating that is in fact a highly skilled bilingual. He is able to speak about personal emotions in both languages. When he mentions “people who are not nice,” he speaks about an event from his past. More importantly, while speaking about himself in two languages, it shows evidence of a level of integration between his Spanish-language and English-language identities.

6.2.2 Competing terms

In the Proyecto Latin@ interviews, certain terms emerge as a way to create links between speakers’ identities. In a single turn, interviewers and interviewees sometimes speak about their identities using the same word in both languages. In the following examples, Carolina asks José in two different moments about his background.

**Excerpt 28**

Carolina: Okay, so. Any other thoughts about you being **ecuatoriano**, Ecuadorian?
Carolina: So, one last question, then. How does being ecuatoriano, Ecuadorian, influence you, as a student?

In both questions she repeats “being ecuatoriano, Ecuadorian” using both languages. According to the literature, the function of the reiterations or repetitions is to put emphasis, or for clarification, or for attracting attention from the interviewee (Auer, 1995, p. 120). This repetition or reiteration makes emphasis on “ecuatoriano, Ecuadorian,” and it also illustrates Carolina’s strong identity perception in both languages. She identifies herself as “ecuatoriana” and “Ecuadorian”, in both languages.

There are other types of code-switches in which participants would reject being categorized in a certain way in their second language because of historical connotations. This happens in the dialogue between Roberto and Mónica. The dominant language in the interview is Spanish. This interview shows a re-evaluation of Roberto and Mónica’s identities. In the following example, Roberto asks Mónica about her being Latina and how she would describe it with adjectives besides Latina:

Excerpt 29


Mónica: Yo a veces uso Spanish.

Roberto: Spanish?

Mónica: Para que sepan que hablo español.

Roberto: O sea, dices: I am Spanish?
Mónica: No, siempr le digo que soy de Argentina, pero, muchas veces que 

dicen “oh, she’s Spanish”.

Roberto: Okay, y ¿qué te parece ese adjetivo?

Mónica: No sé, no me ... con tal de que sepa que hablo español, todo bien.

Roberto: Es medio extraño, ¿no?

Mónica: Sí

Roberto: Cuando le dicen que uno es Spanish. Como que, por lo menos a mi,

¿cómo que Spanish? Yo no soy Spanish!

Roberto: Would you use another word? Besides of- if somebody asks you: What is 
your ethnicity? Your culture? In addition to being called Latina. I do not 
know, would you use, what else would you use?

Mónica: Sometimes I use Spanish

Roberto: Spanish?

Mónica: So they know I speak Spanish.

Roberto: So, you say: I am Spanish?

Mónica: No, I tell them I am always from Argentina, but many times they say,

“Oh, she’s Spanish”

Roberto: Okay, and what do you think about that adjective?

Mónica: I don’t know, I doesn’t... as long as they know I speak Spanish, 
everything is okay.

Roberto: It is strange, isn’t it?
Mónica: Yes

Roberto: *When somebody tells you, you are Spanish. For example for me, how come that Spanish? I am not Spanish!*

In this segment, Mónica code-switches when using the adjective “Spanish” to describe herself and as a way to ensure that others recognize her as a Spanish speaker. Roberto asks her in English: “Spanish?” He then switches to Spanish: “*So, you say*” and finishes in English: “I am Spanish?” in an attempt to understand clearly what Mónica means. She continues her turn in Spanish, and explains that she tells other people she is from Argentina. At the end of this sentence, she switches to English quoting what other people say: “*Oh, she’s Spanish*” echoing the words that English speakers employ to refer to Spanish speakers, since Spanish speakers would never use the adjective “Spanish” to refer to someone only because they speak Spanish. Roberto continues engaging her on the topic and tries to have a better explanation for the adjective “Spanish.” Roberto finishes by saying that it is strange that people call Spanish speakers “Spanish” and adds that he does not accept being called “Spanish,” challenging Mónica’s acceptance of the term.

Code-switching between Roberto and Mónica is important because for both of them, English is their second language. Roberto is completely immersed in the second language environment, and Mónica is starting to acquire a full command of English. Both participants make their perspectives of the language community they belong to clear. Having Mónica using “Spanish” as a way to represent her “new” identity in the Canadian context shows a re-accommodation of how she sees herself and how others see her.
Roberto, on the other hand, tries to keep his Latino identity and rejects being called “Spanish,” even though this term is commonly used in North America to identify both groups of people, those coming from Spain and those who speak Spanish.

### 6.3 Negotiation of the interviewer-interviewee relationship

While the previous example shows how code-switching is present in the context of a negotiation over terms of reference between the interviewer and interviewee, there are others in which code-switching is part of an attempt by the interviewer to establish an open exchange with the interviewee.

