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Title

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Publication Date

2015

Peer reviewed

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Bailey, Alison, and Marjorie Faulstich Orellana. (2015). Adolescent development and everyday language practices: Implications for the academic literacy of learners in multilingual environments. In T. Boals, E. Sato & D. Molle (Eds.). *Sociocultural Contexts of Academic Literacy Development for Adolescent English Language Learners.* Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.

Abstract

This paper provides an overview of (1) adolescents' linguistic, cognitive and psychosocial developmental processes, and (2) the everyday language practices of adolescents living in multilingual contexts. We show how an understanding of the intersection between development and these practices can reveal ways of cultivating academic literacy in culturally and developmentally appropriate ways. We further suggest the importance of moving away from the "monolingual norm" in order to build on the unique skills and experiences of multilingual adolescents who work with different languages and dialects in their everyday lives.

In *Learning a New Land: Immigrant Students in American Society* authors Marcelo and Carola Suárez-Orozco and Irina Todorova (2008) describe their interdisciplinary, longitudinal study with 400 adolescent immigrant students who have lived in the United States for an average of seven years. The authors report that just seven percent of the cohort score at or above the average of their native English-speaking peers for English Proficiency on the Bilingual Verbal Abilities Test (BVAT, Muñoz-Sandoval, Cummins, Alvarado, & Ruef, 1998).[1] Belying a number of naïve beliefs about multilingual learners, the study found that it did not matter what first language the adolescents spoke and what country of origin the students and their families had hailed from, the same levels of English language proficiency performance were reported for adolescents whether they were from Central America, China, Dominican Republic, Haiti or Mexico.

The multilingual students in the study put a human (and specifically adolescent) face on the more typical large-scale reports of student performance offered by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Such reports have compared students who are acquiring English language abilities against their proficient English-speaking peers and have interpreted differences as gaps in the academic achievement of those who are acquiring both a new language and new academic content knowledge. For example, Wilde's analyses of the 2008 NAEP reading scores show students who are categorized as English language learners (ELL students) scoring 30-46 points lower than English proficient students with the gap widening from 4th to 8th grade and again slightly from 8th to 11th grade (NAEP, 2010).

These figures are likely distorted by the fact that students who have successfully acquired English are reclassified and removed from the reported performance of the ELL student group (Saunders & Marcelletti, 2013). Moreover, these figures address the academic

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[1] The average standard score for the cohort was just 75 points, with 76% of the adolescents in the study scoring one standard deviation or more below the normed average score for the assessment (i.e., 15 standard score points or more below the mean of 100). The BVAT assesses bilingual abilities in English and one of 17 other languages, providing a score of English Language Proficiency and, acknowledging that bilinguals may have language abilities distributed across two languages, also a Bilingual Verbal Ability score. It is designed for use with students from 5 years through to adulthood.

achievement gap of students acquiring English from a monolingual perspective, ignoring the achievements these students may have in terms of competencies in additional languages and in content knowledge that can be expressed through more than one language. An alternative is needed to the monolingual assumptions of student academic achievement and development more broadly, both in order to better evaluate adolescents' language development, *and* to better support it, in culturally and developmentally appropriate ways. In this paper we offer new ways to address student achievement and development that is not couched in comparisons with monolingual development, but rather highlights the multicompetencies of developing multilingual adolescents, and builds on their everyday multilingual practices.

We have chosen to refer to the students we write about as *multilingual* learners rather than as English language learners (ELL students) or even bilingual learners. Our use of multilingual is intended to emphasize the linguistic experiences of many students growing up in the globalized world, not just the specific experiences of students who are labeled "ELL" in school. Indeed, it is normative in many urban communities today for students to have varying degrees of competency in several languages, combinations of languages, and/or varieties of language, and to draw from their multilingual repertoires in the course of their daily lives. For example, one person might speak a first language (L1) indigenous to the American continent, a regional/social dialect of an L1, the standard form of an L1, a regional/social dialect of English as a second language (L2), and/or a standard variety of English as L2).

