You Gotta Know the Rules to Break the Rules:
Code-Switching & Attitudes on Language in an Urban Classroom

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When I began teaching high school English Language Arts (ELA) in the South Bronx, I immediately noticed that my students came to me with little formal knowledge of Standard English (SE) grammar. Many of my students couldn't recognize how to fix incomplete sentences, and because they had so little grammar instruction, they couldn't even recognize the parts of speech beyond nouns and verbs. Without the vocabulary with which to speak about grammar, it was very difficult for me to explain to them how to edit their writing for a more formal audience. However, when I tried to teach grammar the way it had been taught to me, I was met with huge resistance from my students. That resistance turned to frustration not just for my students, but also with myself. I tried everything – diagramming sentences, worksheets from grammar books, the Writing Process, "grammar in context," even imitating popular writers – but nothing seemed to work. They'd learn nouns and verbs, and nothing else would stick.

While I watched other colleagues give up, or press on with their teaching techniques that clearly weren't working, I became ever more convinced that my students needed to learn Standard English grammar to be successful. I believe that as long as SE is required for state exams and college entrance (and therefore economic success), SE grammar *must* be taught in schools and is essential to closing the achievement gap. Teachers of English have an obligation to ensure that all students are able to meet city and state standards. If traditional methods of teaching grammar aren't working, then teachers have an obligation to seek out new ways to meet their students' needs. I was determined to find a way to do it.

Lisa Delpit argues, "If you are not already a participant in the culture of power, being told explicitly the rules of that culture makes acquiring power easier" (Delpit, 1995). With Delpit in mind, I delved deeper into the idea of "code-switching" and found one book, *Code-Switching: Teaching Standard English in Urban Classrooms* by Wheeler and Swords (2006). I managed to

get over my fear of the awkwardness of speaking and writing a dialect I don't know, and tried out some of the lessons. I found that this approach, which is similar to the idea of contrastive analysis, or comparing/contrasting dialects to better understand the language, worked better than anything else I'd tried. However, the book was written for elementary students and mine needed to go further. Before launching into a revision of my entire curriculum, I wanted to find out conclusively if this approach would raise my students' exam scores. This is the rationale that leads me to my research question: What is the impact of contrastive analysis language instruction?

Literature Review

I began my action research by investigating what had already been written on my students' home dialects. I am certainly not a linguist, but I did my best to observe and understand my students' home dialects. While I have students from all different backgrounds, the main dialect that I could identify was African American English (AAE). Some of my Hispanic students also seem to speak a variation on AAE, perhaps with some Spanish mixed in there. (I would go so far to say that most of my students speak a distinct "Bronx" dialect, a conglomeration of AAE, Spanish, African, and Caribbean influences, but there is very little literature on this).

Lisa Green (2002) explains that AAE is not a compilation of random deviations from mainstream English, but a rule-governed system, despite the "dialect prejudice" that many speakers face. Dialect prejudice negatively affects students' performance (Wheeler and Swords, 2006). This is important especially in ELA classrooms. The ELA teachers' attitudes affect reading achievement. "Teachers' unconscious but evident attitudes toward the home language causes a psychological barrier to learning by the student," making it much more difficult for a

child who speaks the black dialect or vernacular to read (Ball and Lardner, 1997). If the teacher exhibits dialect prejudice toward his/her students, those students will probably achieve fewer gains in reading. Dialect prejudice could be one of the main obstacles in closing the so-called "achievement gap" between white students and students of color, who often speak a home dialect that is at odds with the "school" dialect of SE. Wheeler and Swords (2006) confirm that traditional techniques for teaching SE to urban minority students have failed (Wheeler and Swords, 2006). Gilyard claims that this 'failure' to learn SE "is more accurately termed an act of resistance: Black students affirming, through Black English, their sense of self in the face of a school system and society that deny the same" (Gilyard, 1991). This helps to explain my students' resistance when I have tried to teach Standard English using traditional methods.

Green advocates for a contrastive analysis approach that integrates material written in dialect. Contrastive analysis approaches integrate material written in dialect and compares and contrasts linguistic features (Green, 2002). "Code-switching" is a kid-friendly way of talking about the subject. Code-switching is defined as the ability to choose the language style to fit the setting (Wheeler and Swords, 2006).

Among scholars, there has been much progress in addressing dialect prejudice over the last thirty years. Valerie Kinloch writes, "Teachers of writing must be grounded in linguistic and cultural negotiation and not in a wrong language/right language debate" and use an "interpretive attitude" to promote democratic practices in the classroom space (Kinloch, 2005). The National Council of the Teachers of English adopted the "Students' Right to their Own Language" resolution back in 1974. However, it "barely made a dent" on traditional attitudes and practices with respect to language differences (Smitherman, 1999).

The courts have even been involved in ensuring that students receive access to instruction that is free of dialect prejudice. The Ann Arbor Black English legal case (1978) and Oakland Ebonics debate (1996) shined the spotlight on this issue. However, the Oakland Ebonics debate (1997) was misrepresented by the media as an attempt to abandon teaching Standard English in favor of Ebonics, missing the real debate about how best to teach our African-American students (Perry, 1997). And the Ann Arbor Black English legal case left the question of how teachers are to respond to the linguistic and cultural diversity of their students unanswered.

