



## Original Article / Artículo Original

**English Spanish bilingualism shown by adolescents in the Canary Islands indicates the need for integrated education proposals in multilingual communities**  
**El bilingüismo inglés-español que muestran los adolescentes canarios indica la necesidad de propuestas educativas integrales en comunidades multilingües**

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## Resumen

La alternancia de código se ha considerado en numerosas ocasiones como una herramienta pedagógica para la educación bilingüe, pero no en las comunidades de inmigrantes de las Islas Canarias, España. Esta investigación se centra en casos de adolescentes bilingües inglés e inglés-español escolarizados desde pequeños en el municipio de Yaiza, Islas Canarias. Se aplicó un cuestionario sobre alternancia de código, preferencia lingüística y dominio autoevaluado a 29 estudiantes de dos centros de estas zonas y, tras obtener resultados que indicaban aceptación de las construcciones bilingües, se diseñaron tres ejercicios a modo de propuesta didáctica para su adaptación a centros de educación secundaria con características similares a las del estudio. Este trabajo pretende visibilizar la necesidad de entornos de aprendizaje más integrales y lingüísticamente tolerantes para estudiantes de todos los perfiles, especialmente relevantes en entornos multilingües tan cambiantes como los que se mencionan en las páginas siguientes.

**Palabras clave:** Bilingüismo, educación bilingüe, cambio de código, translingüismo, competencia lingüística.

## Abstract

Code-switching has been considered as a pedagogical tool for bilingual education on many occasions, but not in immigration communities in the Canary Islands, Spain. This research focuses on cases of English and English-Spanish bilingual adolescents who have attended school from a young age in the municipality of Yaiza, Canary Islands. A questionnaire on code-switching, language preference, and self evaluated dominance was presented to 29 students in two centres pertaining to these areas and, following results that indicate acceptance towards bilingual constructions, three exercises were devised in the form of a didactic proposal to be adapted to secondary education centres that show similar characteristics as those pertaining to the study. This paper aims to shed light on the necessity for more integral and linguistically tolerant learning environments for students of all profiles, particularly relevant in such fast-changing multilingual environments such as those mentioned in the following pages.

**Keywords:** Bilingualism, bilingual education, code-switching, translanguaging, linguistic competence.



## Introduction on code-switching

Multilingual environments have gained recognition as a norm, rather than an exception, in many societies (Hall & Nilep, 2015: 597). Much literature can be found on multilingual realities around the world, such as Wardhaugh (2006: 101-117) on the complex linguistic situation of Singapore, where four official languages are navigated with normality; or Kenya, where English, Swahili, and local languages each undertake their own role in everyday life. Puerto Rico, for example, established both English and Spanish as co-official languages in 1993 (Wardhaugh, 2006: 367-368), and as a result proves to be an ideal example of language contact for a wide range of studies (see Jiménez-Fernández, 2023; for recent work on English and Spanish syntax in Puerto Rico). Examples such as these shed light on multilingualism as a global phenomenon and as a result of language contact in a wide range of contexts, not as mere isolated cases that stray from monolingual standards.

Language contact produces a range of bilingual phenomena, such as code-switching (hereafter CS). Due to the many definitions that may be attributed to this term depending on approaches, this study will understand CS in a generic sense, as in “the alternate use of two or more languages [or varieties of language] by bilinguals for communicative purposes” Gardner-Chloros (2009: 202). Moreover, as “[CS] occurs among immigrant communities, regional minorities and native multilingual groups alike” (Gardner-Chloros, 2009: 20), there is no end to the variety of linguistic situations produced continuously by different types of language contact. In some cases, CS might be so deep-rooted in the speaker’s internal thought-process that they are unaware of switches made continuously in accordance with conversational requirements (Wardhaugh, 2006: 104), whereas, in other situations, CS might follow conscious decisions by speakers or be avoided as considered undesirable.

Nowadays, CS is incorporated as a telling mechanism to possibly understand certain areas of bilingual speech, straying from the monolingual ideals that have influenced research in the past (Hall & Nilep, 2015: 597). Many areas surrounding this phenomenon are now being studied, such as tendencies on when bilingual speech occurs or the intrinsic grammar patterns it presents in different situations. Typically, two perspectives can be taken considering CS grammar—a separationist view, which regards CS patterns to be formed by independent systems relating to the different languages at play (Woolford, 1983); or an integrationist stance,



considering independent grammar systems to be processed by one computational system (Jiménez-Fernández, 2023: 9). Moreover, radical integrationist approaches such as López (2020) may also vouch for but one grammatical system and thus form a new system which feeds off all the languages included. Research regarding this approach tends to view language not as unrelated entities but as part of a whole, by which speech serves from language in a broader sense, using “whatever ingredients the environment supplies” (López, 2020: 2). These ideas point toward integrated models of syntax or grammar, an approach that serves from CS research in its feat to establish universal proposals for language (see Bullock & Toribio, 2009; Jiménez-Fernández, 2023; or López, 2020 for work on integrationist perspectives).

