Spanish/English Codeswitching in Young Adult Novels

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Abstract

Codeswitching is the alternation of two different languages or language varieties within a given sentence or conversation. Among fluent bilinguals, codeswitching can be used to carry pragmatic or socio-psychological information as well (Myers-Scotton, 1998, 22). I examine with both qualitative and quantitative means the syntactic, discourse, and socio-psychological roles played by Spanish/English codeswitching in two young adult novels and determine whether these vary by the ethnicity of the author and the intended audience.

Quantitative analyses were performed by categorizing all codeswitches into syntactic categories and discourse functions. Qualitative analyses included both an analysis of the association of codeswitching with narrative themes and analysis of individual instances of codeswitching via the Markedness Model. These two frameworks were used to analyze two different young adult novels featuring codeswitching by Mexican-American characters, one by and for Mexican-Americans and one by a Chinese American author with a wider intended audience. As a result, most potential differences in the use of codeswitching by those with a different relationship to the wider community of Spanish/English bilinguals should be evident in these two works.

Both the quantitative and qualitative analyses indicated that the Mexican-American author, Isabel Quintero, codeswitched a wider range of discourse functions, a more evenly distributed set of syntactic categories, and connected this codeswitching to a wider range of themes than Stacey Lee. These results indicate that an author’s first-hand experience in a speech community that practices codeswitching allows for a more nuanced and diverse representation of codeswitching in their fiction writing.

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

Codeswitching, or the alternation between two languages within a discourse, is a hallmark of bilingual communities. While often associated with gaps in a speaker’s knowledge in a given language, deliberate codeswitching, may in fact be more common. In deliberate codeswitching, which may or may not involve conscious choice, language alternation and

* Thanks to Donna Jo Napoli, Jamie Thomas, Amy Giacomucci, and Guadalupe Barrientos for their feedback and guidance on this work. All errors are my own.
language choice can themselves be used to convey pragmatic or socio-psychological information and further a speaker’s conversational goals (Peñalosa, 1980, 63). This study aims to examine the use of codeswitching in two young adult novels both quantitatively and qualitatively and determine both whether it is accounted for within current models of codeswitching and whether it varies with the language background of the author and intended audience.

1.2 Pragmatic reasons for codeswitching

Codeswitching can serve a variety of pragmatic and sociolinguistic purposes within conversations. Pragmatic purposes can be most readily identified, in which the choice of language itself carries a piece of information. It can specify the identity of the codeswitched phrase, as in (1) (Lee, 2014, 366):

(1) “I had my own *problemo* to deal with.”
“*I had my own problem* to deal with.”

In this case, by switching to Spanish solely for the word *problemo*, the character notes that the problem she was dealing with was the Mexican cowboy. The language used denotes the fact that the phrase refers to something associated with that language. In addition to denoting the referent of a phrase, it can also denote the recipient using it to distinguish between possible addresses and using it to make a dichotomy within the conversation, such as between action and discussion (Gardner-Chloros, 2009, 80, 66).

1.2 The Markedness Model

The socio-psychological information that can be conveyed through codeswitching is described by the Markedness Model (MM), developed by Carol Myers-Scotton. The MM, like Grice’s conversational maxims, relies on the idea that speakers impart more information through their speech than the specific referential message contains. Unlike Grice’s maxims, however, the

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*All translations marked with an asterisk were done by the author with help from Guadalupe Barrientos. All other translations were taken from the same source as the data.*
additional information the MM concerns is socio-psychological, rather than referential (Myers-Scotton, 1998, 22). As described by the author, the guiding principle of the MM is to “choose the form of your conversational contribution such that it indexes the set of rights and obligations which you wish to be in force between the speaker and addressee for the current exchange” (Myers-Scotton, 1998, 21). This model relies on the assumption that all speakers have an internalized measure of the markedness of a given code within a conversation and that they choose to use a more or less marked code in order to negotiate their position within a conversation. The maxims described by this model vary between its iterations, but the most general form are below, followed by an example of their use (Myers-Scotton, 1998, 26):

I. The Unmarked Choice Maxim: Make your code choice the unmarked index of the unmarked rights and obligations set in talk exchanges when you wish to establish or affirm that rights and obligations set.

(2) Eh, ana- ik hebe gewoon eh zo'n beer tje bekocht voor uh stoelen enzo weet je wel, vind ik leuk, u kont ana baga negri dik s-smurven voor de a uto. 'Uh, I - I just bought such a little bear for chairs and so, you know, I like that, and I wanted to buy those smurfs for the car.'

This example comes from a conversation between young Arabic/Dutch bilingual speakers in the Netherlands, for whom codeswitching between these two languages is the unmarked choice in conversations among peers (Myers-Scotton, 1993, 481)

II. The Marked Choice Maxim: Make a marked choice which is not the unmarked index of the unmarked rights and obligations set in an interaction when you wish to establish a new rights and obligations set as unmarked for the current exchange.

(3) “At a university where I used to teach, a male professor whom I knew socially was named provost. One day soon after his appointment I called him on departmental business. As a conversational opener, I identified myself and said, How are you? Rather than respond with the unmarked choice in such an interaction between acquaintances, if not close friends (Fine, how are you?), he said, What can I do for you? This choice, marked for conversational openers between friends and even only social acquaintances, of course, was his negotiation for a new RO set in which we were not to interact as friends but as provost and faculty member.” (Myers-Scotton, 1998, 29)
III. The Exploratory Choice Maxim: When an unmarked choice is not clear, use switching between speech varieties to make alternate exploratory choices as (alternate) candidates for the unmarked choice and thereby as an index of a rights and obligations set which you favor.