However, the code-switching approach is not without its critics. Keith Gilyard argues that code-switching is "enforced educational schizophrenia." Likewise, Vershawn Ashanti Young argues that code-switching is racially biased, "requiring blacks to separate the codes that bespeak their identities from those they use at school. It breeds linguistic confusion" (Young, 1991). Kirkland and Jackson (2008) argue that while code-switching may be an effective instructional method, by using home languages simply as a "scaffold" for SE, code-switching can actually reinforce negative stereotypes and racist assumptions about language and identity. It seems that while code-switching has its merits as a pedagogical approach, there are other concerns about its impact on students' emotional well-being.

So it seems that while scholars have been talking about this issue for years, K-12 classroom teachers have been teaching grammar in the same old ways, and many have not changed their attitudes about home dialects and language acquisition. In fact, Rebecca Wheeler and Rachel Swords' *Code-Switching: Teaching Standard English in Urban Classrooms* is literally the only book of its kind with lesson plans and worksheets, and it is geared toward elementary students. What about my middle school and high school students who still struggle to learn SE?

Context

Eximius College Preparatory Academy is a 6-12 College Board school in the South Bronx. The school is in its third year of existence. The school has 408 students, 47% Black and 47% Hispanic. School wide, we have 18 ELL students (4.4%) as well as 26 (6.5%) Special Education students. We have a 90% attendance rate overall. The sixth graders are the participants of my study and were quite diverse learners. According to the Gates-McGinnity reading diagnostic that I administered prior to the start of the unit, their reading levels (grade levels) range from 1.0 to 12.0. The median reading level in class 601 was 3.8 and the median in 602 was 6.0. That is to say, on average, kids in 601 are two years below grade level in reading, but in 602, on average, kids are on grade level. Also in 601, I have five SETSS students (a special education designation) and four ESL students. I also had a small group of students who just recently placed out of ESL services, but who still struggle to keep up with their peers.

Eximius College Preparatory Academy	My Classroom
6-12 College Board school 3rd year of existence South Bronx 412 students 54% Black and 43% Hispanic 4% LEP students 7% Special Education students 92.5% Attendance rate 73.5% Title I Eligible (Source: 2007-2008 DOE School Quality Review)	2 Cohorts of 6th grade ELA 30 students per cohort 5 SETSS students 4 ELL students Median reading levels prior to unit: 601 = 3.8 602 = 6.0 Range of reading levels prior to unit: 601 = 2.8 – 6.7 602 = 1.0 –12.0 (Self-administered Gates-McGinnity reading diagnostic)

As a College Board school, we follow their SpringBoard curriculum, which provides a rigorous, standards-based literacy program through grades 6-12. However, this curriculum intentionally does not cover grammar and vocabulary, leaving those approaches entirely up to the district and classroom teachers. I also have no directives from my principal or department head

as to any particular approach to teaching grammar, only that I *should be* teaching it, so my approach is entirely up to me.

The Intervention: Language Unit

In designing my unit, I kept in mind linguist Lisa Green's principles for classroom teachers: (1) Teachers should distinguish between mistakes in reading and differences in pronunciation, (2) Give more attention to the ends of words, (3) Words must be presented to students in those phonological contexts that preserve underlying forms, (4) Use full forms of words and avoid contractions, and (5) Grammar should be taught explicitly (Green, 2002). These were my guiding principles while designing the unit.

Thus, I began the "language unit" with lessons on root words, prefixes, suffixes, synonyms, and antonyms. The essential question for the unit was "How does language work?" We also made connections to their Spanish class and I consulted their Spanish teacher on what they had covered in terms of grammatical vocabulary and concepts. We also did some word puzzles based on a phonics workbook. I also had them memorize the "parts of speech poem" and we did some work recognizing the parts of a sentence (subject and predicate).

However, I heavily emphasized code-switching throughout the two-month unit. We began the discussion on code-switching with a survey on their attitudes (which I then compared to an end survey which asked the same questions). We also wrote several journal entries as we discussed language use in school and in society. We defined "Standard English" as a kind of English that uses the "formal rules" according to traditional grammar books and is usually expected in schools and the workplace. "Informal English," on the other hand, is the kind of English that is most often spoken at home and with friends. A "dialect" is a kind of informal

English and “slang” words are part of dialect and are casual and sometimes playful words and expressions that come and go with generations and are specific to a group of people.

We talked in class briefly about how these terms are “fuzzy” in that some people say them and mean different things, but they seemed to get the gist when I compared it to the different kinds of clothing we might wear for different situations. For instance, “formal” clothes like dresses and suits would be worn for job interviews or church services, and “informal” clothes would be worn for watching TV at home or hanging out with friends at the park. The first week I introduced these terms, I gave students a homework assignment to cut up pictures of clothing and text phrases from magazines to make two collages: one for formal situations and one for informal. Before we began the code-switching lessons, we created a class “Slang dictionary” where students worked together to think of five slang words and come up with the definition and part of speech. Some examples:

Slang Dictionary

Ballin’: 1. (v) Spending a lot of money. Ex. “You ballin’”. 2. (adj): Cool, tight.

Bang’n: (adj) Awesome music. Ex. “That’s bang’n”

Burnt: (adj) Wrong or mad. “You feeling burnt right now?”

Chillax (v): Chill and relax. Ex. “Yo, chillax!”

Grill: (v) To look at someone funny. Ex. “Why is you grillin’ me?”

Tight: (adj) Mad or angry. Ex. “I’m tight.”

Wiling: (v) Going crazy. Ex. “You be wiling”.