In the context of separationist frameworks, MacSwan (1999) is key in a pedagogical sense as well as a linguistic point of view. This influential research defends linguistic autonomy in the classroom and incites tolerance toward bilingual or multilingual students on behalf of institutions. It also debunks the idea that bilingual children have lower language abilities than their monolingual peers and states that these misconceptions stem from hierarchical beliefs linked to social classes and the variety of languages usually found within them (MacSwan, 1999: 4-5).

### ***New types of bilinguals***

Research on CS has mostly focused on more traditional types of multilingual communities—that is, those in which various languages are recognised and are navigated by a significant amount of speakers as part of their social and linguistic identity (such as language contact in Northern Belize in Balam, 2016; Puerto Rican communities in Jiménez-Fernández, 2023; or CS in the Caribbean in Guzzardo Tamargo et al., 2016), but multilingual realities are now extending to almost all areas of the globe, connecting us with cultures and influences that were previously unreachable. In a globalised world such as our own, language contact arises in the most unsuspecting places, producing artificial cases of bilingualism—international business relations, university conferences, online correspondence, consumption of international media, etc.

Apart from the immediate cases of language contact, globalisation has made both tourism and immigration much more accessible for many of us. These movements have not only social but linguistic consequences, especially where immigration communities are formed.



Tendencies in international mobilisation create and sustain destinations in which high amounts of tourism and immigration are received, sometimes from one country or region in particular—such as Spanish communities mentioned in this study. These areas could be particularly telling for research, as a different type of bilingualism arises in these cases, potentially providing us with new perspectives on the inner workings of bilingualism and CS.

In more artificial cases of bilingualism, although different degrees of proficiency are acquired, speakers are not usually expected to develop high levels of emotion toward their second languages (Eilola *et al.*, 2007: 1064). The same cannot be said for traditional bilingual communities, where different languages do not only serve as communicative tools for speakers, but also play crucial roles in shaping cultural identities (Hall & Nilep, 2015: 598). If this is the case for large groups of speakers, the same might be true for individual cases, especially those such as adolescents, who find themselves in key instances in terms of identity building (Upreti, 2017: 54). Hall & Nilep (2015: 599) introduce the notion of *speech community*, in which CS is regarded as an “identity-based phenomenon”, with one language associated to affective speech—relating to the family and life at home—and the other, to more formal and bureaucratic situations. In these cases, emotional connections or preferences toward the language closest to cultural heritage are formed.

Nowadays, integrated education is generally accepted to be beneficial for students who use more than one language daily (Balam & Prada Pérez, 2017; Conteh, 2018; Arnold & Foncubierta, 2019), but these strategies have not yet been applied in educational proposals adaptable for centres found in multilingual environments such as immigration communities. In the Spanish education system, bilingual proposals can be found in autonomous regions in which the recognised co-official languages are taught alongside Spanish—in Catalonia, the Basque Country, Navarre, Galicia, the Valencian Community, and the Balearic Islands, for example, different legislation is in place to ensure the protection and use of the respective minority languages (MEFP, 2023). Similarly, integrated schooling on the frontier between Spain and Portugal can also be found by means of the EBIF project (*Escuelas Bilingües e Interculturales de la Frontera*), an initiative that celebrates linguistic diversity and promotes inclusion in both countries by collaborating with three regional governments in Spain, the University of Aveiro in Portugal, and Madrid’s Complutense University, amongst other institutions.



In terms of L1-L2 proposals, many education centres offer the possibility of following bilingual programmes such as a combined Spanish and French Baccalaureate (known as *BachiBac*) or CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning), for example. Options such as these, along with the previously mentioned programs found in bilingual communities, might seem to give the impression of an integrated linguistic education system. However, in a country with over five and a half million foreign citizens to date (INE, 2022a), more generic and universal practices might be of interest in order to promote linguistic equality and acceptance in all regions and for different types of bilingual or multilingual students.

Comparatively low numbers of immigration in the early two thousands in Spanish communities such as certain municipalities in the Canary Islands (INE, 2022b) made for an almost monolingual environment for children to be immersed in. In the context of this paper, more equitable levels of English and Spanish proficiency and preference were presumably present in students who grew up in a more immersive environment some twenty years ago, compared to younger generations in primary or secondary education at present—in concordance with Licerias *et al.*'s (2016) theory on dominance influencing language choice in CS production. Evidently, communities in this region have changed over the years due to several factors such as tourism and immigration influxes—the foreign population of the Canary Islands was just 3,39% in 1998, situating at 13,25% in 2021 and reaching almost 30% in the municipality of Yaiza (INE, 2022b). As result of these influxes, generational differences relating to bilingual students and the manner in which they process language could be a prominent factor for changes in bilingualism.

If the globalised positions societies now hold are to be fully accepted, it seems logical for educational reforms to move in cohesion with the changes that societies undergo. Thus, an interest in proposing a more integral manner of teaching for equal opportunities amongst all types of profiles is key. Moreover, as bilingual grammar becomes a more pertinent field of research in our multilingual societies, investigations on different kinds of bilingualism—including those pertaining to new multilingual communities—is to be considered in order to gain a better understanding of how different cases process language and to delve further into the inner workings of bilinguals' grammatical systems.