As Blommeart (2010) notes, competencies may also vary across the lifespan, with adolescents showing skill in particular kinds of language practices and not others, as well as across domains. Some adolescents may understand a great deal of their home language, but not feel comfortable speaking it; they may understand and read other languages in their environment, but not have experience in writing. Included in this multilingual group are students who are receiving educational services to help learn English, students who are emergent bilinguals as a result of formal dual-language programming or informal support of two or more

languages at home and in the community, and those who are speakers of non-standard varieties of English. Indeed, rather than attempting to label the *adolescents* themselves (as ELL, emergent bilinguals, or bi-dialectical, etc.), we might focus on the commonalties that these adolescents have: they are living in communities where flexibility and diversity in language practices is the norm. Thus they are exposed to multiple and varied uses of language, and this should be taken into account when measuring their language development (i.e. not just measuring it in English) as well as in designing ways to support their further growth.

The *Learning a New Land* study follows adolescent multilingual students from their initial optimism through the frustrations and disappointments many of them experienced as they transitioned to young adulthood. In subsequent publications from the study, we learn that it is the informal language of the students and their opportunities to converse in English with their peers and others in non-academic contexts that best predicts their English language proficiency outcomes in school (Carhill, Suárez-Orozco, & Páez, 2008). The language opportunities that these adolescents received or made for themselves during recess and hallway interactions at school and in neighborhood contexts were critical. There is increasing evidence that everyday informal but nevertheless complex and extensive language experiences (e.g., language brokering) do have a positive impact on the academic performances of multilingual adolescents (e.g., Dorner, Orellana & Li-Grining, 2007). Yet, much like other adolescent behaviors that may not be commonly known or recognized as achievements by others (Dornbusch, Herman & Morely, 1996), translanguaging practices such as codeswitching and language brokering are largely hidden from the view of educators and others who shape students' schooling experiences.[2]

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[2] The notion of translanguaging, a relatively recent term (see Garcia, 2009), helps situate codeswitching and language brokering within a broader set of intentional linguistic practices. Translanguaging emphasizes that "languages are part of a repertoire that is accessed for their communicative purposes; languages are not discrete and separated, but form an integrated system for them; multilingual competence emerges out of local practices where multiple languages are negotiated for communication;

Our main goal is to bring these language practices into view and to connect these with important developmental milestones in other areas of multilingual adolescents' lives, not just the linguistic but the cognitive and psychosocial changes that they are concurrently undergoing. Examining the characteristics of adolescent development that interact with students' everyday language practices alongside the more commonly held expectations inherent in academic content standards and curricula for literacy may reveal news ways for researchers and educators to support literacy with multilingual adolescents, and to view these adolescents' linguistic competencies in more hopeful and pedagogically strategic ways.

We begin with a definition of academic literacy that highlights the ties between oral language and literacy that are critical for understanding how everyday language practices can serve as a resource for academic literacy. Next, we outline key developments during adolescence in the areas of language, cognition, and psychosocial development that may ultimately make adolescent literacy different from literacy engagement at younger ages. We situate the multilingual adolescent within this predominantly monolingual description of development to highlight what may be similar or different in multilingual contexts. This is followed by a review of codeswitching and language brokering as two key translanguaging practices likely to be experienced by multilingual learners, and a brief description their use and development. We then relate these language practices to the formal expectations articulated in new academic content standards for language use in school contexts where academic literacies are typically taught and tested (Smith & Moore, 2012). Based on these reviews, we suggest how adolescent literacy might be cultivated in both culturally and developmentally appropriate ways.

More specifically, we will argue that the everyday multilingual language practices of adolescents often, but not exclusively, predominant in the oral domain may hone metalinguistic, cognitive and psychosocial development, and that these developments may in turn help to

competence doesn't consist of separate competencies for each language, but a multicompetence that functions symbiotically for the different languages in one's repertoire." (Canagarajah, 2011, p.1).

foster students' comprehension of school-related text and other artifacts (Bailey, 2012). Ethnographic and, to a lesser degree, correlational studies of multilingual students' engagement in translanguaging practices reveal these experiences to be instrumental in cultivating sophisticated kinds of language skills. These practices require further study to understand their value for building the kinds of academic/disciplinary literacy that is required in school, particularly with regard to their impact on student knowledge-building.