We typed up these examples, alphabetized them, and shared the dictionary with other classes. The slang dictionary, more than anything else, really created student “buy-in” for the

unit, because they were able to have fun with language and feel like their language has a place in school. They really loved it when I would start using their words, although sometimes they accused me of being a "cheezeball" or "trippin!'"

We also used word walls with our unit language (root words, prefix, suffix, formal English, informal English, Standard English, dialect, translation, etc.) as well as vocabulary words that I grouped by part of speech (different colored paper for different parts of speech). As the unit went on, I hung up process charts with all of our "rules." We referred to the word walls and process charts daily.

I prepared a set of about twelve lessons on code-switching, mostly from the book, *Code Switching: Teaching Standard English in Urban Classrooms* by Rebecca Wheeler and Rachel Swords (2006). I focused on the patterns that they suggested in the book, common ESL patterns, and patterns I noticed needed the most work in my students' writing: possession, plurality, subject-verb agreement, past tense, shortcut words, is/are/be patterns, gonna/going to (and similar patterns), double negatives, and end punctuation. I used PowerPoint for the mini-lesson itself. Wherever possible, I changed the examples to use my own students' names and supplemented the examples with actual examples from my students' work.

For example, a lesson on plurality would have included the following example from Wheeler & Swords, changing the names to children's names from my classroom. The "Do Now" would be to copy down the right side of the chart and "translate" the informal to formal English. (Note that I used "informal English" generally to mean AAE, but I was careful to explain that there are many other informal ways to say the same thing.) The mini-lesson would be going over the answers, writing those answers in the left column, and discussing the "rules." Ideally, the students would come up with the rules for informal English and formal English.

Plural Patterns for Regular Nouns

Informal English	*Formal English*
1. I have two dog and two cat.	1. I have two dogs and two cats.
2. Three ship sailed across the ocean.	2. Three ships sailed across the ocean.
3. Jessica loves book.	3. Jessica loves books.
4. All of the boy in 601 are here today.	4. All of the boys in 601 are here today.

The Rules:	*The Rules:*
Context clues (number words, other words, common knowledge)	**Noun + s (or +es)**

During the mini-lesson, we would build on our knowledge from the previous lessons. For instance, since we had already learned the rules of possession, during the plurality lesson, we would discuss how it can sometimes be confusing when to add an apostrophe and when not to. Now that we know the "rules" it is easier for students to make that connection.

We began to read as a class a high-interest novel called *The Bully* by Paul Langan, part of the Bluford Series of high-interest, low-readability books from the Townsend Press. I used examples from the dialogue, as well as some other popular movies, for the final code-switching lessons.

Some examples that I lifted directly from the novel included:

1. "How much cash you got on you, boy?"
   "I got no money on me," Darrell said. (*got/have*)
2. "Malik, you ain't ever gonna believe my uncle" (*ain't/are*, *gonna/going to*)
3. "I shoulda known not to come in on a Sunday morning" (*shoulda/should have*)
4. "Please, man, I gotta go home," Darrell said, almost whimpering. (*gotta/have to*)
5. "Why me?" Tyray growled. "I didn't do nothin'!" (*double negatives*)

The Bully became particularly useful when we began more difficult concepts such as is/are and got/have verb patterns and the habitual *be*. Using a shared text also allowed us to see informal

and formal patterns in context, and make connections between our reading and writing. I also began to introduce more than one "rule" in the examples to make it more authentic and to begin to synthesize their knowledge of the rules.

For the group work or independent work, I used the worksheets in Wheeler & Swords where students used scissors to cut out sentences and glue them to the correct column. As we moved into Independent Reading, I would ask students to look for examples of plurality (informal or formal) and write them in their Reading log at the end. When a more interesting activity could not be found, or I could not find authentic examples from which to create my own worksheets, I did use traditional worksheets (particularly as we began to review concepts), but I couched the instructions (either rewriting directions or verbally) as "translate the following into formal English."

Research Tools

At the onset of my study, I administered a pre-test that I generated by looking at writing mechanic diagnostic exams online. I used a diagnostic I found from the website of the Washtenaw Community College in Ann Arbor, Michigan, because it addressed most of the concepts that I planned to teach. I purposefully used a test that would feel similar to the kinds of tests they usually see and one that did not refer to "code-switching" or Standard English, in order to assess how well my students could transfer their code-switching knowledge into the realm of standardized tests. In other words, I wanted my students to "code-switch" on their own.

I slightly modified a couple of the questions when I thought the vocabulary would interfere with my students' ability to answer the question (e.g. "raquetball") and I did not administer the "dangling modifier" and "parallel construction" sections since those are advanced grammatical topics and I would not be covering them.

The test consisted of fifty questions. I administered the exact same questions at the end of the unit, but rearranged the sections, questions, and multiple choice answers in order to ensure that it did not "look" exactly the same. I then measured their improvement by percentage point.

I also collected an "anticipatory guide" that I used to begin our discussions of language usage at home, in school, and in other contexts, and used the same questions on a survey at the end of the unit to compare the shifts in attitudes. I also collected journal assignments.