In the interviews, the interviewer is the one who tries to frame the interview. To do this, they use different strategies to capture the interviewee’s attention. According to Misler (1991) “in a standard interview respondents are presented with a predetermined scheme of relevancies: topics, definitions of events, categories for response and evaluation are all introduced, framed and specified by interviewers, who determine the adequacy and appropriateness of responses” (p. 122). In the next example, Víctor, a Canadian born interviewee, asks Fedra, how she describes her ethnic background.

**Excerpt 30**

like, so **para mí, puedo decir que soy, Latino, tengo menos de 30 años, estudiado unas, en University, tengo, carro, tengo casa, tengo novia, cual... Cosas así. So, ¿cómo, how would you say, siendo Latino es importante? Si alguien me dice, “¿Qué es importante para usted?” Y yo digo que puedo hablar español.**
like, so, for me, I can say I am Latino, I am 30 years old, I’ve been studying in University, I have a car, I have a house, I have a girlfriend, which... Things like that. So, how, how would you say, you being Latino is important? If someone tells you, “what is more important for you?” I say that I can speak Spanish.

In asking the question, Victor also ends up modeling for Fedra how to speak about her identity. That is, he code-switches and as he does this, he highlights that language is an important part of the question he is asking. What is interesting about this quote is that Víctor is unable to find the exact translation for certain terms and ends up making multiple language errors. As an interviewer, Víctor wants to get an answer from the interviewee and the purpose of this interview is to get that information. Code-switching becomes part of Víctor’s strategy to gain access to the interviewee’s experiences. This is consistent with the notion that code-switching is “a form of language practice in which individuals draw on their linguistic resources (or languages) to accomplish conversational purposes” (Heller, 1995, p. 161).

Excerpt 31 is an additional example of an interviewer’s strategy for language negotiation, which is present in Carolina’s utterance “okay bien. ¿cómo es, cómo es ser un estudiante Latino aquí? like, how is it to be Latino, here?” Carolina reiterates the same question in both languages, opening up the possibility that Iván may answer in the language of his choice (Auer, in Milroy and Muysken, 1995). Further in conversation in Excerpt 32, Iván also negotiates languages by saying “todos necesitamos, we all need money for everything in this world and, we just had the bad luck of being born in a poor country, but we’re still pushing.” Reiterating, “todos necesitamos, we all need money”
in both languages he emphasizes the fact that Spanish-speakers are not the only ones who need money to survive. He also reminds the interviewee that either language is possible to use in the interview. The interviewer has a fundamental role in language choice because even though s/he can ask interviewees what language they want to use, they also are flexible and can speak either language in the interview.

A similar example is again from Víctor, as a reference, his first language is English, but he identifies himself as a Latino. Víctor categorizes Spanish as his second language; he has a strong accent and sometimes the verb conjugation is incorrect. Víctor could be categorized as an intermediate speaker of Spanish because he is able to convey the message in his second language. The interview has been carried out mostly in Spanish and the topic of this segment is about teachers who do not motivate students at school. I present three questions in which Víctor uses an adverb to start his turn.

Excerpt 33

so, ese profesor que te caía¹¹, quedaba¹² bien, ¿qué hacía¹³? ¿qué era la cosa diferentes*?
so, ¿qué? ¿cómo qué cosas hacía*?
so, él siempre estaba allí entonces si necesitas más ayuda ¿puedes venir hablar conmigo sola?

¹¹ He corrected himself. It seems he did not know the correct expression in Spanish “caer bien”.

¹² * The star means the word or the sentence has a grammatical problem. Víctor says “quedaba*”, from the verb “quedar”. The correct form is “caía”.

¹³ Víctor says “hacia”, from the verb “hacer”. The correct form is “hacía”.
so, that teacher that you like, what did he do, what was different about him?

so, What? Like, what things did he do?

so, he was always there, therefore if you needed more help [the teacher would ask] could you please come and speak to me alone?

It is important to point out that Víctor insists on code-switching, even as his proficiency limits his ability to use Spanish correctly, making many mistakes. Previous research by Mougeon, Beniak and Valois in Ontario, found (as cited in Romaine, 1989) that borrowing also could represent levels of power within an ethnic group. They found that “low level French users in Ontario shunned the use of so [originally in italics], a widespread loan, presumably in order not to call additional attention to their imperfect mastery of French. It was also avoided by high-level French users, perhaps because they reject the symbolic value associated with the use of this kind of core loan, named, “balanced bilingual” (p. 67). Víctor’s insistence on code-switching despite his lack of proficiency in Spanish highlights the importance of Spanish as part of his identity as Latino, and suggests that it is also part of his attempt to highlight this for the interviewee.

Interviewers have something invested in conversation with high school students. They want to collect as much information as possible from the students’ experiences. Therefore, language selection is important for interviewees and interviewers. In Excerpt 34, Carolina introduces herself as “Carolina Castro, interview number two at (school's name). Today, it is Wednesday, June the 3rd, 9:45 in the morning. Por favor, dime tu nombre, tu grado y tu escuela” [Please tell me your name, your grade and your school]. The language in this interview has not been set yet. Iván code-switches in his
turn saying: “Íván, este décimo. Grade Ten”. As in previous examples, Iván repeats in both languages the same idea, keeping the choice of language for the interview open, but also mirroring the interviewer’s choices.