Academic Literacy

At its broadest, academic literacy is making meaning from interactions with others and with the information and ideas of others, both orally and visually in the ephemeral "here and now," and when removed in time and space from others by virtue of interacting through literate forms of language that use more durative devices such as symbols and images captured in texts. This includes digital texts that can be accessed in a myriad of ways (i.e., via computer, phone, or tablet) (Frey, Fisher & Gonzalez, 2010). More narrowly defined perhaps than academic literacy is disciplinary literacy (e.g., the language of science). It is argued that disciplinary literacy requires students to engage in social, semiotic and cognitive practices (Fang, 2012). This is consistent with sociocultural perspectives of literacy that recognize "that the learning and use of symbols is mediated by and constituted in social systems and cultural practices" (Moje, Overby, Tysvaer & Morris, 2012, p. 109). Moreover, Moje et al. argue that power, identity and agency shapes whose social systems and cultural practices get to be valued. Thus multilingual adolescent students contend with multiple academic literacies and all their facets, but within this broad domain, we are particularly interested in relationships between oral language practices and literate forms of language.

Defining academic language and literacy constructs has been controversial in part because Cummins'(1981) seminal work on the distinction between basic interpersonal communication skills (BICs) and cognitive-academic language proficiency (CALP) was interpreted to mean that social or conversational uses of language were less complex than

academic language. The distinction also led to the assumption that *all* everyday language practices are "merely" social; there was little recognition that everyday language practices could be cognitively as well as social demanding. This has now been critiqued as too simplistic a dichotomy; there is evidence that some conversational features of language are acquired late in language development and some academic languages features are acquired early on, debunking the "simple" versus "complex" contrast (Scarcella, 2003; but see Cummins, 2008 for a rejoinder); and moreover, everyday interpersonal and intrapersonal uses of language (e.g., deceiving, expressing love, self-expression and introspection) can be considered at least as complex as academic uses (Bailey, 2007; Bailey, 2013). Some everyday language practices, like language brokering, involve interactions with highly specialized language forms and genres; arguably a jury summons, bank statement, or credit card application may involve more "complex" language than many school tasks (Orellana, 2009; Orellana et al., 2012).

In addition, the controversy of defining academic language and literacy constructs remains for the very reasons that led to the dismissal of everyday oral language practices as relevant for school; the focus has been on written texts almost exclusively and there has been the assumption that literacy is distinct from orality. We want to show how informal language practices are consonant with many of the things that schools say they want to develop in the fostering of academic literacy. This work will contribute to efforts to consider more seriously the relationship between literacy and orality, and between everyday and academic literacies; we will also challenge the idea of neat separation of language by contexts, genres, and forms, because in everyday *and* academic practice, there is much more blurring than is generally recognized (Orellana et al., 2012). For example, correlational studies have found that certain features of oral language such as *decontextualized* referents for objects not found in the "here and now" (e.g., necessity for a definite determiner and noun *the book* when referring to a book returned to the library instead of the demonstrative pronoun *that* and a pointing gesture to a book still in view on the shelf) surface in literate forms of language (e.g., Snow & Dickinson, 1991). Such

language is likely prerequisite in the acquisition of literacy (cf. the language experience approach to literacy, Dickinson, McCabe, Anastasopoulos, Peisner-Feinberg, & Poe, 2003). At the very least, certain features of oral language (e.g., the control of meaning and form in narrative discourse) have been argued to serve as an early "rehearsal" of literate forms of language but within the oral language domain (Bailey & Moughamian, 2007). Furthermore, adoption by most states of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS, National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010) and the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS, Achieve Inc., 2013) may change how oral language has typically functioned in the classroom with greater emphasis on the oral communication of content area knowledge and the requirement for a greater degree of sophisticated interaction and collaboration between students for content learning in the classroom.

Adolescents engage in a wide range of oral language experiences outside school and multilingual learners in particular have experiences that no monolingual students can emulate because of the very nature of the multilingual learners' on-going option of using two or more languages to express themselves (Cook, 2005). Thus the ties between oral language use and literacy in adolescent multilingual students warrant their own review and further investigation. In the next section, we begin by outlining key developmental changes that students undergo in adolescence, with a particular emphasis on multilingual student development where it may differ from the monolingual findings and assumptions of prior research.

Adolescent Development

Adolescence, roughly the period between 12 and 18 years of age, is a time of physical and psychological development that is characterized by asynchronies in the progression to maturity. While children may grow in physical size and their language(s) increase in sophistication, their emotional understanding may lag their cognitive functioning by many years. In the following sections, we briefly outline some key developments in the linguistic, cognitive

and psychosocial domains, highlighting how this is a period of rapid but frequently asynchronized growth across the domains, with important implications for multilingual adolescent development and educational practices. Figure 1 provides an attempt to summarize different trajectories of development, providing approximate age of onsets and denoting whether or not the extant literature suggests development for multilingual students may be precocious or challenging in specific areas.