(4) He: Nisaidie na dance, tafadhali.
    Please give me a dance.
She: Nimechoka. Pengine nyimbo ifuatayo.
    I’m tired. Maybe the following song.
He: Hii ndio nyimbo niyayopenda.
    His is the song which I like
She: Nimechoka!
    I’m tired!
He: Tafadhali –
    Please –
She: (interrupting) Ah, stop bugging me.
He: I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to bug you, but I can’t help it if I like this song.
She: OK, then, in that case we can dance.

In this case, which is from a dance hall in Swahili, the young man attempting to gain a dance partner begins with the “neutral” choice, but upon his partner’s switch to English he switches as well. It is this exploration of a second choice that appears to change her mind. By codeswitching, therefore, he was able to determine that it was English that invoked an RO set which persuaded her to dance with him (Gardner-Chloros, 2009, 69).

IV. Deference Maxim: Switch to a code which expresses deference to others when special respect is called for by the circumstances.

(5) I think this is what I shall do, because I am – where is the time, bwana? Time I the problem with me – Wewe unajua mimi niko mwandikawa, bwana. I have always to squeeze myself. Niko taibu, bwana – na sasa watu ya kusaidia taibu yangu ni watu kama wewe, tu. No, what do I do, bwana? – I will come, but, huyu mzee yangu, nahitaji unisaidie, bwana na mzee yangu – una experience nyingi – Umezoea mambo haya naweza kusaidia mimi na mzee yangu.

I think this is what I shall do, because I am – where is the time, mister? Time I the problem with me – You know I am here, fated. I have always to squeeze myself. I have worries, mister – Now the people who can help (me) in my troubles are people such as you. No, what do I do, mister? – I will come, but, my dear old mother, I need your help, mister, y dear old mother – you have lots of experience. You are used to these matters (and) you can help me with my dear old mother.

The above example of English/Swahili codeswitching, a request posed by an accountant to his client in Kenya, comes from a situation in which English, the
language of business exchanges in Kenya, would be unmarked. As is backed up by empirical data, speakers from this group view the speaker as switching to Swahili as a technique for showing deference while posing a request for a favor (Myers-Scotton, 1983, 124-125).

V. **Virtuosity Maxim**: Switch to whatever code is necessary in order to carry on the conversation/accommodate the participation of all speakers present.

(6) Mr. Beck: *A table les enfants!*
*Lunch is ready, children!*

Mrs. Beck: *De Putzlumpe isch gefrore sinn. Allez vite maintenant, allons!*
*The mop was frozen. Come on now, quickly!*

Grandfather: *Hit morje haw ich gelöjt, sinn's vier Grad g'sinn.*
*I had a look this morning, it was four degrees.*

Mrs. Beck: *Ja, s'isch unter null g'sinn. S'isch g'frore g'sinn. Des pommes de terre, qui veut des pommes de terre? Yes, it was below zero. Potatoes, who wants potatoes?*

In (6), which takes place at the table of an Alsation family, the parents, Mr. and Mrs. Beck, switch between Alsatian and French to accommodate the participation of the grandfather, who only speaks primarily Alsatian, and their children, who are primarily French-speakers. In this conversation, Mr. and Mrs. Beck therefore alternate their code choice based on the language capabilities of their intended audience for each statement, command, or question (Gardner-Chloros, 2009, 80).

Overall, these maxims emphasize the fact that speakers choose to speak in unmarked codes to maintain the status quo within a conversation, but use marked codes to challenge that status quo or to convey gratitude or respect.

Myers-Scotton also developed maxims more specifically focused to codeswitching, which can be seen below (Myers-Scotton, 1993, 480):

VI. **The Sequential Unmarked Choice Maxim**: Switch from one unmarked code to another when situational features change during an interaction such that the unmarked choice changes.

This can be seen above in (6), the example for the Virtuosity Maxim, where the people involved in the conversation change from line to line, resulting in switches between French and Alsatian.

VII. **The CS as an Unmarked Choice Maxim**: Maintain a pattern of switching between codes when the unmarked rights and obligations balance for participants is that indexed by both codes, not one alone.
This can be seen in (2), the example for the Unmarked Choice Maxim, which comes from a conversation between Arabic-Dutch youths for whom Arabic/Dutch codeswitching is an unmarked choice.

These maxims, which explicitly refer to the choice to codeswitch, affirm the fact that codeswitching can itself be the unmarked choice or that the unmarked code choice is either changing or unknown. As a result, these maxims explain situations unaddressed by the set of maxims not specific to codeswitching.

1.3 Previous research on codeswitching in fiction

Two previous studies have already considered codeswitching in literature and provide the basis for the analyses performed in this study. The first, published by Callahan in 2004, examined Spanish/English codeswitching qualitatively in a large written corpus. Callahan sets up a framework of categories into which she can sort the pragmatic uses of codeswitching (2004, 71-74):

- Referential (Callahan, 2004, 73)
  
  (7) So cruising became for us on shadowy autumn nights an aberrant social interaction...; up to the Heights... and through the forgotten vecindades del Valle...
  