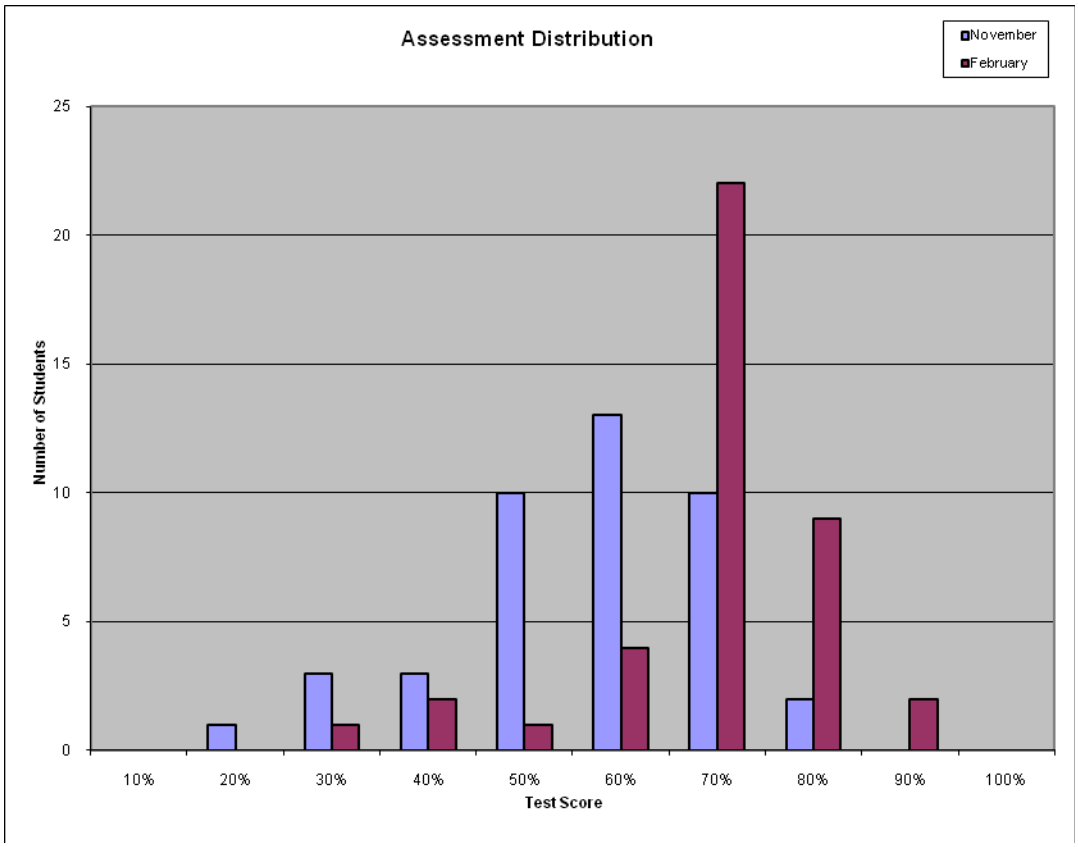
Data Analysis We began the unit with an anticipatory guide, which consisted of ten statements that reflect feelings about language, culture, and identity. For a journal assignment, they were asked to choose one statement and explain why they agreed or disagreed with it. From the outset, cultural identity and heritage emerged as very important in relation to language. Many students commented about the connection between their culture and the way they speak. Anne said, "…sometimes the way people speak it is part of their culture. So if someone tries to change the way another person speaks it is like they are changing their culture. You can't change who you write because it will always be natural to you…" I later shared this statement with the class, with the student's permission, and elicited more responses. We kept the dialogue going throughout the unit.

Comments reflecting self-esteem also came up often. Jose confessed, "I feel good and at the same time alitole imbarist because cant speak properly sumtimes. I mess up a lote." Similarly, Manny wrote, "I feel kind of wired because is the way I talk and I just cant change it by someone correcting me." These comments underscore the importance for teachers to understand the connections between language usage, cultural identity, and self-esteem. I would go so far as to say that my previous attempts at teaching grammar failed because I ignored the kinds of feeling my current students wrote about in their journals.

Before we began the unit, I gave the pre-unit diagnostic writing mechanics test. The average score for both classes was 58%. Class 601's average score was 55%, while class 602's average score was 62%. To calculate these numbers, I simply divided the number correct by the number of questions for each student and for each test, then entered the before and after test scores for each student along with their class, and used an Excel formula to derive the mean. I sorted the students by class and found the mean for both 601 and 602. Also note that several students ended up changing class assignments at the semester break. Since more of the code-switching lessons were taught in the second semester, I included these students' with their second class.

After we completed the unit, the average score for both classes increased by 12 percentage points to 70%, indicating a significant improvement in the skills that I zeroed in on through the code-switching unit. 601 made the most progress with an increase of 14 percentage points, to 69%. Class 602 began with a higher score but only increased 8 percentage points, for an average score of 70%. The percent of students passing (defined as 65 or above) increased from 30% to 80%.

Below is a chart of the distribution of test scores, rounded to the nearest ten. This graph shows the number of students, both before and after the unit, who fall within each range.



On the second survey the same questions were asked in a different order. I went back through the surveys and aligned the pre- and post-unit questions so they are comparable. Then I assigned a code of "0" for disagree, "2" for agree, and "1" for neither agree nor disagree. Using an Excel spreadsheet, I simply calculated what percentage of students agreed and disagreed. Note that not all of my students completed both surveys. Since it was not a graded assignment and it dealt with sensitive topics, I did not want to make it mandatory. Therefore, some students opted out. Below, I have included some highlights from the attitude survey results.

Question	**601**	**602**
I feel like I know how the English language works (ex. Nouns, verbs, prefixes, etc.)	Increased from 65% agree to 83% agree	Increased from 83% to 89% agree
The way I speak is up to me and nobody should tell me how to speak or write, including teachers.	Decreased from 38% agree to 25% agree	Increased from 65% agree to 80% agree

I feel like I am giving up a part of myself when I try to speak or write in ways that people call “proper” or “correct”.	Decreased from 53% to 30% agree	Increased from 39% to 60% agree

What is interesting about this data is that 601’s positive attitudes increased after the unit, while 602’s positive attitudes decreased.