[Place Figure 1 here]

Linguistic developments during adolescence

Regardless of an individual's language or languages, during adolescence, there is an increase in knowledge and abilities across a host of linguistic and discourse features and characteristics. Such knowledge includes increases in the pragmatic, syntactic and semantic knowledge and uses of language (Nippold, 1998). In the area of metalinguistic awareness—the reflection on and manipulation of language—knowledge shifts from the phonological manipulations of language during childhood which are associated with learning to read, to the sophisticated manipulations of word-, sentence- and text-level structures (e.g., Ely, 2005). For example, by adolescence individuals are able to deliberately select words for the effects they may have on the listener. For multilingual learners, there may even be a heightened attunement to such metalinguistic awareness due to the need to flexibly control and contrast two linguistic systems (Adesope, Lavin, Thompson, & Ungerleider, 2010); indeed, adolescent language brokers interviewed by Orellana (2009) were very explicit in their discussion of why they chose particular ways of saying things in each language, based on their assumptions about who their audiences were, as well as how they wanted to represent themselves to those audiences.

Adolescence also sees the development of language needed for formal reasoning, and the development of persuasion and negotiation and other language functions of the academic content areas (e.g., Nippold, 1998; Christie, 2012). Moreover, adolescence is a time for growth in understanding and use of abstractions (Christie, 2012) and figurative language (i.e., simile, idioms, and proverbs). According to Tolchinsky (2004) only by adolescence are students found to use metaphor creatively. Metaphor is increasingly demanded in academic writing but is also present in oral language practices, as Lee (2007; 2001) has shown with bidialectical speakers of African American English and the everyday practice of "signifying."

Here the disciplinary natures of oral language and literacy also play important roles. In historical discourse in the English language for example, abstractions are frequently used to refer to complex or lengthy processes or series of events in a compressed fashion. Lexical metaphor is used to give agency to historical entities that otherwise do not have their own volition as with the use of the verb "saw" in the following example: "The First World War saw many young Australian and New Zealand men enlist…." (p.113) written by a 15-year-old student cited in Christie (2012). Linguistic as well as cognitive benefits of bilingualism may in fact enhance the creative language abilities of students; Spanish-English speaking 6th grade students for example, have been found to use qualitatively more complex metaphoric language in their written English on an inquiry science task than their monolingual English-speaking peers (Kessler & Quinn, 1987).

Cognitive developments during adolescence

Basic cognitive skills such as working memory and information-processing become fully mature during adolescence (MacArthur Network: Steinberg et al., 2009). Congruent with the increasing maturity in linguistic capabilities, adolescence is also a period marked by increased abstract thinking. The ability to reflect on abstractions of knowledge and concepts allows adolescents to develop critical thinking skills (Inhelder & Piaget, 1958). Importantly, for the subsequent focus on language practices, growth in cognition during adolescence allows for the

increasing ability to take the perspective of the communicative partner (Hoff, 2009). The

multilingual experiences of adolescents may provide them with metacognitive advantages that

may particularly hone their abilities to interact with others from a wide variety of linguistic and

socio-cultural backgrounds (Brisk & Proctor, 2012), as well as hone other cognitive (e.g.,

problem-solving, sustained cognitive control) abilities not necessarily as advanced in their

monolingual peers (Adesope, et al., 2010; Bialystok, 2007). In a recent study by Guan,

Greenfieldand Orellana (under review) young adult children of immigrants were measured on a

"transcultural perspective-taking" task (assessing their ability to see social scenarios from

different perspectives, as informed by divergent cultural values). Language brokering

experiences predicted higher levels of performance on this task as well as on measures of

empathy.

Psychosocial developments during adolescence

There is enormous social and cultural variation in factors related to the emotional and

psychosocial development of children and adolescents, as well as heterogeneity within cultures

(Chen & Eisenberg, 2012). The cultural practices of North American middle-class families of

European descent are most often reflected in school settings and adolescence in this context is

typically believed to be a time of increasing emotional autonomy from parents or other care-

givers. Adolescents are socialized to become independent individuals, achieving greater self-

reliance and an increasing sense of responsibility for decision-making (Lamborn & Steinberg,

1993). These developments may not be representative of the psychosocial functioning of all

social and cultural groups however. The emphasis on independence rather than

interdependence may not be representative of the social orientations of working class North

American communities for example (Stephens, Fryberg, & Markus, 2012), nor may this

emphasis capture the complexities of psychosocial development suggested by cross-cultural

studies. Keller (2012) for example, finds that autonomy can have either an individual or a

communal focus so that adolescents being raised in non-Western cultural contexts may have

the flexibility for both an independent perspective and an interdependent perspective on their actions depending on differing contexts. The study by Guan et al. (under review), suggests that this flexibility can be captured in scores on transcultural perspective taking.