### ***Code-switching in the classroom***

Code-switching used for pedagogical uses is often known as *translanguaging*. When the concept was first devised by Cen Williams, it was to present a “purposeful cross-curricular strategy” for bilingual English-Welsh students in schools in which bilingual education was included in learning proposals (Conteh, 2018: 445-447). Where education reforms or pedagogical proposals are found, translanguaging is often used to imply CS applied for didactic benefits.

If bilingual education has been considered beforehand, it has not been without controversy. As many bilingual environments result from language contact present in immigration communities, prejudices toward bilingual speakers and their “linguistic limitations” have often formed, a preconception which becomes cyclically detrimental toward bilingual speech and those who practice it (MacSwan & Faltis, 2020: 26). MacSwan (1999) presents framework to actively counterattack these negative perceptions that not only false, but detrimental to the students whom they affect.

Intolerance toward CS could partially be attributed to western societies in which language contact has not typically been a wide-spread phenomenon in formal contexts such as education. In the US, for example, CS might have been present in many communities throughout the country’s history, but not within upper-class society or in formal schooling. However, in environments in which language contact has almost always been part of the social norm, such negative bias does not seem to exist. One study on CS perception in the bilingual part of Northern Belize shows significant acceptance toward CS as a general rule, even amongst teachers and in the context of translanguaging in the classroom (Balam & Prada Pérez, 2017: 27-30). Similar opinions can be found in other traditionally bilingual communities, such as Puerto Rico, for example, mentioned above.

Whilst CS has been discouraged in most educational contexts in general, this socially constructed prejudice is beginning to weaken with new theories on how bilingual education could prove to be not just harmless, but an asset for learning. Many are the scholars who have promoted translanguaging as a pedagogical tool in recent years (Duarte, 2019; Yilmaz, 2021), with some students reacting to this more liberal approach by serving from the entirety of their linguistic repertoire, as opposed to only the languages they are being taught at the time (Tigert



*et al.*, 2020: 67). This factor is especially interesting in the context of our study, as framework based on the idea of language to be conceptualised as a whole, rather than separate entities (Gardner-Chloros, 2009; López, 2020) would be cohesive with education proposals in which language aids itself in the learning process, as opposed to models in which languages are restricted in the classroom and separated from one another as if they were completely unrelated.

If the emotional implications of a first language have been made apparent by previous literature (Hall & Nilep, 2015; Pérez Casas, 2016; Balam & Prada Pérez, 2017), further evidence on how emotion is a more active factor in L1 than in L2 can be found in Eilola *et al.* (2007: 1071), in which subjects were found to process negative and taboo words slower in their mother tongues than in their second languages, indicating emotional implications of an L1 in late bilinguals with respect to an L2. If such strong emotional bonds are held to our native languages, and if elements linked to affection are beneficial to the learning process in general (Arnold & Foncubierta, 2019), it seems logical to incorporate a more permissive bilingual education system into national proposals so that students might experience a freer and more effective learning environment.

Cummins (2001), in particular, praises the benefits of “linguistic interdependence” in the classroom, affecting a great number of scholars with theories on this concept which falls into line with the idea of language as an educational process (Conteh, 2018: 445). Although there is much research and recognition on translanguaging as a beneficial element in language learning, the prevailing sentiment is still a rather conservative one in many communities. Subjects are treated as default monolinguals and languages are separated in the learning process. Despite innovative research and proposals in some areas, traditional evaluation systems still triumph in most schooling and multilingual realities are usually ignored (Conteh, 2018: 446).

Perhaps most influential in his theories regarding CS as a pedagogical tool is MacSwan (1999: 251), who believes that teachers should consider students’ multilingual realities as they become more aware of the existence of such cases, forgoing possible previous negative misconceptions, and accepting that bilingual students’ linguistic competences are not inferior to those of their monolingual peers. MacSwan (1999: 253-254) mentions theories on how first language reading has proven to benefit learning a new language even when different alphabets are concerned, not to mention for instructional purposes when students are still at beginner



levels, by which an L1 can be an asset in second-language learning. Similarly, it is also possible that low abilities in a first language might affect results in L2, proving that L1 influences L2 learning in general (MacSwan, 1999: 254). This idea is cohesive with the notion of sentiment as a learning tool, as that which we already know how to express in our L1 is transferred and connected with a new linguistic system in the learning process (Arnold & Foncubierta, 2019: 15). Teachers must be aware of such factors and aim to connect with students' linguistic realities to the best of their abilities if they are to ensure optimal education for all profiles.

## Materials and methods

Certain communities in the Canary Islands with high immigration rates could prove to be a telling indicator for bilingual tendencies. For this study, a questionnaire was presented in two education centres —C.E.O. Playa Blanca and I.E.S. Yaiza<sup>1</sup>— in the municipality of Yaiza (Lanzarote). These centres contain a range of English-Spanish bilingual adolescents between 12 and 17 years old currently enrolled in secondary education or E.S.O. (*Educación Secundaria Obligatoria*). In what follows, we describe the results of the questionnaire carried out in these centres.