An example from another interview in which Carolina leaves the language option open to the interviewee is the following, Excerpt 35. Carolina starts by saying “Carolina Castro, I am here at (school’s name). Today is Friday, June the 12th. Afternoon interview. Okay. Entonces vamos empezar por favor dime tu nombre, tu grado, y tu, escuela, your home school.” [Carolina Castro I am here at (school’s name). Today is Friday June the 12th. Afternoon interview. Okay. So, we are going to start, please tell me your name, your grade and your school, your home school]. At the end of the sentence Carolina repeats the last sentence in both languages “your school, your home school.” She mentions this in both languages, reminding the interviewee that s/he could use either language to answer. The fact that this utterance is in the start of the dialogue is of extreme significance because it shows how the language of interaction is open to both participants. In both interviews, Carolina gives the interviewee the choice to speak in the language s/he feels more comfortable with.

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter presents a series of code-switches in which participants talk about their ethic background. The first section focuses on words that participants use to speak about their identities. They want to present a parallel representation of their identities in both languages which suggests a constructed identities. The second section of this chapter focuses on words that were repeated or reiterated in both languages in order to emphasize
or represent participants’ identities. This also brings new characteristics in the English language to identify Spanish speakers, which sometimes Latin@s do not accept.

Code-switches may be present in conversations as an exact quotation from previous conversations. It shows a re-accommodation of how participants are seen by others as well. For the interviewer, code-switching could function as a strategy to connect and capture the interviewee’s attention. Interviewers may not want to completely set the frame of the interview in a single language. Therefore, participants negotiate language of interaction in different instances. Finally, code-switching has conversational purposes for both participants. It can serve as a negotiation strategy, a rejection, a re-accommodation or a construction of a multiple identities. Regardless of the exact function, it is important to understand that it is a strategy commonly used by bilinguals during their conversations. Therefore, when teaching any language as a second language, it is important to bear in mind that code-switching could be used as a strategy to facilitate language learning.
Chapter Seven: Conclusions

This chapter presents the conclusions derived from the data discussed in chapters four, five, and six. It focuses on what code-switching reveals about the ways Proyecto Latin@ participants construct their identities in relationship to language. My examination of code-switching in these interviews confirms the argument made by Bailey (2002) and Heller (2007) that language as a social practice is directly related to personal identity; I have noticed this in the following aspects of identification: identity as an immigrant, student, Latin@, identity as Spanish speaker and finally an identity as an English speaker.

I began the discussion by arguing that some Proyecto Latin@ interviewees are immigrant students who display a process of constructing a school-related identity particular to the English speaking context of Toronto. Then, I studied the code-switches that were related to family, peers and immigration experiences which also shape participants’ identity construction. Finally, I presented the participants’ code-switches employed when they were asked about their Latinoness and ethnicity.

This research was guided by two related key questions: (1) How do bilingual Latin@s high school students and interviewers use code-switching as an expression of their identities, in interviews discussing high school students’ experiences as Latin@s in schools? (2) What does code-switching reveal about the relationship between different categories of identification?

Participants use code-switching as part of the process in constructing various identities such as immigrants, Latin@s, students, and bilinguals. This code-switching construction can be seen as a result and process that Spanish-English bilinguals employ to denote that they are different from other groups of monolingual speakers. The samples
drawn from this research offered a variety of methods used by bilinguals to present their realities when they interact, and it was evident that they alternated languages more often with certain topics than others. Topics such as family, school, ethnicity, and friends were some of the themes in which code-switching stood out and that clearly showed the connection between code-switching and their identities.

Previous studies by Sankoff, Poplack and Woolford (as cited in Becker, 1997) arrived at the conclusion that code-switching “rather than being a result of imperfect competence in either of the two monolingual language systems, represented an integrated knowledge of the rules of both languages, including their similarities and differences” (p. 5). Both fluent and non fluent bilinguals would code-switch in different instances during conversation. As stated by Sankoff and Poplack (as cited in Becker, 1997) people code-switch based on their levels of proficiency, “non fluent bilinguals are less code switchers” (p. 5), because they still do not have a full command of the second language. In the Proyecto Latin@ interviews, this is confirmed with both groups: the Latin@ and Canadian-Latin@ participants.

Code-switching in the data gathered from Proyecto Latin@ research acts as an expression of identity. It reveals that participants use code-switching as they construct identities with English- and/or Spanish-speaking communities or contextual circumstances. Using code-switching in conversation is part of the process of integration into a new society and developing a newly constructed identity in relationship to a new social and cultural context in which language is an important signifier.

With regard to the relationship between code-switching and other categories of identification, participants, such as Víctor and Iván, choose to speak about themselves in
their second language instead of their first language. In fact, they speak about their personal identities in either language, even though the literature suggests that they would be more likely to choose their mother tongues to do so. Bilinguals, in comparison to monolinguals, can construct and enact multiple versions of themselves in their second language. This suggests that bilinguals have developed an additional way of identifying themselves.