  So cruising became for us on shadowy autumn nights an aberrant social interaction...; up to the Heights... and through the forgotten Valley neighborhoods...

- Vocatives (Callahan, 2004, 73)
  
  (8) (so much for the computer age, *mijos*)
  (so much for the computer age, *my children*)

- Expletives (Callahan, 2004) 72)
  
  (9) *coño, carajo, concho*
  
  *sh*t, f*ck, *d*amn it*

- Quotation (Callahan, 2004, 72)
  
  (10) But like my father always said, "*El dinero robado tú te lo gastas con miedo.*"
  
  But like my father always said, "You spend stolen money in fear."
Commentary and repetition (Callahan, 2004, 73)

(11) The elders loosened up – ¡que se aflojaron! – got tired, and permitted the youngsters to come back.
The elders loosened up – they loosened up! – got tired, and permitted the youngsters to come back.

Set phrases, tags and exclamations (Callahan, 2004, 74)

(12) Dios te bendiga, ¿que no?, ¿verdad? ¿entiendes? chévere! ¡bendito!
God bless you, right?, right?, do you understand?, cool!, blessed!

Discourse markers (Callahan, 2004, 74)

(13) mira, bueno, pues, porque
look, OK, well, because*

Directives (Callahan, 2004, 74)

(14) “Vámonos, man, let’s get out of this joint!” Carlos pleaded.
“Let’s go, man, let’s get out of this joint!” Carlos pleaded.

Excluding the referential category, which was the default and the most common, most of the codeswitching Callahan examined fell into the vocative, with the combined category of set phrases, tags, and exclamations as the second most common. She also identified the syntactic category of all codeswitches, based on the type of single lexical item, phrase, or clause they comprised (Callahan, 2004, 47). Single nouns were by far the most common type of code switch, with interjections coming in second. This analysis provides a methodology for my study that will allow me to compare works quantitatively.

Gross (2000), in contrast, performed a qualitative analysis of codeswitching in three dramatic works using the MM as a framework. He examined three situations in which the unmarked code was either Spanish, English, or Spanish/English codeswitching and found that each of them could be explained by the MM (Gross, 2000, 1293). While not explicitly identifying the maxims in place in each encounter, he notes that the less powerful characters
within the encounter tend to use the marked code in order to maximize their position and increase their status, as in (15) except in one case, shown in (16) where using the disfavored code actually allows the character to forfeit status in order to escape a dangerous situation (Gross 200, 1293-1298).

(15) Teacher: Get up there and give your report, you hoodlum.
Francisco: Orale, ese vato, llevatela suave. (Moves to center stage.)
             All right, this dude's cool.
             A is for amor, como amor de mi Raza.
             A is for love, like the love for my people.
Teacher: What!
Francisco: B is for barrio como where the Raza lives. (Teacher growls.) And C
             B is for barrio like where the Raza lives. (Teacher growls.) And C
             is for carnalismo.
             Is for brotherhood
Teacher: (Heated.) How many times have I told you about speaking Spanish
             in my classroom, now what did you say?
Francisco: Carnalismo.
             Brotherhood
Teacher: (At the limit of his patience.) And what does that mean?
Francisco: Brotherhood.
Teacher: (Blows up.) Get out!
Francisco: Why? I was only speaking my language. I'm a Chicano, que no?
             Why? I was only speaking my language. I'm a Chicano, aren't I?

(16) As far as fights go, I had my share. Once a tough carnal challenged me to fight. He sensed I was afraid of him. This was no lie, but so was every other kid my size. 'Vamos a darnos en la madre', he invited me as the crowd of other batos circled anticipating the action and wanting the best possible view of the massacre. 'No'. I answered, but quickly followed with, 'Not now, tomorrow, at noon, here. I can't see too well at night'. He laughed, and so did the other batos, sensing my copout. It was miedo, they were sure, and laughed some more.

As far as fights go, I had my share. Once a tough dude challenged me to fight. He sensed I was afraid of him. This was no lie, but so was every other kid my size. 'Let's go so I can beat the shit out of you', he invited me as the crowd of other guys circled anticipating the action and wanting the best possible view of the massacre. 'No'. I answered, but quickly followed with, 'Not now, tomorrow, at noon, here. I can't see too well at night'. He laughed, and so did the other guys, sensing my copout. It was fear, they were sure, and laughed some more.
Gross argues that this literary data can serve as evidence regarding the choices of less-powerful individuals to codeswitch to the marked code, stating that he “holds the view that literary discourse is not functionally different from other types of discourse and that any theoretical framework that can describe and explain language in nonliterary settings ought to be able to do the same in literary contexts” (Gross 2000, 1291-1292). This statement, however, conflicts with his analysis that the MM is an examination of the intentionality behind a statement. In the case of literary data, there are two levels of intentionality, that of the character and that of the author. As a result, while this study will emulate Gross’s use of the MM to analyze instances of codeswitching within literary novels, it will also consider the intentions of the author.