Adolescence is also a time of unevenness in psychological development, and in some cases seemingly even reversals in developmental trajectories. Motivation, particularly in the academic domain, is one such area that may decline rather than increase with age (Graham & Williams, 2009), and this decline may co-occur while an adolescent's understanding of motivation constructs (e.g., attributions, self-esteem, notions of effort) actually becomes more complex over time. In the face of all other challenges that adolescent multilingual learners encounter (i.e., acquiring English for academic purposes, possible cultural differences in and expectations for psychosocial development, high risk of living in poverty), the loss of academic achievement motivation may occur more readily. Loss of such motivation has been found to contribute to underachievement and can put multilingual students' at risk for dropping out of school (e.g., Callahan, 2013).

Developments in the area of friendship formations are also taking place during adolescence and are related to growth in interpersonal motivation. This often involves a process of social grouping which, during adolescence, can be impacted by attributions (e.g., racial and ethnic stereotypes) (Graham, Taylor & Ho, 2009). On the one hand, adolescents who are learning English may be at greater risk for poor psychosocial outcomes in terms of social identity formation due to the racial and ethnic stereotyping they may face (e.g., Phinney, Berry, Vedder & Liebkind, 2006), as well as due to the possible stigma attached to being an L2 speaker of English (Casanova, 2012). On the other hand, adolescents may make their L1 a central and positive component of their social identities as Imbens-Bailey (1996) reports for second generation Armenian-American adolescents. Similarly, Oh and Fuligini (2010) found that proficiency in L1 may help immigrant-background Latino- and Asian-American students better cope with the stresses of adolescence. (See also Harklau, 2007 for a review.)

Finally, what has become increasingly clear about adolescence, is that it is a period when the coordination of both the affect and cognition necessary for psychosocial functioning is not yet fully mature (MacArthur Network: Steinberg, 2009). For example, adolescents may lack resistance to peer influence and impulsivity, making some of their behaviors and decision-making less mature than their abilities in the area of cognitive reasoning would predict. Indeed, psychosocial abilities, it is argued, are on a slower developmental trajectory than cognitive abilities, and psychosocial maturity is not likely to be reached until individuals are in their twenties (although see Fischer, Stein & Heikkinen, 2009 for an alternate interpretation of the Macarthur Network studies).

Nevertheless, the linguistic abilities and multicultural experiences of multilingual adolescents may have a positive impact on their psychosocial developments. Children who are exposed to and/or are learning two or more languages develop into individuals with greater positive attitudes and tolerance towards other cultures, languages and peers (Genesee, 2008). Moreover, by frequently serving as language brokers for their families, multilingual students demonstrate psychosocial abilities in order to successfully navigate cultural norms and the demands of the home and wider society (Mushi, 2002).

By necessity, this overview of linguistic, cognitive and psychosocial developments during adolescence has been truncated but it illustrates the myriad of changes that multilingual adolescents are likely undergoing at the point they are acquiring English as a second (or additional) language in U.S. schools. Collectively, these developments may have implications for how multilingual adolescent students may use their everyday language experiences as an academic literacy resource. These are issues to which we now turn.

Everyday Language Practices of Multilingual Adolescents

This section focuses on two translanguaging practices, namely codeswitching and language brokering. These practices are part of a multilingual repertoire of language practices that have surfaced in ethnographic studies adopting a "funds of knowledge" perspective (Moll,

Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992) or "cultural modeling" approach (e.g., Lee, 2001) to reveal

racial/ethnic minority and adolescent multilingual students' everyday language uses and

language routines as linguistic resources.

While there are distinctions between these practices, there is also considerable overlap,

and both practices are common in multilingual environments. Both involve flexibility and

versatility in communicative norms, the recognition that things can be said in different ways, for

different purposes, in different ways, for different audiences. In both, language is a resource that

can be used to transmit information, make meaning, and make things happen in the social

world, while also involving aesthetic dimensions that can be exploited to signal particular

identities and sensibilities, and to affiliate with or distinguish one's self from others.