In total, 29 subjects participated in the questionnaire, as well as 9 former students between the ages of 20 and 27 from the same education centres used for contrastive purposes. All participants, both belonging to the student group and the older alumni group, have resided in Spain since they were between 1 and 10 years of age. We selected students based on their proficiency in both languages, as considered by their teachers and themselves. We asked teachers to consider students' families, as they knew in some cases which students experienced multilingual environments at home, and to select subjects whose grades in English and Lengua Castellana (Spanish language and literature) were not affected by lack of knowledge. Our questionnaire was presented to both groups of students in March of 2023.

As an initial exercise, both groups were subjected to an introductory session on CS to familiarise them with bilingual speech in the classroom. They were presented with the concept by means of videos in which various examples of CS speech from a number of bilingual

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<sup>1</sup> In Spain, the initialisms C.E.O. and I.E.S. refer to *Centro de Educación Obligatoria* and *Instituto de Educación Secundaria* respectively, by which the former can be considered a centre for primary and secondary education and the latter, for secondary and sixth form.



communities (such as Belize, Gibraltar or Puerto Rico) were shown and were spoken to at all times in English-Spanish CS dialogue by two interlocuters. The main goal in these sessions was to neutralise negative perceptions regarding bilingual speech and invite students to partake in CS. Simple questions were asked regarding the subjects' thoughts on language, their linguistic background, and their language preferences as a means of initiating dialogue and debates in CS. Apart from answering questions on language, they were invited to ask any questions they wanted formulated in CS —to further promote participation.

After the familiarisation exercise concluded, the questionnaire was presented through Google Forms. Students used their school accounts, ensuring complete anonymity and abiding by the centres' data protection rules. The first section aimed to categorise students by age, self-described dominant language, and their perceptions on CS:

### **Section I**

*Thank you por ayudarnos en nuestra investigación. Your answers son muy importantes para nosotros.*

- *Age and curso escolar:*
- *A qué edad did you start school en España?*
- *What would you say is your lengua dominante? English / Spanish / Both / Otra*
- *Utilizas code-switching en your day-to-day? Sí / No / Sometimes*
- *Cómo consideras code-switching? It shows falta de conocimiento por parte del hablante / It shows mucho conocimiento por parte del hablante / It doesn't have anything to do with los conocimientos del hablante*
- *Would you say code-switching is more appropriate for... Contextos formales? / Contextos informales? / Ambos contextos? / Ninguno de los contextos?*

A second section related to knowledge and use of Canarian Spanish lexicon by subjects was also presented. Questions in this part of the questionnaire were aimed to establish tendencies on language preference and dominance in Section I to knowledge and use of Canarian lexicon. The questions we posed were as follows<sup>2</sup>:

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<sup>2</sup> Specific criteria were not followed regarding the selection of Canarian lexicon, as the focus point for this part of the questionnaire was a comparison of local vocabulary regarding the older alumni group. Due to this, our interest lies in whether differences are shown on knowledge and usage between these groups, rather than acceptability towards specific lexical items.



## **Section II**

*Thank you for rating nuestras frases. Si pudieras answer some questions on léxico canario, nos ayudaría even further!*

- *Cuántas palabras from this list have you heard before?*

*Baifo*

*Jable*

*Cholas*

*Chucho*

*Salitre*

- *How many of these words usas de manera cotidiana?*

*Baifo*

*Jable*

*Cholas*

*Chucho*

*Salitre*

We presented the questionnaire in the form of a 4-point forced choice Likert scale, to avoid middle options and thus unreliable results. Students were to rate each sentence based on mixed-language grammaticality, thereby producing quantitative results regarding each grammar option. Once obtained, we ran statistical analyses to look for correlations between the students' preferences and their self-described language preference, individual sentences, and grammar combination. A full description of methodology, results and implications can be found in the original study (Lewis Grossman & Jiménez-Fernández, 2025).

## **Results**

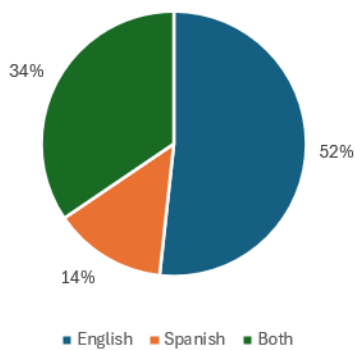
Our questionnaire indicated that 7 of the 29 students were born in Spain to one or two British parents, with the other 22 having moved to the country from the United Kingdom before the age of 10. Of these students, 19 had received only Spanish education, having emigrated before starting school. We can see from these answers that the student group is subjected to a rather Spanish environment in general. However, when asked about dominance, 15 students considered their dominant language to be English with only 4 stating that it was Spanish (10

opted for *both*). This presents a contrast between students' language preference/dominance and their linguistic environment.

In relation to opinions regarding CS, 7 students said that they partake in this manner of speech daily. 16 of the participants affirmed that they use CS, but not on a daily basis, and 6 said that they do not normally use CS. When asked about when they thought CS is an appropriate form of language to use, 12 students said that it should be used for informal contexts only (with 7 believing that it could be used in any context and 1 regarding it as inappropriate in all contexts).