2 Methods

2.1 Selection of the works

The two novels selected for comparison were chosen on the basis of their different authors and intended audiences. *Gabi, A Girl in Pieces* was written by Isabel Quintero, a Mexican-American author, primarily for a Spanish/English bilingual audience, while *Under a Painted Sky* was written by Stacey Lee, a Chinese American author, for a much wider intended audience. Isabel Quintero is a second generation Mexican immigrant who is bilingual in Spanish and English (Quintero, 2015). Her familiarity with codeswitching is evidenced by the presence of codeswitching on her website (Quintero, 2015). Evidence for these distinct audiences comes from both author statements, the nature of their publication and promotion, as well as the texts themselves. Isabel Quintero *Gabi, A Girl in Pieces* was published by Cinco Punte Press, a publisher that focuses on Mexican-American writers and readers, while *Under a Painted Sky* was published by an imprint of Penguin, one of the major American publishing houses. Moreover, the text of *Gabi, A Girl in Pieces* assumes a knowledge of Spanish, while *Under a Painted Sky*...
does not. As can be seen in (17), large stretches of Spanish remain untranslated within *Gabi, A Girl in Pieces*, while *Under a Painted Sky* provides translation within the text, as in (18)

(Quintero, 2014, 94; Lee, 2015, 51):

(17) Little Brother cries and asks, “Why don’t you love me?” Our father, the best, answers, “Vete con tu madre, ella si te querré.” And she does, even if she’s always scolding us.

(18) “Hablas Español,” he murmurs. “Si Princesa te quiere, entonces tenemos un trato.” I translate in my head: If Princess likes you, we have a deal.

Thus, both the text themselves and their publishing and promotional context indicate that *Gabi, A Girl in Pieces*, was written by and for the Spanish/English bilingual community, while *Under a Painted Sky* was intended for a wider audience. This allows them to be used in a comparison between codeswitching as written by and for the speech community that uses it and codeswitching as it is written by someone from outside of that community.

2.2 Quantitative comparison

To compare them quantitatively, I used two classification systems adapted from Callahan (2004, 55-74). These systems classified all instances of codeswitching according to both discourse role and grammatical status within a sentence. Due to the difficulty of identifying the matrix language of any specific conversation, especially in *Gabi a Girl in Pieces*, where isolated pieces of dialogue were common, codeswitches were defined as a word, phrase, or clause in Spanish, the embedded language of both works as whole novels. For the discourse role analysis, each word or sentence was categorized as falling into the following categories: referential, set phrase, repetition, vocative, expletive, commentary, exclamation, euphemism, directive, quotative, question, or tag. This primarily matches the categories described by Callahan (2004, 71-74), with some combined categories (such as tags and exclamations or commentary and repetition) separated. In addition, the categories of euphemism and question were added to cover
instances of codeswitching that did not appear to fall into any of the categories described by Callahan but that were present in the two novels examined here. To compare frequency of discourse roles across both novels, the percentage of non-referential switches was calculated for each discourse role. Referential switches, the default category, were the most common and obscured the patterns of discourse role use in the works.

Switches were also categorized by the morphological category of an individual lexical item (nouns, adjectives, adverb, preposition, conjunction), at the phrasal level by the category of the phrase (noun phrase, adjective phrase, adverb phrase, prepositional) or by their syntactic status as independent or subordinate clauses. Interjections (namely affirmatives, negations, greetings, and tags) were excluded from this analysis due to their lack of a morphological or syntactic status. Once again, percentage of total switches was then calculated.

2.3 Qualitative comparison

To complement this quantitative analysis, I also performed a qualitative analysis to examine the ways in which the characters used codeswitching to advance their conversational goals, the ways in which the authors used codeswitching to advance the novels’ themes and narrative goals, and the way the code-switching affected me, as a reader. The Markedness Model developed by Carol Myers-Scotton and described earlier was the basis for the analysis of the characters’ use of codeswitching. For a given scene or interaction, I identified the unmarked code (either Spanish, English, or Spanish/English code switching), and determined which of the maxims were indicated by the characters’ code choice. I then compared the types and variety of maxims at work in the two novels. To consider the use of codeswitching to further the narrative and themes of the novels, I looked at when codeswitching was used or discussed within the novel, and how those patterns were related to the thematic structure of the novels. I identified
which themes co-occurred with codeswitching and compared them between novels. Between these quantitative and qualitative comparisons, the differences and similarities between these novels in the types of codeswitching and their uses, both at the levels of the characters and the stories, becomes clear, thereby providing valuable information on how membership in a bilingual speech community affects one’s use of codeswitching in fiction.

2.4 Distinction between codeswitching and borrowing

For both of these analyses, a distinction had to be made between codeswitching and borrowing, as both are frequently used within the same bilingual topics. For this paper, borrowing is taken to be the adoption of a word from one language into another, in which some level of morphological, phonological or syntactic adaptation has taken place (Gardner-Chloros, 2009, 12). While this distinction is in reality less clear, a clean divide is made in this paper for expository purposes. As Callahan (2014, 38) notes, the most commonly used metric, the frequency of a word, is not sufficient in large works, where a single word may be codeswitched multiple times. Instead, a combination of factors was used to identify and exclude borrowings. All words that have entered the English vocabulary of non-Spanish speakers (e.g. burrito, taco) or would be the only word available (e.g. ponche, tehocote) were excluded. Between these two qualifiers, effectively all words for prepared food were excluded. In addition, family terms were excluded, due to the fact that they appeared, especially for extended kinship terms, to have completely replaced their English counterparts. Moreover, the use of the term ex-tio indicated that one of these terms (and therefore, likely all of them) could be modified by English morphemes, a commonly used distinction between borrowings and codeswitches (Quintero, 2014, 45; Callahan, 2004, 39).