Codeswitching Practices

Codeswitching is most commonly defined as the alternating and concurrent use

of two languages in conversation (Broersma & De Bot, 2006). For example, MacSwan (2012)

reports the following example from Belazi et al. (1994) of an utterance beginning in English and

concluding in Spanish "The students *habían vistó la película italiana*" (p.325). Switches can

occur within a sentence, as in the previous example, between sentences, and even between

speakers, with a conversation conducted in parallel across two different languages (speakers

comprehending both languages yet each conversing in a different one). Initially (and still in

popular thinking) considered evidence of confusion between or the limited development of two

languages, codeswitching has increasingly been viewed as sophisticated bilinguality with

systematic syntactic rules governing when switches can occur within a sentence (e.g.,

MacSwan, 2000, 2012; Martinez, 2010; Poplack, 1980). Codeswitching also contributes to

multilingual social/interactional functioning (e.g., Pagett, 2006; Reyes, 2004).

Children's codeswitching in particular, was thought to be initially limited to linguistic

transfer (i.e., borrowing words from one language to fill lexical gaps in the other). But Vu, Bailey

and Howes (2010) report socio-pragmatic uses for switching languages in children as young as

5 years. For example, a child will switch languages to follow their interlocutor's switching behaviors. Children become even more attuned to their linguistic environments as they become older and consequently, codeswitching takes on greater interactional function. Specifically, as students mature they become attuned to situational changes that might require a switch in language, such as different interlocutors, settings, and topics, as well as become sensitive to the emphasis placed on certain words or phrases by others (e.g., Genesee, Paradis, & Crago, 2004; Gumperz, 1982).

Codeswitching can serve a role in forming group identity or membership (e.g., race/ethnicity) and also in creating social situations in which the use of two languages signals belonging to the worlds of each language group (e.g., Zentella, 1997). Such intentional uses of codeswitching demonstrate the practice as an effective communicative mechanism. Furthermore, research on hybrid language usage, itself a form of translanguaging, posits codeswitching as a systematic process that is strategic and affiliative amongst those multilingual adolescents who share the code (Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López, Alvarez, & Chiu, 1999; Martinez, 2010). Having such linguistic resources available can become part of the important process of identity formation at this point in multilingual adolescent development.

While children may be skillful at codeswitching from an early age, as they mature, they may intentionally use codeswitching in some contexts and not others. For example, Rivard (2010) reported little codeswitching with Spanish-English multilingual adolescents elicited by a formal church setting. She argues that the formal setting may have made codeswitching behaviors less likely to occur, rather students may have preferred to reserve switching for less formal settings. One implication of these findings is that the school context, as another formal setting, may not be the easiest place to observe codeswitching unless is it overtly sanctioned and deliberately utilized for pedagogical purposes. This is true in the case of hybrid language practices in classroom spaces with their strong emphasis on meaning-making as well as form, and so authentically supporting student expression in all the languages they know and can

utilize (Gutiérrez, et al.,1999). Juxtaposing and interweaving two or more languages can be important for the development of both languages particularly if the two languages share common root words (cognates) by which to expand the vocabulary of both. Moreover, because it requires attention both to meaning and form, codeswitching practices may hone skills such as working memory and inhibition control that are thought to be underlying skills necessary for academic literacy (e.g., Bialystok & Peets, 2010).

Language Brokering Practices

Language brokering is a form of what Harris and Sherwood (1973) call "Natural Translation." Tse (1996) defined it as "interpretation and translation in everyday situations by bilinguals who have no special training" (p.486). While even very young children engage in some kinds of language brokering, adolescents living in multilingual communities are frequently called upon to do this work, which involves many different kinds of language-related tasks for family and community members: filling out forms, answering the phone, reading and explaining written materials of many different genres, and providing oral interpretation in a wide array of situations, such as doctor appointments, parent-teacher conferences, and making purchases in stores (Orellana, 2009; Valdés, 2003). In doing these things they navigate a wide array of cultural norms, communicating both within and across the boundaries of their home and dominant cultures (Mushi, 2002). The variety and complexity of the tasks language brokers are called upon to do often increases throughout adolescence, both because families rely on them more and because older youth have more independent movement in the world, through which they encounter more people who need interpretation services. In the following example from Dorner, Orellana and Jiménez (2008), 15-year-old Jasmine describes one occasion in which she noticed a person in need and stepped up to offer her help:

Sometimes I do [translating] for some other people when I see they don't

know what's going on. Like one time, we were at the laundromat and there

was this lady and I think she didn't know English. She was just standing

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there, and I was like "Why is this lady just standing there," you know? I think

that the coins were stuck to wash, and she was afraid to ask anyone, 'cause I

think she thought nobody would listen to her, 'cause she didn't know how to

communicate. So I asked her, "Do you need any help?" I told her in Spanish.