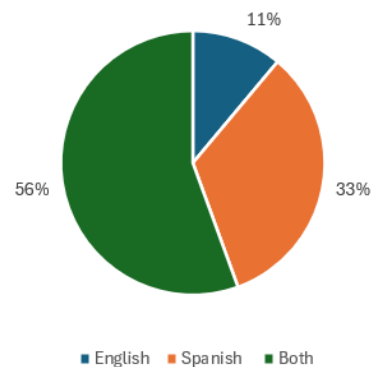
Results from the questionnaire displayed considerable differences between the student group and the alumni group, with almost 52% of the younger subjects selecting English as their dominant language compared to 11% of the alumni, and 56% of the older subjects stating that they use CS in their day-to-day compared to 24% of the student group (see Graphs 1-4 for comparisons between these results). However, most participants in both groups considered CS to be a positive phenomenon that requires considerable knowledge on the speaker's behalf—a sentiment that contrasts with previous literature.

Subject group dominant language



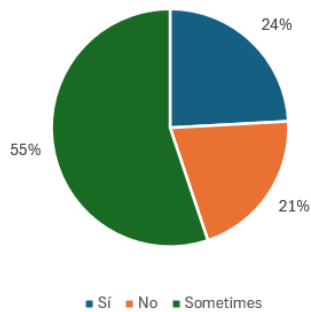
**Graph 1:** Subject group dominant language