3 Results
3.1 Quantitative Analyses of Codeswitching

A quantitative comparison of the discourse functions of codeswitching indicates differences in both the degree of diversity in the discourse functions used and the most prevalent forms of codeswitching. *Gabi, A Girl in Pieces* demonstrated a wider variety of discourse functions in codeswitches, with all of the categories represented, while *Under a Painted Sky* only contained seven out of twelve possible functions (see Table 1). Moreover, the two most common non-referential discourse roles in *Under a Painted Sky*, directives and vocatives, account for 71% of all non-referential codeswitches. In contrast, the top two non-referential discourse roles for *Gabi, A Girl in Pieces*, repetition and commentary, only account for 35% of non-referential codeswitches. This indicates that codeswitches in *Under a Painted Sky* both fall into fewer discourse roles and are distributed less evenly among the discourse roles that are present. Thus, the discourse role analysis provides one piece of evidence for the argument that *Under a Painted Sky* uses codeswitching in a less varied and rich way than *Gabi, A Girl in Pieces*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discourse Role</th>
<th><strong>Gabi, A Girl in Pieces</strong></th>
<th><strong>Under a Painted Sky</strong></th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td>Total number</td>
<td>Percentage of non-</td>
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<td><strong>Total Non-Referential Switches</strong></td>
<td><strong>68</strong></td>
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Table 1. Discourse functions of codeswitches.
In addition to representing fewer discourse roles in its codeswitching, *Under a Painted Sky* also represents different categories more frequently than *Gabi, A Girl in Pieces*. While *Gabi, A Girl in Pieces* most frequently uses codeswitching for commentary and repetition, *Under a Painted Sky* most frequently uses it for directives and vocatives. Interestingly, both of these pairings seem to play related purposes distinct from one another. The topics most common in *Gabi, A Girl in Pieces*, both commentary and repetition, are discourse roles used to allow for emphasis and continued discussion of a topic without exact repetition. Thus they play a role central to the speaker’s ability to convey information in a pleasing manner. *Under a Painted Sky*, in contrast, primarily uses codeswitching for vocatives and directives, both of which are the discourse roles most directly tied to the relationship between the two speakers. It is through these two categories that a speaker can most directly influence the listeners’ actions and their perception of the relationship between speaker and audience. These distinct groupings of categories suggest that the differences in prevalent discourse roles between the two novels is not random, but rather reflects differing purposes for which codeswitching is being used.

A similar pattern can be found in the grammatical analysis distinguishing between 6 lexical types (5 major category heads plus “conjunction”), 5 types of phrases, and 2 types of clauses (see Table 2). In this case, the difference in the number of grammatical statuses represented is somewhat less dramatic, with six out of thirteen represented in *Under a Painted Sky* compared to nine out of thirteen in *Gabi, A Girl in Pieces*. It is possible, although unlikely, that this could be simply the result of the greater number of codeswitches in *Gabi, A Girl in Pieces*, rather than a true difference in variety, especially as many of the categories are only represented once or twice in *Gabi, A Girl in Pieces*. Evidence against this suggestion is that the pattern of a more even distribution of codeswitches across grammatical statuses in *Gabi, A Girl*...
*in Pieces* is found in the grammatical analysis just as it was in the discourse role analysis. Close to two thirds of the codeswitches in *Under a Painted Sky* were nouns and noun phrases, while only 55% of codeswitches in *Gabi, A Girl in Pieces* fell into those categories. Thus, the grammatical analysis reconfirms the analysis of discourse roles and suggests that *Gabi, A Girl in Pieces* uses codeswitching in a more versatile fashion than *Under a Painted Sky*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Gabi, A Girl in Pieces</strong></th>
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<th><strong>Under a Painted Sky</strong></th>
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<td>52</td>
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</table>

Table 2. Syntactic category analysis.

Moreover, this analysis may not fully capture the difference in authors’ uses of codeswitching between the two novels. In fact, almost all codeswitching in *Under a Painted Sky* is limited to nouns or single word noun-phrases or entire conversational turns, as in (19), (20), and (21), respectively (Lee, 2015, 56, 202).

(19) “And your Español?” asks Peety.
   “And your Spanish?” asks Peety.*

(20) “Not much fur on your cheeks, *chicos.*”
   “Not much fur on your cheeks, *boys.*”*
In contrast, codeswitches of multiple word noun--phrases, or of other types of phrases within a larger sentence, are remarkably rare. While this may not have any syntactic significance, it seems to indicate that the author was viewing codeswitching as something can only occur at the unit of a single word or a whole sentence. The rare examples of single verbs or single adverbs came in situations such as (4) and (5), where it did not reside within a larger clause or where the single verb composed a well-formed independent clause (Lee, 2015, 93, 108):

(22) “Rápido, amigos, the boy caught something,”
   “Quickly, friends, the boy caught something.”*

(23) “Princesa never done stampede before. Vámanos.”
   “Princesa never done stampede before. Let’s go.”* 

Thus, the uses of codeswitching in *Under a Painted Sky* are in fact more limited than are indicated by a purely grammatical analysis.