Just as we began with journal entries, we concluded the unit with some reflections. This time I gave them space on the actual survey to complete their comments. I also asked them questions about how much they felt they learned. Anne said she became aware of her dialect use: “I have learned that most of the time, I have been mostly been talking informal English.” Raquel was aware, but seemed not to care: “Actually is has not change because I still talk in slang.” Vanessa even commented that her attitudes changed as a result of the unit: “My views on language changed a lot because now I know the formal ways to say thing. Now I won’t be stuck trying to say something ‘informal.’” This student seems to like the fact that he/she now has more choice over how she/he speaks in different situations.

Findings

Code-switching is an effective method of teaching Standard English grammar. I saw an increase in skill level for both groups of students, as evidenced by the increased test scores, and both groups reported that they felt more confident in knowing and using the English language.

The Code-switching approach does seem to reduce students’ resistance to learning Standard English. Students reported that they felt more confident about their knowledge of how the English language works and in my informal observations, I noticed a higher level of engagement with activities that involved code-switching than activities that did not.

Code-switching is most effective with students who are resistant to learning Standard English and/or have significant language barriers (ESL, home dialects, Special Education students). The class of students (601) who started out with the lowest scores on the test, lowest reading levels, and arguably had the most to overcome (Special Education and ESL students), showed the most improvement and showed an increase in positive attitudes by the end of the unit.

Code-switching may not ultimately change underlying attitudes about language, and may in fact be problematic for students' self-concepts. Even though students gained the skills I set out to teach them, and even though I was conscientious and culturally sensitive in my approach, class 602 showed more negative attitudes about themselves and their language use after the unit than 601. 602 also did not achieve the same level of gains as 601. 602 was primarily African-American and I used AAE in most of the examples of informal English. I was surprised by these results, and I am not sure how to interpret them, except to note that more emotional support was needed in that class.

Conclusions

Smitherman argues that in order for a 'dent' to be made in traditional attitudes and practices, the 1974 NCTE resolution would need to be embraced by K-12 teachers. Many ELA teachers I know recognize that "dialect prejudice" is detrimental to their students' learning and that traditional methods of grammar instruction are not working, but they just don't know what to do instead. One of the main barriers to K-12 teachers using contrastive analysis is the inadequacy and inaccessibility of code-switching and other culturally-sensitive materials for the teaching of Standard English grammar.

While there is much theoretical work in this area, there are few *practical* and *accessible* resources for teachers to use (e.g. reproducibles, worksheets, unit, and lesson plans). Creating these materials from scratch, solely using one's own students' work, as many theorists suggest, would be prohibitively time-consuming for most urban teachers. Yet, I could find only one book available for teaching code-switching that was complete with lesson plans and worksheets, and it was rather simplistic and not intended for my middle and high school students. In order to push my students further, I spent large amounts of time gathering authentic examples of dialogue from texts, novels, films, and textbooks; preparing worksheets and activities; and researching the most effective methods. The typical urban teacher would probably not devote as much time as I did in order to fully implement this approach.

Furthermore, as a white middle-class teacher who grew up speaking Standard English, I was hardly confident in my abilities to deliver the lessons authentically or respond to students' understandable mixed feelings on racial identity and language. Thank goodness for my generally positive rapport with my students, who forgave numerous blunders on my part and giggled at many a faux pas. Some might not have been so kind or understanding, and some might have misinterpreted my intentions. I can imagine the same lessons going sour if the trust was not there. Without adequate training, teachers – especially teacher like me who have grown up only speaking Standard English as I did – will probably have a hard time creating and implementing code-switching materials into their classrooms, even if they want to, not to mention the possibility of unwittingly contributing to their students' negative feelings about themselves.

Finally, I am left with several questions regarding the mixed attitude results in my study. As proud as I am of my students' gains, I feel regret that I was not able to support them better emotionally as we explored language together. Clearly more emotional support was needed in

class 602 since self-concepts decreased throughout the unit. But perhaps self-concepts would have decreased no matter what method was used, since dialect prejudice does run rampant in the whole of society? Maybe self-concepts were higher than they would have been otherwise? Despite low self-concepts, was the unit still worth it because of the clear gain in skill levels? And won't students lack self-esteem to a *greater* extent *later* in life, if opportunities are closed because they lack Standard English skills? More research would be necessary in this area to fully answer these questions.

Policy Recommendations

With my findings in mind, I have several policy recommendations for university faculty, city school administrators, school principals, and teachers.

At the University-level, require prospective English teachers to take a basic course in linguistics during their teacher preparation program in order to be conscious of, and responsive to, their students' many home dialects. A basic linguistics course would go a long way to ensure that prospective English teachers are aware of all the varieties of English they may encounter and to counteract dialect prejudice that is pervasive in the United States. Such a course would better prepare them to create learning materials and curricula that will be engaging and authentic. If teachers choose to do contrastive analysis language instruction, a linguistics background would help them analyze their students' language and easily recognize patterns so the essential tasks of the code-switching method would not be so daunting.

At the City-level, allocate funds for training in Contrastive Analysis language instruction for interested teachers. The current UFT contract includes mandatory biweekly professional development. Several sessions could be set aside so that English teachers could choose to attend

workshops on contrastive analysis. Current NYC English teachers who have used this method could lead the workshops.