Control group dominant language

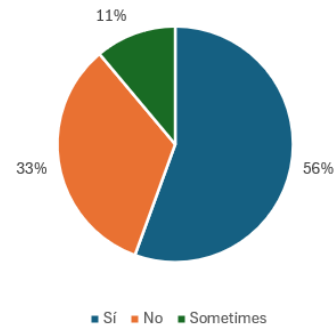


**Graph 2:** Control group dominant language

Subject group daily use of CS



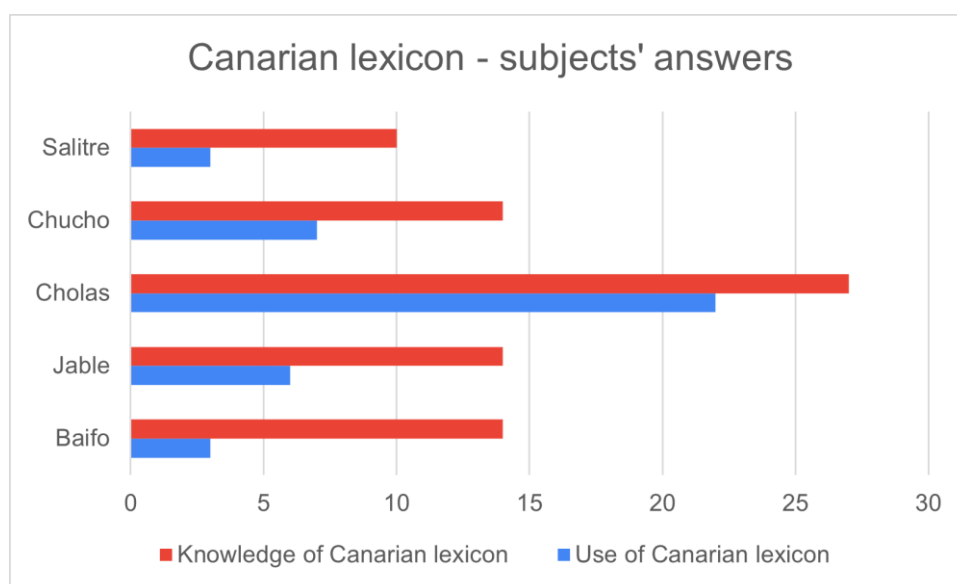
Control group daily use of CS

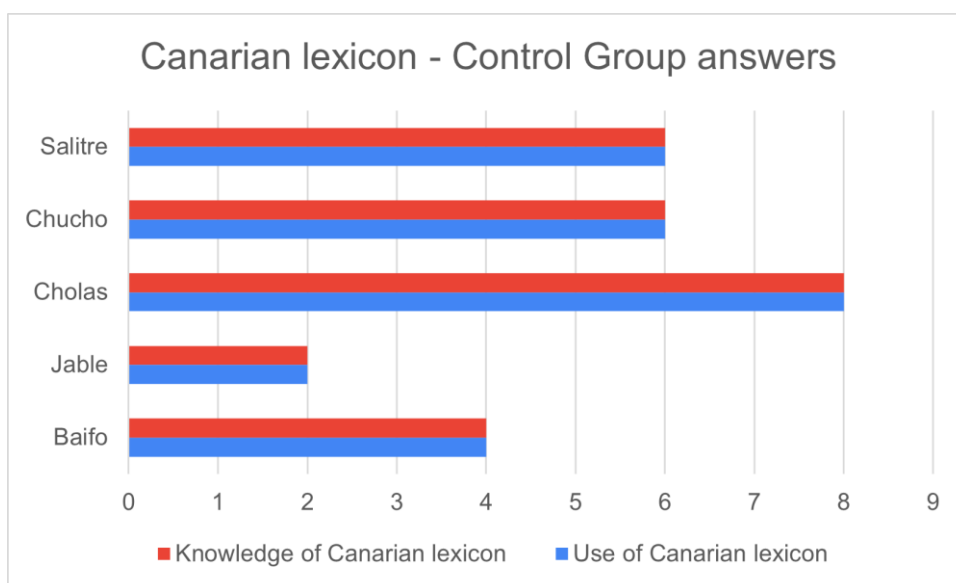


**Graph 3:** Subject use of code-switching

**Graph 4:** Control group use of code-switching

Answers from this section also showed the students to be less familiar with Canarian lexicon and use these elements less frequently than the older group, in coherence with results on language dominance and preference in Section I, with students showing 48% knowledge and 28% usage of Canarian lexicon in general, compared to 86% and 58% respectively regarding the alumni group (see Graphs 5 & 6 for a comparison of knowledge and use of Canarian lexicon between groups). Although this would need to be tested with much larger groups and statistical analyses, these results indicate that the younger generations are also using the local dialect less than their older peers.





Results from this questionnaire concerning the multilingual reality shown in two centres in the municipality of Yaiza, Canary Islands, indicate the possibility of presenting a pedagogical proposal in certain areas with high immigration rates such as those mentioned above. Furthermore, tendencies showing positive attitudes toward CS on the students' behalf prove that translinguaging exercises could be of use in the context of promoting a more linguistically liberal environment in which students of all backgrounds are able to make the most of their education in an unprejudiced environment.

### Discussion - the proposal

Based on results obtained from the aforementioned questionnaire, the following is a pedagogical proposal that could be applied with the objective of promoting innovation for bilingual secondary education in multilingual communities in Spain. Since students generally indicated positive feedback toward CS in terms of interest and participation in the classroom, the following exercises are intended to be used as motivational activities that can be applied to encourage students to explore their linguistic capabilities and enhance performances in both L1 and L2.

These proposals are designed for the centres of similar characteristics as those used in the questionnaire— C.E.O. Playa Blanca and I.E.S. Yaiza, two education centres with high numbers of bilingual students, situated in communities that receive high numbers of tourism



and immigration. It is centred on students of E.S.O. level (approximately 12-16 years-old) who experience multilingual environments in their everyday lives, both in school and at home.

Due to the nature of bilingual integration in the classroom as a general proposal to be undergone throughout the academic year, the following activities have been drawn up as suggestions of how translanguaging might be incorporated into classes, as opposed to a proposal to be applied to a specific session, as a more gradual and consistent approach will benefit students in both long-term memory and enthusiasm (Arnold & Foncubierta, 2019: 51-55).

These activities are designed to be adaptable to different educational contexts and can be used in a variety of manners depending on the students' abilities and how such material is intended to be incorporated into sessions. Each exercise contains objectives to be fulfilled, and competences approved and recommended by the UNESCO and the DeSeCo project (from the Spanish *Definición y Selección de Competencias*), as in BOE/76/2022; as well as specifications such as timescales, materials, and evaluation. Possible adaptations are to be considered, as is attention to diversity. All activities are in coherence with the latest educational reform currently in use in Spain, LOMLOE (BOE/76/2022) and are designed according to the objectives and specifications detailed within this document.

### ***Proposal 1: Translanguaging sessions in the classroom***

With the idea of promoting a more liberal linguistic environment, a brief conversation exercise in bilingual speech could be held in the last ten minutes of the session, if time is permitting. Participation may be rewarded for encouragement purposes, but interventions are primarily led by the teacher both in Q&As and discussion on non-academic related topics — with the idea of promoting participation by using subjects of interest for the students.

#### Objectives and competences

An English class offers an ideal context for this type of activity, as practice in switching between any languages is beneficial to the students in that they will become more accustomed to their L2 and less apprehensive to practice it, all of which are objectives found in article 7 of the education reform LOMLOE (BOE/76/2022) —specifically in paragraphs (h), (i) and (j) relating to language, culture, and expression. Moreover, any improvement in interest within the classroom could be especially beneficial to this subject in particular, as English is notoriously a low-performing subject in Spanish public schools.



The key factor in this task is that interventions are not limited to English-Spanish, but rather to any languages that the students feel comfortable speaking—see Arnold & Foncubierta (2019) for the benefits of a familiar, comfortable environment to potentiate the learning process in foreign languages. Linguistic permissions such as these are intended to promote participation in future sessions and to familiarise students with the notion of CS as an acceptable phenomenon, ultimately pushing them to practice oral speech in the classroom. Competences devised by LOMLOE found in article 11 that are met in this exercise are (a) “competence in linguistic communication”, (b) “plurilingual competence”, and (h) “competence in cultural expression and consciousness” (BOE/76/2022 art.11). Competence (b) “plurilingual competence” or *competencia plurilingüe*, as it can be found in original legislature, is of essence throughout these proposals. Although it is included in the objectives and competences section of each activity, its importance in this section should be emphasised above others, as it holds an integral relation to the general aim of promoting CS in the classroom. The main goal in this activity is for subjects to feel more comfortable using their first language to aid them in second-language learning and to thus practice more oral production in the long-run, a feat in many English classrooms.