3.2 Qualitative analyses

3.2.1 Codeswitching and the narrative

As these novels are works of literature and not simply true reportings of events, it is necessary to consider not just how the characters use codeswitching, but also how the authors use codeswitching to advance the narrative and the story’s themes. By examining how codeswitching co-occurs with particular themes and how it is deliberately invoked to advance them, the authors’ deliberate use of codeswitching to further these narratives can be revealed. In doing so, it once again becomes clear that Isabel Quintero, in *Gabi, A Girl in Pieces*, uses codeswitching to convey a wider array of messages than Stacey Lee does in *Under a Painted Sky*. While the first novel uses codeswitching both to highlight feelings of belonging and group identity, it also co-occurs frequently with the struggle between identities and tensions within communities over the
blending of cultures. *Under a Painted Sky*, however, primarily uses codeswitching to celebrate multiculturalism and to highlight themes of unity and belonging.

The positive themes highlighted by codeswitching in *Gabi, A Girl in Pieces* can most easily be seen in the book’s only explicit discussion of codeswitching. This comes when Gabi first reads Mexican-American poets in her poetry class and discovers that it is possible to use codeswitching in poetry. Her positive reaction can be seen in (24) (Quintero, 2014, 67):

(24) Martin did great. His poem had some words in Spanish and so did mine. We have been practicing using two languages in writing since after we read some poems by two superpoets: Michele Sierros (who is still alive AND from California!) and Sandra Cisneros (she’s still alive too, but not from California). Before we read their poetry, I didn’t even know you could use two languages in a poem.

Her strong identification with these poets is clear from her emphasis on the home state she shares with one of them and also her eagerness to emulate their use of codeswitching. In this case, therefore, the poets’ use of codeswitching is a signal to Gabi that there is overlap between the bilingual community she comes from and the poetry community she hopes to enter. Codeswitching therefore becomes a symbol of belonging and shared culture.

Codeswitching is also strongly connected to the related positive theme of the importance of familial ties. The first example of this comes in a sentence directly stating this theme, as can be seen in (25) (Quintero, 2014, 65):

(25) They need each other- they’re blood. Family. *Familia*. And while *familia* is the glue that keeps us crazy, it’s also the glue that makes us who we are.

In this case, the codeswitches are primarily repetitive and don’t provide new referential information, but instead highlight the cultural importance placed on family. The same emphasis appears in the codeswitches present in Gabi’s letters to her father. Although the letters are primarily in English, they frequently contain sentences in Spanish that specifically emphasize Gabi’s affection for her father, as in (26) and (27) (Quintero, 2014, 41, 192):
Help tía Bertha find a boyfriend! Or girlfriend. Or something. She is way too lonely and grouchy and I can’t handle her anymore! Te quiero mucho. Tu hija, Gabi

Help tía Bertha find a boyfriend! Or girlfriend. Or something. She is way too lonely and grouchy and I can’t handle her anymore! I love you a lot. Your daughter, Gabi

Te extraño mucho. I miss you everyday.
I miss you a lot. I miss you everyday.*

Once again, in (24) the information conveyed in the codeswitch is duplicated for the most part in the English text and the codeswitch instead emphasizes the importance of the familial relationships being discussed in Mexican-American culture, which is represented in the text by the use of the Spanish language. In contrast, her letters to her boyfriend contains no Spanish, despite the fact that he is bilingual as well—perhaps due to Gabi’s assumption that letter-writing, as a more formal method of communication, should take place primarily in English (Quintero, 2014, 64). Thus, in addition to belonging, codeswitches into Spanish are used within Gabi, A Girl in Pieces to underline the importance of familial relationships to Gabi and her community.

However, the themes associated with codeswitching in Gabi, A Girl in Pieces are not always positive themes of strong relationships and belonging. This can be seen the most clearly in the most frequently repeated Spanish phrase, (28), which appears throughout the course of the novel, beginning on the first page (Quintero, 2014, 7):

(28) “Ojos abiertos, piernas cerradas.”
“Eyes open, legs closed.”

This phrase, which Gabi’s mother uses to warn her daughter against any exploration of her sexuality, is a point of tension throughout the novel. In fact, even after that first introduction of the phrase, Gabi notes that she doesn’t particularly agree with her mother’s emphasis on chastity and notes that this is a cultural difference, as can be seen in (29) (Quintero, 2014, 7):

(29) I don’t necessarily agree with the whole wait-until-you’re-married crap though. I mean, this is America and the twenty-first century, not Mexico one hundred years ago. But, of
course, I can’t tell my mom that because she’ll think I’m bad. Or worse: trying to be White.

Thus the first instance of codeswitching in the novel is not tied to any positive conception of community or family, but rather to a tension between the two cultures between which Gabi finds herself torn.

This association between codeswitching and cultural tensions continues throughout the novel. In addition to this phrase, one of the most commonly codeswitched words, ofrecida, is a derogatory term used to refer to sexually active women, and once again is a part of the cultural judgments questioned by Gabi over the course of the novel. The tension this questioning causes her to have with her mother can be seen in (30) (Quintero, 2014, 107):

(30) “Oh, que te crees? Americana? We don’t do things like that.”
“Oh, what do you think you are? American? We don’t do things like that.”*

Once again, codeswitching is directly associated with a discussion of the incompatibility between certain values her mother’s culture holds dear and those more mainstream in American culture as a whole. Thus, codeswitching’s positive associations with family and community in Gabi, A Girl in Pieces are accompanied by more mixed associations with conflicts between cultures.