And she's like, "oh yeah," and she started telling me that the coins got stuck,

and that she didn't know who to ask and she thought that she had to pay

again, but she didn't have enough money. And I was like, okay, then, let me

just go and talk to her [the laundromat attendant], you know, and I went and

she told me that it was like broken or something. (p. 526)

Language brokering practices are likely valuable for academic literacy skills for several

reasons. First, in addition to oral interpretation in a wide range of contexts (e.g. doctors' offices,

parent-teacher conferences, restaurants, stores), language brokers often are called upon to

read and explain specialized written texts of various genres: credit card applications, mortgage

applications, bank statements, report cards, informational leaflets, letters, jury summons, and

more. In the following example from Dorner et al., (2008), Miguel, also 15 years old, describes a

range of oral and literate tasks involving his interpreter and translator roles for family

particularly:

The last thing I think I did was for [school parent-teacher] conferences—I

translated. And like, she [mom] changed the plan for the phone, so we could

get more calls, so I had to call the company and tell them about it. And then,

like, we get bills in the mail and, say, if we want some changes—I have to

read that. And then like my dad's car, the new sticker [car registration], and

when you go take the car to test [for emissions] (p.528).

Many of the texts brokers read involve the kinds of decontextualized language that we previously described as closely associated with literacy (Snow & Dickinson, 1991), and with specialized vocabulary and genres. Language brokering requires students to navigate diverse written genres (Perry, 2005), and brokers develop a range of strategies to parse these texts, unpack their meaning, and help make the understood by their recipients (Orellana et al., 2003; Perry, 2009). In interpreting written materials, language brokers integrate oral language, literacy skills, cultural and pragmatic competencies, with a focus on meaning-making.

Although much research has focused on the potential negative implications of this practice for youth development, such as depression (Love and Buriel, 2007), adolescent stress (Guske, 2010; Jones et al., 2005; Kam, 2011), and internalizing symptoms (Chao, 2006), more recent research has considered its positive effects on social, cognitive, and academic measures. See Orellana and Guan (forthcoming) for a review of research of the developmental implications of language brokering, and consideration of ways in which the most negative effects of the practice may be mediated. Positive social effects that have been found in the practice may be particularly valuable for adolescents from non-dominant social groups; for example, Weisskirch (2005), found a greater sense of ethnic identification and belonging (see also Weisskirch et al., 2011). The practice has also been associated with biculturality (Acoach and Webb, 2004; Buriel et al., 1998), transcultural perspective taking, and empathy (Guan et al., under review),

Language brokering has also been associated with academic gains. Language brokers reported higher self-reported grade point averages than their peers (Buriel et al., 1998). Acoach and Webb (2004) found that language brokering had a direct effect on academic self-efficacy, which in turn was associated with higher GPA for high school students. Fifth and sixth grade students with extensive experience as language brokers scored higher on standardized tests of reading and math than did those with less experience, even when first grade reading scores

were controlled for, suggesting that the practice itself enhanced academic competencies (Dorner, et al., 2007).

Everyday Language Practices and New Academic Content Standards

As everyday language practices of many multilingual adolescent students, both codeswitching and language brokering can be considered in relation to CCSS for English Language Arts.[3] The CCSS include specific expectations (e.g., task appropriateness and audience awareness) that would seem to be well aligned with the skills inherent in these everyday oral language practices. Brisk and Proctor (2012) make a similar point, noting that the CCSS for oral language expect students to present their own thinking and understand others' perspectives.

The processes underlying codeswitching and language brokering practices include executive control or functioning—heightened attention, organizational skills, and problem-solving abilities—and metalinguistic awareness that are the same processes and skills underlying not only the academic literacy that we have discussed here, but many other academic tasks and forms of learning (e.g., arguing from evidence in science or explaining mathematical problem solving). Furthermore, these are also skills that are found to be particularly precocious in bilingual students (e.g., Bialystok & Peets, 2010; Yoshida, 2008). Moreover, the underlying socio-cognitive processes involved in language brokering in particular may serve to hone important skills for multilingual students beyond the competencies considered in the CCSS or NGSS. For example, these are skills and processes that might also foster important developments in the psychosocial domain (e.g., motivation; impulsivity control) and given the slower psychosocial trajectory that adolescent are on, these are important non-scholastic skills and processes from which they may especially benefit.