#### Timescales, materials, and resources

As stated above, this activity is designed as a wind-down at the end of a session (approximately conducted in the last ten minutes). If grammar exercises and other tasks requiring high levels of concentration have been worked on, practice in oral speech could constitute a productive finish without feeling burdensome. No materials are necessary for this activity, although flashcards to suggest certain topics could be provided and used by the students if considered opportune. The teacher must be assertive and confident in their ability to direct an exercise with such high levels of improvisation and participation, as it is expected for subjects to mirror the teacher’s level of involvement in bilingual speech to an extent.

#### Evaluation

It is key for students to feel as though they are not being evaluated per se in this activity, as this could be detrimental to their participation. However, the teacher must take note of each students’ involvement and ability, as this will help them gain a better understanding of individual situations in further English sessions.



### Adaptation proposals

Self-evaluation discussions could also be held in these sessions, allowing students more autonomy over their education and promoting interest and participation during future classes, key to their learning process. Participation and involvement of this kind would also promote objectives in art.7 of the educational reform such as (g) relating to entrepreneurship and self-confidence, as well as competences found in art.11 such as (e) “personal, social, and 'learning to learn'” competence as they deal with planification, decision-making and responsibilities on the students’ behalf. Benefits of autonomous learning can also be found in Arnold & Foncubierta (2019).

If sessions do not usually have any time to spare for these exercises, initial reflexions regarding didactic units could be conducted in bilingual speech, if the teacher makes it clear when CS is permitted to the students and when they must only use their L2 —to avoid confusion when dealing with grammatical issues, for example. These reflexions refer to opening questions on the introduction page of most English textbooks for secondary education in Spain —such as Devlin & Shaw (2021). As each unit generally follows a theme, these questions could be personal reflexions on technology, the environment, the natural world, etc.

### ***Proposal 2: Linguistic Tandem***

In multilingual environments such as those mentioned in this paper, it is not uncommon for groups in all levels to include students from various backgrounds who speak different languages at home. Whilst presenting our questionnaire, the headteacher at C.E.O. Playa Blanca expressed his concerns on English students not integrating with their Spanish peers and thus forming English-speaking groups that become isolated from the rest of the student body. Decades ago, it was easier for foreign students to be separated from one-another to promote their integration in Spanish environments, but as the numbers of English students grow, this becomes a challenging feat —not to mention a controversial one.

Activities such as linguistic tandems could prove to be positive environments for students to practice a more liberal linguistic environment, as well as autodidactic language learning. Tigert *et al.* (2020) present similar proposals in their study relating to the pedagogical benefits of CS in the classroom, designing a Reading-Buddy scheme in which students read and discuss a range of educational texts in pairs and with minimal instruction. In their results, a



natural pattern of Spanish-English speech was observed in most pairs of students, by which results showed that CS was used not only for communication and clarifying purposes but was also key in building social relationships between peers (Tigert *et al.*, 2020: 78).

### Objectives and Competences

This rich linguistic reality, product of high immigration rates, could be used to students' advantages, promoting objectives related to language expression, communication and personal relations found in art.7 of LOMLOE (BOE/76/2022), also abiding by competences stated in art.11 of the reform such as (a) “competence in linguistic communication”, (b) “plurilingual competence”, (f) “social competence”, and (h) “competence in cultural expression and consciousness”.

### Timescales, materials, and resources

Students who speak different languages would be paired and given topics to speak about each week. They would need to prepare themselves to a certain extent in order to gain familiarity with the vocabulary that might be used in each session and would undergo conversations for around 10 minutes in each of the students' first languages —by which the activity would last for around 20 minutes each week. Basic notions of the other party's language would be helpful to produce more fluid conversation but is not strictly necessary. Students are expected to improve in their L2 and become more participative in second language speech.

### Evaluation

Tandem partners must present a weekly report stating what topics were dealt with in each session. They must present five new words and a cultural issue pertaining to the other student's language and culture. Evaluation will consist in participation and enthusiasm, not on linguistic ability in L2 as this is considered to a certain extent a self-directed activity between peers.

### Adaptation proposals

Adaptations in this activity could include digital sessions (in conformation with art.11/d of LOMLOE in “digital competence”) and could be beneficial for after-school work or in cases in which online education has resulted in a necessary modification to regular schooling —such as the recent COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, this proposal could be designed as an in-class activity or could be put forward as a department project —also referred to as a level 3 project



(*Proyecto de nivel 3*) which does not require external funding and is organised within the department to which the project pertains. In the case of the latter, the centre's various departments would have to agree on organisation matters so that sessions might be conducted in an equitable timescale that does not have an impact on students' regular curricular activity.