On the other hand, codeswitching in Under a Painted Sky is associated exclusively with positive feelings of belonging. This can be seen from the first uses of codeswitching, where the main character, Samantha, uses her knowledge of Spanish to gain entrance into a group of cowboys traveling west. By using Spanish to respond to their challenge, as can be seen in (31), she gains their respect (Lee, 2015, 51):

(31) “¿Cómo puedo probar?”
“How do I prove my worth?”
Moreover, it is her knowledge of Spanish that directly allows her to join the group, as the horse she rides only responds to Spanish commands. Thus from the very beginning, codeswitching in *Under a Painted Sky* is associated with belonging and bonds of friendship.

This association holds up for the rest of the novel. The most common codeswitch in the story, the word *chicos* as a vocative, is effectively a term of endearment, at least by the end of the novel. When the Mexican-American finally affirms that the main character and her friend have been fully accepted into his group, in (32), he switches into Spanish to do it (Lee, 2015, 239):

(32) "You and Andito take good care of us. I want you to know we appreciate it. We’re like a big *familia*, eh?"

"You and Anadito take good care of us. I want you to know we appreciate it. We’re like a big *family*, eh?"

By switching into Spanish solely for the word ‘*familia,*’ the author firmly associates the language with acceptance and the concept of a found family.

The consistent use of codeswitching to establish and reinforce social bonds in *Under a Painted Sky* reflects a deliberate choice on the part of the author to establish codeswitching as a source of unity and social cohesion. This stands in direct contrast to its representation within *Gabi, A Girl in Pieces,* where codeswitching is used both to strengthen familial bonds and foster a sense of belonging, but also to highlight tensions between cultures. This pattern is consistent with those found in the quantitative analyses, indicating that Isabel Quintero uses codeswitching in more varied ways than Stacey Lee, regardless of whether one considers discourse functions, grammatical functions, or themes.

3.2.2 The Markedness Model analysis

Unlike the other analyses, analysis of codeswitching in these two novels uncovers that both of them use a similar number of maxims, although which ones they use may vary. The second instance of *Under a Painted Sky*, (28), discussed above in 3.2.1, is a clear example of the
Marked Choice Maxim. The exchange between Samantha and the cowboys she has just encountered begins in English, the clearly unmarked code in the situation. Since the exchange takes place in a region where English is the dominant language, and the bilingual statuses of all of the speakers other than the Mexican-American cowboy are unknown to the other members of the conversation. Thus when she switches to Spanish to say (31), this is clearly a marked choice. (Lee, 2015, 51):

(31) “¿Cómo puedo probar?”
“How do I prove my worth?”

Consistent with the analysis that her use of Spanish is a marked choice, it causes significant surprise, as can be seen in (29) (Lee, 2015, 51):

(33) Green-Eyes chokes out a laugh. Annamae’s pupils slide from one side to the other, like she’s not sure she heard right. Finally paying attention, the Mexican swaggers toward me like a Spanish bullfighter addressing a cow that has wandered into the arena: posture erect, nostrils flared, eyes bemused.

As is consistent with the Markedness Model, Samantha makes this choice of a marked code in order to shift the relationship, or RO set, between her and the cowboys. The success of this can be seen above, as it finally garners her the attention of the cowboys’ leader. Whereas prior to her use of Spanish the cowboys were uninterested in even continuing to talk to her, this use of Spanish gains their interest and, eventually, leads to her acceptance into their group. This first case is therefore a clear example of the Marked Choice Maxim.

Even after Samantha’s bilingualism is established, English remains the unmarked code for her interactions with Peety, the Mexican cowboy and she uses English with him almost exclusively. However, the only time she uses Spanish with him, to thank him for a gift as discussed above in the theme section, provides a clear example of one of the lesser maxims, the
Deference Maxim. In this instance, the use of the marked code, as can be seen in (31), is in fact an act of deference that emphasizes her gratitude.

(34) “Peety, this is the nicest-” I can’t finish my sentence. I wipe my eyes and take a deep breath to get the tremors out of my voice. “Muchas gracias, mi amigo.”

“Peety, this is the nicest-” I can’t finish my sentence. I wipe my eyes and take a deep breath to get the tremors out of my voice. “Thanks a lot, my friend.”*

This example demonstrates how the use of a marked code can be used to show respect for another character, in this case by using their preferred code.

In contrast, the most common maxim present in *Gabi, A Girl in Pieces*, is definitely the CS as an Unmarked Choice maxim. This is consistent with the observation by Myers-Scotton that this maxim is most prominent in in-group conversations between bilingual peers (Myers-Scotton, 1993, 482). As most of the characters in *Gabi, A Girl in Pieces* are bilingual and many conversations are between her and her friends and classmates, who count as peers, this maxim should be prevalent. Indeed, conversations such as that in (35) clearly demonstrate situations in which codeswitching is not produced with the goal of altering the conversational dynamic, but rather as the unmarked choice (Quintero, 2014, 130)

(35) “No exageres. Relax, I’m sure there are plenty of baby-friendly places you can go.”