Overall, the examples of code-switching discussed throughout this thesis illustrate the processes through which Proyecto Latin@ participants construct bilingual identities. In conversation, they are able to move from one language to the other because they have expanded their identity boundaries and identify themselves as part of both language communities (Spanish and English), or because they have different identities that are associated with different languages. This categorization extends their reality from being primarily identified as Latin@ or Canadian-Latin@ born, to a more complex identity construction that is determined by factors such as their demographic reality or their family’s cultural practices at home. An immigrant’s identity construction is also available for these participants when they enter the Canadian schooling system. They find themselves being called Latin@s, which is a new denomination of their ethnic background that they did not know before. Then, they discover that this word brings stereotypes such as Latinos are lazy, or usually work as gardeners and cleaners. Therefore, these participants redefine their existing identities and construct new ones, which become explicit when they code-switch.
7.1 Code-switching and identity

Bilingual conversations can be understood in different ways. The samples in the three previous chapters reveal how bilinguals consciously or unconsciously code-switch when talking about their experiences as Latin@s in schools. When analyzing Carolina Castro’s elicitations, one can observe how she, as an advanced bilingual speaker, code-switches in the process to establish personal connections with the interviewees. The same is true for Víctor Vela, who learnt Spanish as a teenager. He code-switches when speaking about identity, particularly when talking about being Latino, as illustrated in various samples of his conversation. Overall, interviewers code-switch in the process of collecting as much information as possible from interviewees. This confirms Myers-Scotton’s (2006) Markedness Model, which suggests that “speakers make choices with a sense about which choices will bring them the best outcome” (p. 161). Interviewers’ use code-switching in the process of getting better results with their data collection. In addition, the interviewers from Proyecto Latin@ are encouraged by the research theme which entice them to create a close relationship with the interviewees. This empathy and connection as members of the Latin@ community becomes visible when they code-switch. Therefore, both participants reveal a part of the process when constructing their identities through code-switch. In the interviews, topics such as school, family, friends, and ethnicity lead to the most code-switching. As they consider themselves part of one group, their code-switching becomes more explicit, perhaps to demonstrate their closeness with that group of people.

The dialogues between Carolina Castro, Aurelio Arango, and Iván Iglesias are very interesting because they demonstrate that code-switching is part of the process of
constructing various identities that are rooted in the ability to code-switch. In other words, the claim that identity is bound to a specific language is challenged by their ability to code-switch with such ease. This suggests that their language proficiency and multiple identities are also connected to multiple ways of using language, including multiple ways of code-switching.

7.2 Code-switching and its relation with other types of identification

Researchers on code-switching such as Heller suggest (as cited in Auer, 2007) that when speakers decide to code-switch several times in one turn or in the conversation, it may be a strategy to construct ambiguity or, as Scotton mentions (as cited in Auer, 2007) it is their strategy to be recognized as having more than one social identity. Participants’ code-switching during interviews was also related to two other aspects of the conversation: the topic of the question they were asked and their attachment to the group or people they were talking about. This is supported by Fishman (1965) when he highlights the importance of the analysis of what is said, how it is said, and when it is said. Participants’ code-switching shows a result and a process of integration into Canadian culture. Code-switching, on one hand, is a process of integration to the new culture for immigrants, as it is the case for Mónica, Iván, Roberto, Ana, José and Fedra. On the other hand, code-switching for Aurelio, Felipe, Ernesto, Carolina and Víctor is a result of cultural mix. This cultural mix is presented by these participants because their families immigrated to Canada when they were either little or they were born in Canada. This suggests that they were raised with the idea that they are different from the local English community. Regardless of where they were born, participants code-switch to
exhibit their belonging to both community groups, which means that the context plays an important role when defining somebody’s identity.

Context is a key part of the process of code-switching among bilinguals and this has implications on their everyday usage of first language (L1) or second language (L2). Zentella (2008) mentions that “those who become fluent in the dominant language feel more at ease and intimate in it and communicate with difficulty in their weakened heritage language, even distancing themselves from it” (p. 5). This is what happened to Felipe who has low proficiency in Spanish. If bilinguals use their L2 often, they become more familiar and comfortable with the surroundings of the L2 community and grammatical structures of that specific language. This can be observed in Iván’s case. He can alternate from one language to the other without much effort. In addition, advanced bilinguals are able to express themselves in both languages and sometimes they are able to keep both language structures intact. This is what happens in the case of reiterations or repetitions in a single turn.