### ***Proposal 3: Personal descriptions***

Our language helps us to understand who we are. The manner in which we express and describe ourselves is shaped by the words and constructions that we use for such purposes (Arnold & Foncubierta, 2019: 15). Due to this natural link that first languages have with sentiment and affection, it could be in students' best interests to create similar emotional ties with their L2 during the learning process. Translanguaging could thus be beneficial to language acquisition in that affection and sentiment are also key factors in learning any subject, as they help us to retain and remember information in general (Arnold & Foncubierta, 2019: 11). Due to this, a possible activity to propose in relation to CS in one's native language and their L2 (in this case, English) would be emotional and personal reflexions or descriptions of oneself or close environment. Exercises such as this could create positive emotions toward students' L2, aided by the security and emotion that their native tongues already provide, bringing personal relation into their new language as opposed to impersonal material. Also, these activities help to eliminate the fear of only being allowed to use a language that the student is not familiar with in the learning process, not to mention that of punishment or error, all of which allow the student more comfortable conditions to strengthen the learning environment.

#### Objectives and Competences

In an educational sense, these activities could promote objectives such as those found in article 7/k and 7/l of LOMLOE (BOE/76/2022) regarding personal development, tolerance, and expression—as well as respect for oneself and for others. The key competences that would be dealt with in this activity would be (a) “linguistic communication”—as descriptions promote oral or written expression, (b) “plurilingual competence”, and (e) “personal, social, and 'learning to learn'” competence.

#### Timescales, materials, and resources

This activity consists in adapting ordinary description tasks in L2 classes and providing more emotional subject-matters. Due to this, any 10-, or 15-minute activity of this sort could



include translanguaging in the first 5 minutes to promote oral production. The materials used would be those of the original task and ultimately consists in facilitating what many learners consider the most difficult part of language learning.

### Evaluation

Evaluation would be similar to the original activity, but higher levels of participation would be expected in CS-permitted descriptions. Also, students who strive for using more vocabulary in their L2 than their L1 are graded more positively, as they would be considered to show more determination in their learning process.

### Adaptation proposals

This activity could be conducted as a progression from L1 to L2 descriptions. If students are finding oral expression particularly difficult in the classroom, they could keep a chart of how much they rely on their native language in the activity as time progresses and, by doing so, they might feel a degree of competitiveness which pushes them to learn more of the language they are being taught. This adaptation would also include translanguaging as a pedagogical tool, even when students do not partake in CS per se. Oral comprehension is also beneficial to language learning, by which students should be put into group situations in which they can learn from their peers.

### ***Attention to diversity and integration***

According to the educational reform LOMLOE (BOE/76/2022), curricular diversity should be considered at all times throughout secondary education. Articles 19-24 deal with various aspects relating to this issue, such as students with special educational needs, learning difficulties, high capacities, or late-incorporation to the education system—amongst others. All centres must abide by protocols in place for cases such as these, and sessions in all subjects and courses must include possible adaptations conforming to individual students' needs, as well as attention to possible discrimination resulting from these diversities (as stated in art.19 of BOE/76/2022). The activities designed in this subchapter must take these cases into consideration and be adaptable to students with integration problems, speech difficulties, personal issues, etc. Teachers must be aware of these occurrences and provide alternative approaches such as working in smaller groups or providing more structure and preparation for



class discussions, as constant reflexion and attention become key to providing a high-quality education for all students, irrelevant of context or ability (Fernández, 2013: 92-93).

Strongly related to attention to diversity is the issue of student integration. Each student must be taken as a particularity and be contextualised according to their personal background and situation. Whilst some centres include social integration plans or work with associations that provide such help —La Caixa offers foundations such as *Incorpora*, for example, which promotes social integration for people at risk of social exclusion in less-privileged areas— it is also within teachers' responsibilities to notice when students might be involved in situations that are detrimental to their education or social integration. Many resources for students with special educational needs can be applied to those with integration issues, and ultimately must be helped to the best of the centre's abilities so that they may receive equal education opportunities as those available to their peers.

## Discussion

As a result of the questionnaire presented in two centres in Yaiza, Canary Islands, surrounding current and former students' perception and use of CS, the general objective of this paper was to utilise the multilingual reality characteristic to the communities in which this research was undertaken for an educational reform proposal that might benefit bilingual students. In relation to this, sentimental factors inherent to native languages (L1) were linked to pedagogical framework that supports emotion as a key element in the learning process and were presented in the form of three activities to be conducted in public secondary education in multilingual communities in Spain. Given the lack of previous research in these types of reduced bilingual communities, the originality of this paper could be key in potentially applying framework from recognised bilingual areas to new linguistic realities such as those mentioned in this study. Moreover, proposals of this kind pave the way for a more inclusive education in all areas and in different multilingual contexts, which is of utmost importance in everchanging globalised societies such as our own.

## Methodological constraints and future research lines

The main methodological constraints regarding this paper are related to the sample size that we were able to organise on this occasion. The present study can be considered a



preliminary research proposal, but future research of this kind would require a more extensive control group and a larger number of participants for sounder analyses. Other communities of similar characteristics could be included to formalise English immigration groups as legitimate bilingual research opportunities.

In terms of future research, results from this study are currently being contrasted with those obtained from a more legitimate bilingual community, namely Gibraltar. As for our education proposals, these could be put into practise in controlled environments and performance tests could be conducted to analyse whether our methodological proposals wield significant results.

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