“Don’t exaggerate. Relax, I’m sure there are plenty of baby-friendly places you can go.”*

In this case, the codeswitching has no underlying goal related to altering the standing of the participants in the conversation. CS as an Unmarked Choice is also clear in Gabi’s use of codeswitching within the narration, which is presented as her diary. Since this diary nominally has no audience other than Gabi herself, she cannot have any intent to change her standing through this speech. Nonetheless, codeswitching is widespread even out of the dialogue, as can be seen in (36) (Quintero, 2014, 26):
(36) Now I’m going to have to wear it, otherwise it would hurt her feelings. Oh well. *Así es la vida.* That’s my life at least.
Now I’m going to have to wear it, otherwise it would hurt her feelings. Oh well. *That’s life.* That’s my life at least.*

Unmarked codeswitching is therefore present both in the predicted peer-group conversations and also in the ‘audience-less’ narration.

The Marked Choice Maxim, in contrast, is much more common in Gabi’s interactions with her parents. In these cases, English is often the unmarked choice, with Spanish used in order to establish an RO set in which family loyalty plays a larger part. This is clearest in her letters to her father. Perhaps due to the formal nature of letters (especially for Gabi’s generation, who have more casual textual forms of communication) Gabi codeswitches much less freely within these letters. Thus, when Spanish is used in these letters, it often accompanies a request for a reestablishment or improvement of their familial relationship, a change to the RO set. This can be seen in (37) most clearly, where Gabi’s affirmation of affection accompanies a request for her father to rejoin the family (Quintero, 2014, 41):

(37) I know you’re tired of living like this. Papi, I love you. *Te quiero con todo mi corazón.*
Come back, please. I know you’re tired of living like this. Papi, I love you. *I love you with all of my heart.*
Come back, please.*

This therefore constitutes a situation in which Gabi wishes to change the RO set by convincing her father that he has a responsibility to return to the family. Her switch to Spanish, the heritage language, serves as a reminder of this familial relationship and an effort to remind him of its importance and his responsibilities.

When examined through the lens of the MM, therefore, codeswitching in *Gabi, A Girl in Pieces* and *Under a Painted Sky* appear to be more similar than when examined in the other analyses. In both novels, the characters use the Marked Choice Maxim in order to negotiate the
RO set with other conversational participants. While the other maxims used may be different, this is likely simply a function of the different levels of bilingualism between the two books. As most of the speakers in *Gabi, A Girl in Pieces* are bilingual, the maxim of Codeswitching as an Unmarked Choice is more likely to come up, while in *Under a Painted Sky* the lack of more than one character who prefers Spanish means that the use of that code can be seen as a sign of respect, invoking the Deference Maxim.

### 3.2.3 Codeswitching and the reader

As a reader, my experience of these two novels was also directly affected by two major differences in their use of codeswitching: how Spanish was integrated into the text and how prevalent it was. In *Under a Painted Sky*, but not in *Gabi, a Girl in Pieces*, the Spanish was italicized, setting it apart from the English text and calling attention to it. When reading *Under a Painted Sky*, therefore, it was impossible for me to forget the Spanish was there, but it also divided the work into the default language (English) and the alternative language (Spanish). In contrast, the Spanish in *Gabi, a Girl in Pieces* was in no way visually marked, which caused it to be less marked in my perception of the narrative, as well. Therefore, it was a mix of Spanish and English that became the default in *Gabi, a Girl in Pieces*.

At the same time, this integration occasionally caused problems for me as a non-Spanish speaker. *Gabi, a Girl in Pieces* contained significant stretches of untranslated Spanish or Spanish-heavy codeswitching. While the meaning, or at least tone, of these passages was often decipherable from context, nuances were often lost. As a reader with a high tolerance for imperfect comprehension of a work and a high capacity for deciphering other languages, this did not significantly detract from my appreciation of the novel; however, it was apparent that this might not be the case for other readers. In contrast, *Under a Painted Sky*’s use of Spanish was far
more accessible. All long stretches of Spanish were translated, and many of the short words that were not translated were repeated such that a non-Spanish speaker could understand their meaning from context and learn them. This difference raises an important additional motivation in the portrayal of Spanish within these works. While Isabel Quintero’s portrayal of Spanish may have been more nuanced and even accurate to Mexican-American communities, Stacey Lee’s approach may have served a different purpose in allowing non-Spanish speakers to more easily approach the story.

4 Conclusion

All but one of the analyses preformed suggest a clear pattern: codeswitching in Under a Painted Sky is less diverse and varied than codeswitching in Gabi, A Girl in Pieces. Quintero uses a codeswitching for a wider range of discourse functions and syntactic constituents and connects it to a wider range of themes. Lee, in contrast, almost exclusively uses codeswitching for single nouns and one-word noun phrases or whole conversational turns and associates it only with themes of belonging and acceptance. This result matches well with the language backgrounds of the two authors. Quintero, as a Mexican-American who regularly uses codeswitching in her everyday life, has a more nuanced appreciation of the role codeswitching can play within conversations and the novel as a whole. This suggests that writers writing characters from a bilingual background to which they do not belong are at best less versatile in their use of codeswitching and at worst may not accurately portray that speech community.
References