Also at the City-level, create “Standard English Learner” (SEL) programs, coupled with additional funding, as the Los Angeles Unified School District is beginning to do, that might better target students who struggle with learning Standard English.. These programs could be modeled after ELL programs: identify “SEL” (Standard English Learner) students early, and use contrastive analysis approaches. The obvious drawback would be “labeling” students, but the advantage in skill level may be worth it, just as it is for ELL students.

At the School-level, provide common planning time during teachers’ professional assignments to do a lesson study using Contrastive Analysis approaches. If space and scheduling allow for it, this could be a very effective way for teachers to collaborate and create authentic and engaging ways to address their students’ language diversity at virtually no cost to the school. School guidance counselors and social workers could be included in the conversations to brainstorm ways to address students’ emotional needs around language and identity. Common planning time is also a great way to ensure that teachers in a department are on the same page about how they reach struggling learners.

At the Department-level, build a repertoire of teacher-friendly grammar lessons that work for our school’s students and that are specifically created for non-standard English speakers, regardless of the specific approach. A “library” of differing methods would encourage teachers, new and experienced, to share ideas and approaches that work for their students, as well as to reduce the burden of creating entirely new curricular materials every year. As the library grows, teachers can share the strengths and weaknesses of each approach, building on their collective knowledge about how best to address their students’ needs.

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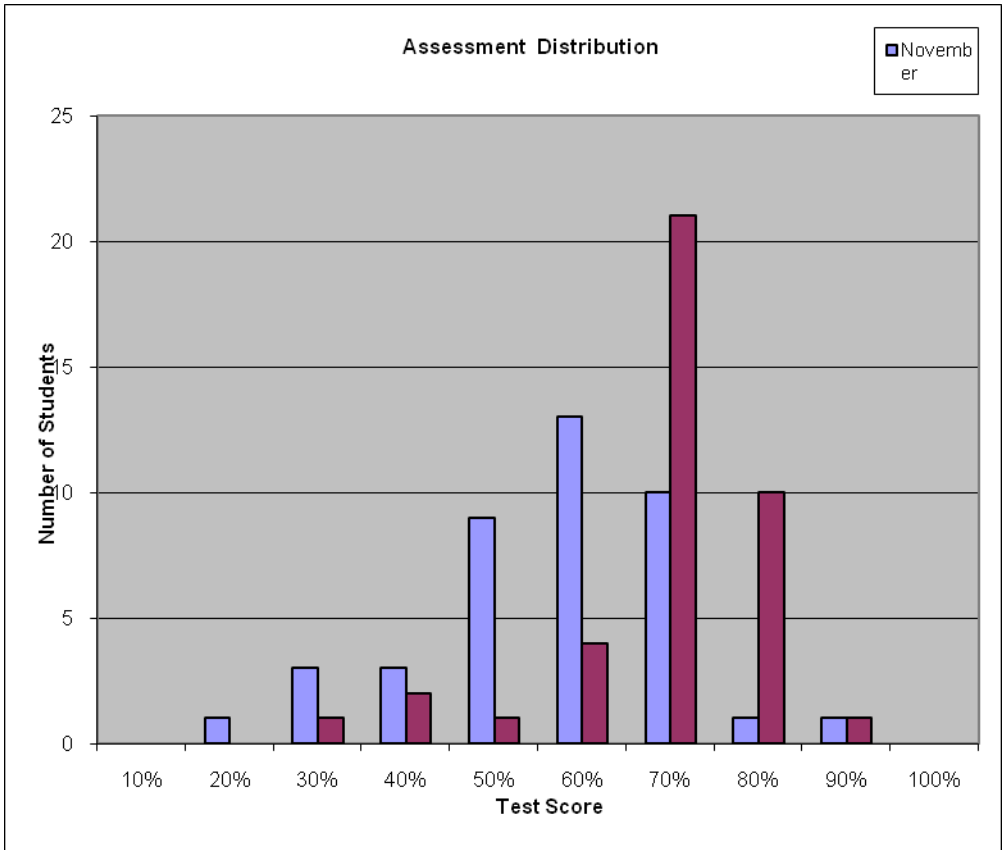
Appendix 1. Raw Test Score Data (November and February)

Student code	Class	ESL	SpEd	Nov. score	Feb score
Student 43	601	0	0	66	78
Student 4	601	0	0	54	66
Student 5	601	0	1	46	60
Student 6	601	0	0	68	66
Student 7	601	0	0	54	68
Student 9	601	1	0	52	62
Student 10	601	0	0	82	90
Student 11	601	0	0	54	68
Student 44	601	1	0	46	64
Student 12	601	1	0	64	66
Student 13	601	0	0	74	72
Student 14	601	0	1	26	26
Student 15	601	0	0	64	72
Student 18	601	1	0	50	72
Student 45	601	0	1	34	68
Student 24	601	0	0	62	68
Student 28	601	0	0	46	70
Student 30	601	1	0	46	56
Student 33	601	0	0	44	76
Student 46	601	0	0	42	74
Student 34	601	0	0	64	78
Student 35	601	0	0	62	74
Student 37	601	1	0	20	76
Student 38	601	0	1	64	74
Student 39	601	0	0	70	74
Student 41	601	0	1	68	66
Student 1	602	0	0	52	64
Student 2	602	0	0	86	70
Student 3	602	0	0	66	76
Student 8	602	0	0	60	70
Student 16	602	0	0	64	78
Student 17	602	0	0	66	76
Student 19	602	0	0	68	70
Student 20	602	0	0	62	70
Student 21	602	0	0	74	42
Student 22	602	0	0	46	54
Student 23	602	0	0	66	74
Student 25	602	1	1	40	42
Student 26	602	0	0	68	68
Student 27	602	0	0	80	82
Student 29	602	0	0	62	90
Student 31	602	0	0	28	82
Student 32	602	0	0	64	66
Student 36	602	0	0	62	82
Student 40	602	0	0	60	68
Student 42	602	0	0	74	80