In the conversations from Proyecto Latin@ I was not expecting to find many examples of code-switching in which participants repeat the same idea in both languages. The reasons for a speaker to make such translations during his turn carry an important significance for the turn itself. Previous studies by Auer (as cited in Milroy & Muysken, 1995) have indicated that reiterations are elicited because the speaker wants to accommodate the “recipient’s language of preference” (p. 121). However, I can argue that reiterations also express a representation of the speaker’s multiple identities because they can go from one language to the other. This could suggest that, participants kept language choice open when code-switching in different instances of the conversation.
Continuing with Auer’s work (as cited in Milroy & Muysken, 1995) “keeping language choice open also provides information about the speaker and his or her conceptualization of the situation” (p. 126). Therefore, based on the excerpts from Carolina, Aurelio, Ernesto and Iván, one can affirm that they are conscious of their bilingualism and give their interlocutors a choice between Spanish and English.

In conclusion, this thesis has corroborated links between language use, in particular code-switching and identity. Code-switching is a representation of individual identity construction, which for some speakers, it is already constructed, but for others it is in the process of construction.

7.3 Study Limitations

My analysis is limited to the data collected for Proyecto Latin@ research. There are at least three major limitations to this study. First, an in-depth analysis was not possible because the data was limited to the recordings and the forms filled in by the participants of Proyecto Latin@ research. I did not have the opportunity to go back to the students and ask for additional information, such as why they code-switched at a specific moment and not another.

The second difficulty I encountered was that the dialogues analyzed were only from eight conversations. Out of these, the number of participants who were part of these interviews was 11, including interviewers and interviewees. Consequently, the number of participants is limited to the conversations selected for this thesis. There were only four females and of these, only one was an interviewer. There were seven males, two interviewers and five interviewees. The information about their background was limited and a follow-up was not possible. If a similar study is to be conducted in the future, it
would be useful to have more participants from different social backgrounds. Also the amount of interviewers was limited to three; it would also be interesting to have a greater variety of language skills, ranging from beginner Spanish or English language speakers to advanced ones. Given the small sample, the analysis must be understood within the constraints of this research. A larger sample might allow for some statistical analysis, and would serve to corroborate some of the interpretive analysis developed here.

Finally, participants in this study did not undergo an in-depth analysis of their background, but some information was considered, such as age, gender, and first language. More in-depth information could have helped to frame the excerpts more accurately. Aspects such as age and gender were taken into account as background information, an in depth analysis of these variables was not be performed due to the time constraints, however. Participants’ fluency in either language was also not measured, so the comments were based on my subjective perception of participants’ language fluency presented in the recordings.

7.4 Implication of findings

The Proyecto Latin@ research sought to explore Latin@ students’ experiences in public schools in the city of Toronto. When analyzing that data, I noticed interviewers and interviewees’ language use and code-switching as a part of students’ identities construction. This opportunity brought an enormous advantage for social and sociolinguistic analysis of the data. The interviewers and interviewees’ different cultural backgrounds enriched this analysis because it shows what is linguistically, psychologically, and socially possible with the global mobilization of people and parents from different backgrounds.
The focus of this research lies with Spanish-English bilinguals and their use of both languages in conversation. However, if participants from other language backgrounds took part in a similar research, the results could be compared to the ones presented here. By comparing these studies, generalization may be achievable in terms of the relation between language and identity. Peñalosa (1980) suggested, “the way people live affects the way they speak, and vice versa” (p. 4). Therefore, learning a new language and moving to the country where they can speak it may change their own perception of identity. This is true for both interviewers and interviewees of Proyecto Latin@ research. This is why it is important to continue this research, to understand the purpose of language and its influence in shaping people’s identities.

I began this thesis discussing the fact that code-switching was not encouraged in second language classrooms because instructors generally believe that it would interfere with learners’ second language acquisition. Instead, second language teachers commonly believe that teaching the target language through grammar and the communicative approach increases language competency. In addition, students are sufficiently prepared to interact in non-academic contexts. However, some studies have highlighted the importance of the first language when learning a second language. Despite the huge amount of research on code-switching, it is not common for teachers to allow the usage of the first language in the classroom. Meanwhile, the reality is that non-native speakers (and now bilinguals) interact with other bilinguals and code-switch outside of classrooms. Therefore, supporting the rule of “English only” creates a conflict when learning a second language.
I would suggest that if students are allowed to use code-switching in dialogues, it could foster faster development of students’ second language skills. Students would be able to use certain expressions from their mother tongues while teachers and peers would also recognize their backgrounds. Therefore, if students feel respected in the bilingual classroom, they would possibly be more motivated to learn a second language and share their first with their classmates. This may also increase their fluency and in turn their confidence when speaking in their second language.

Equally, language learning is a process that contains many stages and code-switching could be one of them. In addition, language practice outside classrooms is also a representation of identity, which participants are proud to reveal when they interact with others. As Alvarez-Cáccamo proposes (as cited in Auer, 1998), language should not be analyzed only by its grammar, but as it occurs in practice. This is the case of the interviews of Proyecto Latin@ research in which participants “in order to enter into social relationships, (...) have to acknowledge and show awareness of the face, the public self-image, the sense of self of the people (...) [they] address” (Cutting, 2008, quoting Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 43).