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[3] We speculate that this claim for the wide-spread practices of codeswitching and language brokering by multilingual adolescents is true. However, we have not found studies of the prevalence of these practices in the multilingual adolescent population.

Cultivating Adolescent Literacy in Culturally and Developmentally Appropriate Ways

Before concluding, we want to suggest some ways these understandings of developmental processes and of the everyday language practices of adolescents living in multilingual environments might inform educational practice aimed at fostering academic language development. There are many ways we could envision building on everyday translanguaging experiences, but we will suggest a few general principles here.

First, as we have noted, adolescence is a time in which adolescents are growing in their capacity to take on different perspectives and to engage in metalinguistic reflection. Adolescents who traverse cultural and linguistic borders in their everyday lives have many opportunities to cultivate metalinguistic awareness and transcultural competencies. Schools might enhance the development of those competencies simply by helping adolescents to become more conscious of their own everyday skills, and reflective about them. This could involve helping adolescents to articulate the strategies they use as they communicate with and for different speakers; the decisions they make about when, where and why to codeswitch (or not), for whom and how to broker language for others; and the challenges they face when translating/interpreting diverse kinds of texts. Teachers might also guide students in identifying how academic literacy requires similar skills: sensitivity to audiences, texts, and circumstances, and conscious decisions about language forms. (See Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Martinez et al., 2009; Martinez, 2011; Orellana et al 2008; Orellana and Reynolds, 2008 for more specific suggestions and lesson ideas.)

We are suggesting an approach to pedagogy that *leverages* the everyday language experiences of adolescents living in multilingual contexts, and that treats multilingualism as normative, not deviant. This approach demands some rethinking of both monolingual norms in education *and* traditional ways of approaching bilingual education (e.g. with strict separation of languages). Creese & Blackledge (2010) suggest ways of rethinking bilingual pedagogy to recognize, endorse and support *translanguaging,* and to use students' full linguistic toolkits to

support their overall literacy development. (See also Garcia, 2009.) This can be done whether or not teachers speak the languages of their students; the first step is to acknowledge everyday competencies, and help students to see the relationship between what they do every day and what is asked of them in school.

Valuing the everyday practices that multilingual adolescents engage in will not just enhance literacy development *in school*; it will likely also make everyday language activities even more powerful learning experiences. Rather than fostering the idea that everyday and academic literacies are *distinct* (a message that is conveyed by well-meaning teachers who say such things as "That kind of language is fine at home, but in school…") we can help adolescents to see how things they do everyday can help them in school, as well as how what they learn in school can support their everyday language work. This is especially important for adolescents who have come to see their own multilingualism as a deficit rather than an asset—a perspective that, sadly, too many multilingual adolescents develop as they internalize the norms of a monolingual centric society (Martinez, 2010).

Concluding Remarks

The predominantly oral language practices described here would benefit from further study, treating them both as agents and outcomes of adolescent development. We need to know more about the trajectories of language and literacy development of adolescent language brokers, as well as variations in translanguaging practices and competencies across kids, language groups and communities. We might better unpack the ways in which adolescent developmental processes both shape and are shaped by translanguaging practices like language brokering and codeswitching. We also need better understanding of the relationship between academic literacy development and predominantly oral language practices like codeswitching.

But we do know this: language brokering and codeswitching (as two dimensions of translanguaging practices that are common in multilingual communities) involve complex social,

linguistic, cultural, cognitive and pragmatic knowledge that have received little recognition in schools. Those competencies seem to overlap in important ways with the competencies that are considered integral to academic literacy. Unfortunately, the full range of linguistic resources students have available to them, particularly in the form of oral language abilities, may not receive sufficient attention in school (Escamilla and Coady, 2005). Thus we argue here for recognition of the skills and experiences of adolescents living in multilingual environments as we build and expand understanding of the construct of adolescent academic literacy. We hope not only to have piqued interest in but to have argued convincingly for the value of further explorations of academic literacy at the intersection of adolescent development and the oral language and literate lives of adolescent multilingual students.

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