Appendix 2. Assessment Distribution

Decile	Code	# Nov	# Feb
10%	1	0	0
20%	2	1	0
30%	3	3	1
40%	4	3	2
50%	5	9	1
60%	6	13	4
70%	7	10	21
80%	8	1	10
90%	9	1	1
100%	10	0	0



Appendix 3. Raw Survey Data
3a. November Data

Student Code	Class	NQ1	NQ2	NQ3	NQ4	NQ5	NQ6	NQ7	NQ8	NQ9	NQ10	NQ11	NQ12
4	601	2	2	2	2	2	2	0	2	0	0	2	0
5	601	0	0	0	2	0	2	2	0	0	2	2	2
6	601	2	2	2	2	0	2	2	2	0	2	2	0
10	601	0	2	2	2	2	2	2	0	2	2	2	2
11	601	2	1	0	2	0	0	2	2	2	2	2	0
12	601	2	0	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
13	601	2	0	2	2	0	0	2	0	2	2	2	2
15	601	2	2	2	2	2	0	2	2	0	0	2	0
18	601	2	0	2	0	2	0	2	2	0	2	0	2
24	601	2	0	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
28	601	2	2	2	2	2	0	0	2	0	0	2	0
33	601	2	2	0	2	0	0	2	2	2	0	2	0
34	601	2	2	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	2	2	0
35	601	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	0	2	2	2
37	601	2	2	0	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2
38	601	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
39	601	2	0	2	2	0	2	0	2	2	0	2	0
41*	601	2	2	0	2	0	2	2	2	0	2	2	
1	602	2	2	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0
3	602	2	2	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0
16	602	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0
17	602	1	2	0	2	0	0	1	2	0	2	1	2
19*	602	2	2	0	2	2	2	2	2		2	2	2
20	602	2	2	0	2	2	2	2	2	0	0	2	2
21	602	2	2	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	2	2	2
22	602	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	2	2	0	2	0
23	602	2	2	0	1	0	1	2	2	2	0	2	0
25	602	0	0	0	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2
26	602	2	0	2	2	2	2	2	2	0	2	2	2
27	602	2	2	0	2	0	0	2	2	0	2	2	0
29	602	2	2	0	2	2	2	0	1	2	1	2	0
31	602	2	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0
32	602	0	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	0	0	0	0
36	602	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	2	0	0	2	0
40*	602	2	2	0	0	0	0	2	2		0	2	0
42	602	2	2	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	2	2	2

3b. February Data

Student Code	Class	FQ1	FQ2	FQ3	FQ4	FQ5	FQ6	FQ7	FQ8	FQ9	FQ10	FQ11	FQ12
7	601	2	2	1	3	1	2	3	3	0	2	2	1
9	601	3	2	3	2	0	1	3	1	2	0	2	1
12	601	2	3	1	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	3
13	601	3	3	0	3	0	0	3	3	2	0	2	2
14	601	0	3	3	3	0	3	3	0	3	0	3	0
24	601	3	1	3	3	2	2	0	3	2	2	3	0
28	601	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	3	0	2	1	1
30	601	2	3	2	1	3	2	1	2	0	2	3	0
34	601	1	3	2	1	0	3	2	3	0	3	3	0
35	601	3	3	1	3	2	2	3	3	2	3	3	3
1*	602	3	0	1									
2	602	3	2	2	3	2	1	3	3	2	2	2	2
3	602	3	3	0	3	0	0	0	3	0	0	3	0
8	602	2	3	2	3	0	1	3	3	0	3	3	2
16	602	3	3	2	3	2	0	1	3	0	0	3	0
17	602	2	2	1	3	1	1	2	3	2	3	2	3
19	602	3	3	2	3	1	1	2	3	2	2	3	2
20	602	3	2	1	3	1	2	3	3	1	2	3	1
21	602	0	0	3	0	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3
22	602	2	3	0	3	2	1	0	3	0	1	3	2
23	602	2	3	2	3	1	1	0	2	0	2	2	1
27*	602	3	3	0	3	1	0		0	0	3		3
29	602	3	3	2	3	2	2	0	2	3	3	3	2
31	602	3	2	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	1	2	1
36	602	3	2	0	3	0	1	2	3	0	2	3	0
40	602	2	3	1	1	2	2	0	3	0	2	1	3
42	602	3	3	2	3	0	1	1	3	0	2	2	2

* Student did not complete all questions on the survey.