7.5 Final Remarks

During the last forty years, numerous studies on code-switching have taken place in different languages. Commonalities in language use have been found when people code-switch as Poplack (1979-1980) concluded. Knowing that, the purpose for this paper was either to confirm these commonalities or find alternative patterns that occur among Spanish and English conversations. By learning the patterns of the sociolinguistic communication, it would be easier to understand why, how, and when code-switching
takes place and its relation with participants’ identities. The data collected by Proyecto Latin@ research provided the opportunity to analyze bilingual language used in the context of a research interview interaction, in which none of the participants knew their language use would be analyzed. This set up was very important in trying to identify language utilization and identity connections between Spanish and English communities. This investigation provides interesting results for researchers and second language teachers because it focuses on linguistic aspects and it is related to identity. Overall, these interactions between bilinguals presented manifestations of a proper understanding of Canadian society.

Participants in these interviews arguably have at least two distinct backgrounds. The first group was made up of participants who were born in Canada who felt more comfortable speaking in English than in Spanish, but identified themselves as Latin@ because of their family’s backgrounds. This is the case of Felipe Fernandez, Ernesto Franco and Carolina Castro. The second group of participants have been living in Canada for more than two years and identified themselves as being from Latin America. In these interviews, those in the latter group were in the process of transforming their identities and were adjusting to a new society. One clear difference between these two groups is that the Canadian-born Latin@ seem to have multiple identities whereas the “other country”-born Latin@ show how this process is still in progress. Bilingual code-switching shows how Proyecto Latin@ participants displayed both Anglo and Spanish identities when they code-switched. It is important to continue research in this area. I strongly believe that research in all areas of language can further improve our understanding of connections between identity and language.
References


Appendix A - Interview Protocol (English version)

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to speak with me. I appreciate your time. This interview will take about 30 minutes, but you may stop the interview at any point. The purpose of this conversation is to talk about your experiences as a Latino/a student at (school name). This interview is part of a study on Latino/a student engagement and achievement in Toronto’s schools. I’d like to ask you a few questions about your experiences here. Is that okay?

I’d like to remind you that this conversation will be audio-recorded. This will help me to give you my full attention now and return to our conversation later. The interview is confidential, and only the research team and I will have access to this recording, which we will transcribe. If you want me to stop at any time, just let me know. Is this okay with you?

Do you have any questions before we get started?

Please state your name, and your grade.

Perspectives on School Leaving

Have you ever considered dropping out of school? Why or why not?

Prompts:

Can you think of a situation in which you thought of leaving school?
Do you have friends or family that dropped out of school?
What do you think of their decision to drop out of school?
What would have made a difference in your friend or family member’s decision to drop out of school?

Student Experiences and Disengagement

What is it like to be a Latino/a student here?

Prompts:

How would you describe the teachers here?
Are there any teachers that make you or have made you feel like dropping out of school?
If yes, what happened to make you feel that way?
Are there any teachers who inspire you to work harder and do better in school?
If yes, how so?
What, if any, are the most challenging aspects of being a Latino/a student here?
What advice would you give your teachers on supporting Latino/a students at school?
What school supports are in place for Latino/a students at school?
What school supports are missing but would like to see in place to help Latino/a students at school?

**Latino/a Identity**

How would you describe yourself in terms of your cultural or ethnic background?

**Prompts:**

What do those labels mean to you?
How would you say that being ______ shapes your experiences at school?
Appendix B- Entrevista (Spanish version)

Introducción

Gracias por venir a hablar conmigo. Esta entrevista durará unos treinta minutos, pero puedes pararla en cualquier punto. Estamos aquí para que hables de tus experiencias como un/a estudiante latino/a en ____ (nombre de la escuela). Esta entrevista es parte de un estudio sobre las motivaciones y los logros de los estudiantes latinos en las escuelas de Toronto. Te quiero hacer unas preguntas sobre tus experiencias aquí en esta escuela.
¿Está bien?

También quisiera recordarte que esta conversación será grabada. Así podré darte mi atención completa ahora y regresar a nuestra conversación después. Esta entrevista es confidencial - solamente yo y mis socios de esta investigación tendremos acceso a nuestra conversación, que vamos a transcribir. Si quieres que paremos en cualquier momento, házmelo saber. ¿Está bien?

¿Tienes alguna pregunta antes de empezar?

Por favor di tu nombre, tu grado, y el nombre de tu escuela.

Perspectivas en la deserción escolar

¿Has pensado en dejar tus estudios en algún momento? ¿Por qué o por qué no?

Guías:

¿Puedes describir una situación en que pensaste en dejar tus estudios?

¿Tienes familiares o amigos que dejaron sus estudios?

¿Qué piensas de la decisión de tu ______________ de dejar sus estudios?

¿Qué hubiera cambiado la decisión de tu _________ de dejar sus estudios?

Experiencias y motivaciones estudiantiles

¿Cómo es ser un/a estudiante latino/a aquí?

Guías:

¿Cómo describirías los maestros aquí?

¿Hay algún maestro o maestra que te hace o que te ha hecho pensar en dejar tus estudios?
Si es así, ¿qué sucedió para hacerte pensar en dejar tus estudios?

¿Hay algún maestro o maestra que te inspire a trabajar duro en la escuela?

¿Cómo te inspira este/esta maestro/a?

¿Cuáles son los aspectos más difíciles o complicados de ser un/a estudiante latino/a aquí?

¿Qué consejos darías a tus maestros con respeto al apoyo escolar para los estudiantes latinos?

¿Cuáles apoyos ya existen aquí para los estudiantes latinos?

¿Cuáles son los apoyos para los estudiantes latinos que no existen aquí pero que quisieras que hayan aquí?

**Identidad latino/a**

¿Cómo te describes en términos de tus orígenes étnicas o culturales?

**Guías:**

¿Qué significan esos nombres?

¿Cómo piensas que tu identidad como ___ influye tus experiencias como estudiante?
Appendix C - Personal information (English version)

Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions. The responses you provide are for our research purposes only and will not be shared with anyone. This questionnaire is voluntary and you are not required to answer any of the questions below in order to continue participating in the project. All of your answers are confidential.

Thank you!!

Name: ____________________________________ Postal Code: ________

ABOUT YOU

1. What school do you go to? _________________________________________________
2. What grade are you in? _________________________________________________
3. When were you born? ___________________________________________________
4. Where were you born? ___________ Month ___ Day ___ Year
5. If you were not born in Toronto, when did you come to Toronto? ____________
6. Do you identify yourself as Canadian? (Circle one)  Yes  No  Depends
7. What adjectives would you use to describe yourself and your ethnic or cultural background? ____________________________________________________________
8. What other adjectives would you use to describe/identify yourself? These adjectives can describe anything about yourself, such as country of origin, sexual orientation, or activities you are involved in. ________________________________________________
9. Has someone said to you or to your parent(s) that you have a learning disability? If so, how would you describe this? Do you need any special accommodations for this challenge? ____________________________________________________________

ABOUT YOUR PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S)

10. Where are your parents from? If you know the cities too, please include them.
11. If your parents were not born in Canada, where were they born?

12. When did they come to Canada?

13. Who are the adults that you live with most of the time?

14. What is the highest level of education that your parent(s)/caregiver(s) have completed?

Parent1 (Circle: Mother or Father):  
Elementary  High School  College  University  Don’t know  
In what country did she receive her highest level of education? ____________

Parent2 (Circle: Mother or Father):  
Elementary  High School  College  University  Don’t know  
In what country did he receive his highest level of education? ____________

Other caregiver:  
Elementary  High School  College  University  Don’t know  
In what country did he/she receive her highest level of education? ____________

15. What is the employment status of your parents/caregivers?

Parent1 (Circle: Mother or Father):  
Works full-time  Part-time  Stay at home parent  Does not work right now  Retired  Don’t know

Parent2 (Circle: Mother or Father):  
Works full-time  Part-time  Stay at home parent  Does not work right now  Retired  Don’t know

Other caregiver:  
Works full-time  Part-time  Stay at home parent  Does not work right now  Retired  Don’t know

16. What do your parents/caregiver(s) do for a living? Please write what they do and not where they work.

Parent1 (Circle: Mother or Father) ________________________________
Parent2 (Circle: Mother or Father) ________________________________
Other caregiver: ________________________________

**LANGUAGE(S) SPOKEN**

17. What is(are) the first language(s) you learned to speak at home?

________________________________________________

18. What language(s) do you use the most at home?

________________________________________________

19. What language(s) do your parents/caregivers use the most at home? If more than one, please specify

Parent1 (Circle: Mother or Father) ________________________________
Parent2 (Circle: Mother or Father) ________________________________
Other Caregiver: ________________________________
Appendix D - Información personal (Spanish version)

Por favor tómate unos minutos para responder a las siguientes preguntas. Tus respuestas informarán nuestra investigación, **y no serán compartidas con nadie**. Este cuestionario es totalmente voluntario. No estás obligado/a a responder a las siguientes preguntas para participar en este proyecto. Todas tus respuestas son confidenciales.

¡Muchas gracias!

Nombre y Apellido: ___________________________ Código Postal: ________

**SOBRE TI**

1. ¿A cuál escuela vas? __________________________________________

2. ¿En qué grado estás? _________________________________________

3. ¿Cuándo naciste? ____________________________________________

4. ¿Dónde naciste? ________________ mes __________ día ________ año

5. Si no naciste en Toronto, ¿cuándo llegaste a Toronto?______________

6. ¿Te identificas como canadiense? (circula una contestación) s í  no depende

7. ¿Qué adjetivos usarías para describirte y tu origen étnico o cultural? __________

8. ¿Cuáles otros adjetivos usarías para describirte o identificarte? Estos adjetivos podrían describir cualquier aspecto, por ejemplo, tu nacionalidad, tu orientación/identidad sexual, o las actividades en que estás involucrado/a. _________________________________

9. ¿Hay alguien que te ha dicho o que ha dicho a tus padres que tienes una discapacidad de aprendizaje? Si es así, ¿cómo describirías esta situación? ¿Necesitas alguna modificación para este reto? _________________________________

**SOBRE TUS PADRES/CUSTODIOS**

10. ¿De dónde son tus padres? Si sabes las ciudades también, por favor escribe los abajo. __________________________________________
11. Si tus padres no nacieron en Canadá, ¿dónde nacieron?

__________________________________________________________________________

12. ¿Cuándo llegaron a Canadá?

__________________________________________________________________________

13. ¿Quiénes son los adultos con que vives la mayoría del tiempo?

__________________________________________________________________________

14. ¿Cuál es el nivel de educación más alto que han terminado tus padres/guardianes?

Circula tus respuestas.

Madre: primaria secundaria instituto universidad no sé

¿En qué país terminó ella su nivel de educación más alto? ______________

Padre: primaria secundaria instituto universidad no sé

¿En qué país terminó él su nivel de educación más alto? ______________

Custodio/a: primaria secundaria instituto universidad no sé

¿En qué país terminó él/ella su nivel de educación más alto? ______________

15. ¿Cuál es la situación laboral de tus padres/custodios?

Madre:

Trabaja a tiempo completo Trabaja a tiempo parcial No trabaja ahora

ama de casa jubilada no sé

Padre:

Trabaja a tiempo completo Trabaja a tiempo parcial No trabaja ahora

amo de casa jubilado no sé

Custodio/a:

Trabaja a tiempo completo Trabaja a tiempo parcial No trabaja ahora

ama/o de casa jubilada/o no sé

16. ¿En qué trabajan tus padres/custodios? Por favor escribe el trabajo que hacen y no el lugar en que trabajan.

Madre: ___________________________

Padre: ___________________________

Custodio/a: ___________________________
17. ¿Cuál es el primer idioma/cuáles son los primeros idiomas que aprendiste a hablar en casa? ______________________________________________________________

18. ¿Cuál es el idioma/cuáles son los idiomas que más usas en casa? __________

19. ¿Cuál es el idioma/cuáles son los idiomas que usan más tus padres/custodios en casa? Si usan más de uno, escríbelos.

   Madre: __________________________________________________________

   Padre: __________________________________________________________

   Custodio/a: ____________________________________________________
Appendix E - Project Description (English version)

We are researchers from the Centre for Urban Schooling at OISE/University of Toronto and we are interested in what makes Spanish-speaking students of Latin American heritage do well in school and what does not. We are working with the TDSB Office of Student and Community Equity. The information learned in this study will be used to develop strategies for increasing achievement levels of Latin@ students in TDSB schools.

The Latin@s in Schools Project (LISP) is interested in how do Latin@ students explain the processes and factors for staying in and leaving school? how do Latin@ students define student engagement? And what can schools do to engage Latin@ students in their education?

We are interested in these questions because a recently released TDSB research report reveals that the achievement levels of students who come from Spanish-speaking homes are consistently low. We will meet with and talk to Latin@ students in order to understand the processes that shape their engagement in TDSB schools. We hope that this project will help the TDSB develop strategies for increasing academic achievement and decreasing the number of students who leave school.
Appendix F - Descripción del Proyecto (Spanish version)

Somos investigadores del Centro de la Escolaridad Urbana de OISE/Universidad de Toronto y estamos interesados en los factores que influyen el éxito y los retos escolares de los/las estudiantes hispanohablantes. Nuestra investigación es una colaboración con la Oficina de Equidad de Estudiantes y Comunidad del TDSB. Utilizaremos los resultados de este estudio para crear y desarrollar estrategias para aumentar el éxito escolar de los estudiantes latinos en las escuelas públicas de Toronto.

Proyecto Latin@ es un estudio sobre los pensamientos de los/las estudiantes latinos/as con respecto a sus experiencias en las escuelas de Toronto y las maneras en que estas experiencias influyen su propio desempeño escolar. Estamos interesados en cómo los estudiantes describen los factores que influyen sus experiencias y sus decisiones de abandonar o seguir en sus estudios. Basado en sus experiencias, quisiéramos desarrollar ideas y estrategias para promover su desempeño y sus logros académicos.

Estas preguntas nos interesan porque una publicación reciente del sistema educativo público de Toronto revela que muchos estudiantes de habla hispana alcanzan bajos niveles de éxito escolar. Nuestro grupo de investigación entrevistará a estudiantes latinos para entender los procesos que forman la motivación educativa en las escuelas públicas de la ciudad de Toronto. Esperamos que los resultados de este proyecto lleguen a ayudar al TDSB a crear y desarrollar estrategias para incrementar el éxito académico y disminuir el número de estudiantes latinos que abandonan sus estudios.