0=Disagree
1=Neither agree nor disagree
2=Agree
N=November
F=February

Appendix 3. Survey Questions

1. I like to learn about how language works.

Agree a lot Agree somewhat Disagree somewhat Really disagree

2. I feel like I know how the English language works (ex. nouns, verbs, prefixes, etc.)

Agree a lot Agree somewhat Disagree somewhat Really disagree

3. When a teacher corrects my writing or speech, I feel frustrated.

Agree a lot Agree somewhat Disagree somewhat Really disagree

4. I need to know how to speak and write in certain ways in order to go to college and get a good job.

Agree a lot Agree somewhat Disagree somewhat Really disagree

5. I don't like it when people correct how I speak or write because it makes me feel bad about myself.

Agree a lot Agree somewhat Disagree somewhat Really disagree

6. The way I speak is up to me and nobody should tell me how to speak or write, including teachers.

Agree a lot Agree somewhat Disagree somewhat Really disagree

7. The way I speak is part of my culture.

Agree a lot Agree somewhat Disagree somewhat Really disagree

8. I want to know how to speak in different situations because that knowledge will open doors for me.

Agree a lot Agree somewhat Disagree somewhat Really disagree

9. I feel like I'm "acting white" when I speak in ways that other people call "proper" or "correct".

Agree a lot Agree somewhat Disagree somewhat Really disagree

10. When teachers correct my writing, I don't know how to fix my mistakes because the way I write feels natural to me.

Agree a lot Agree somewhat Disagree somewhat Really disagree

11. I feel confident in the way I speak and write at school.

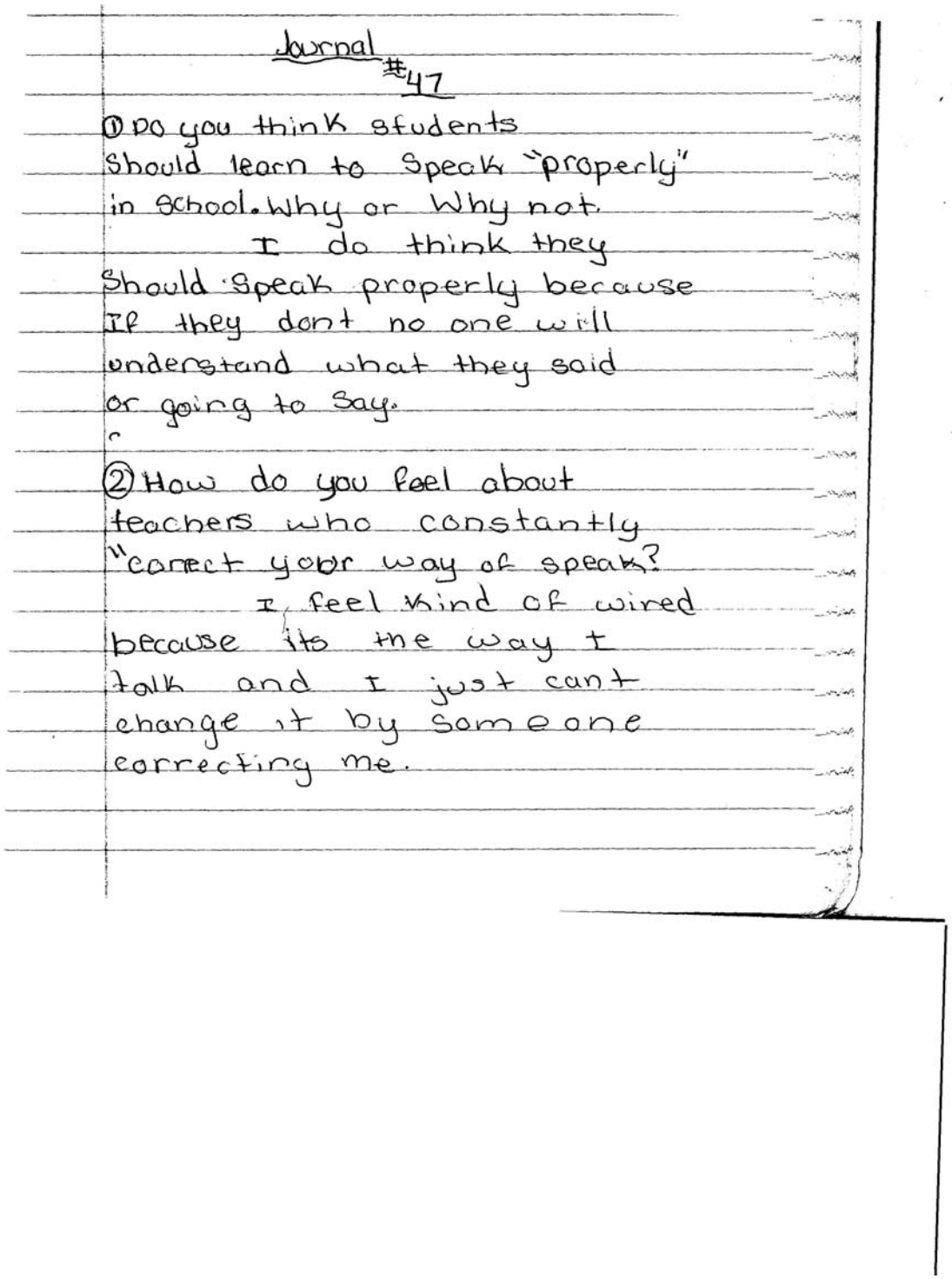
Agree a lot Agree somewhat Disagree somewhat Really disagree

12. I feel like I am giving up a part of myself when I try speak or write in speak in ways that people call "proper" or "correct". It feels unnatural to me.

Agree a lot Agree somewhat Disagree somewhat Really disagree

Appendix 4. Sample Student Work Prior to (Nov.) and After (Feb.) the Unit

4a. Student 6 (Nov.)
"Manny"



Journal #47

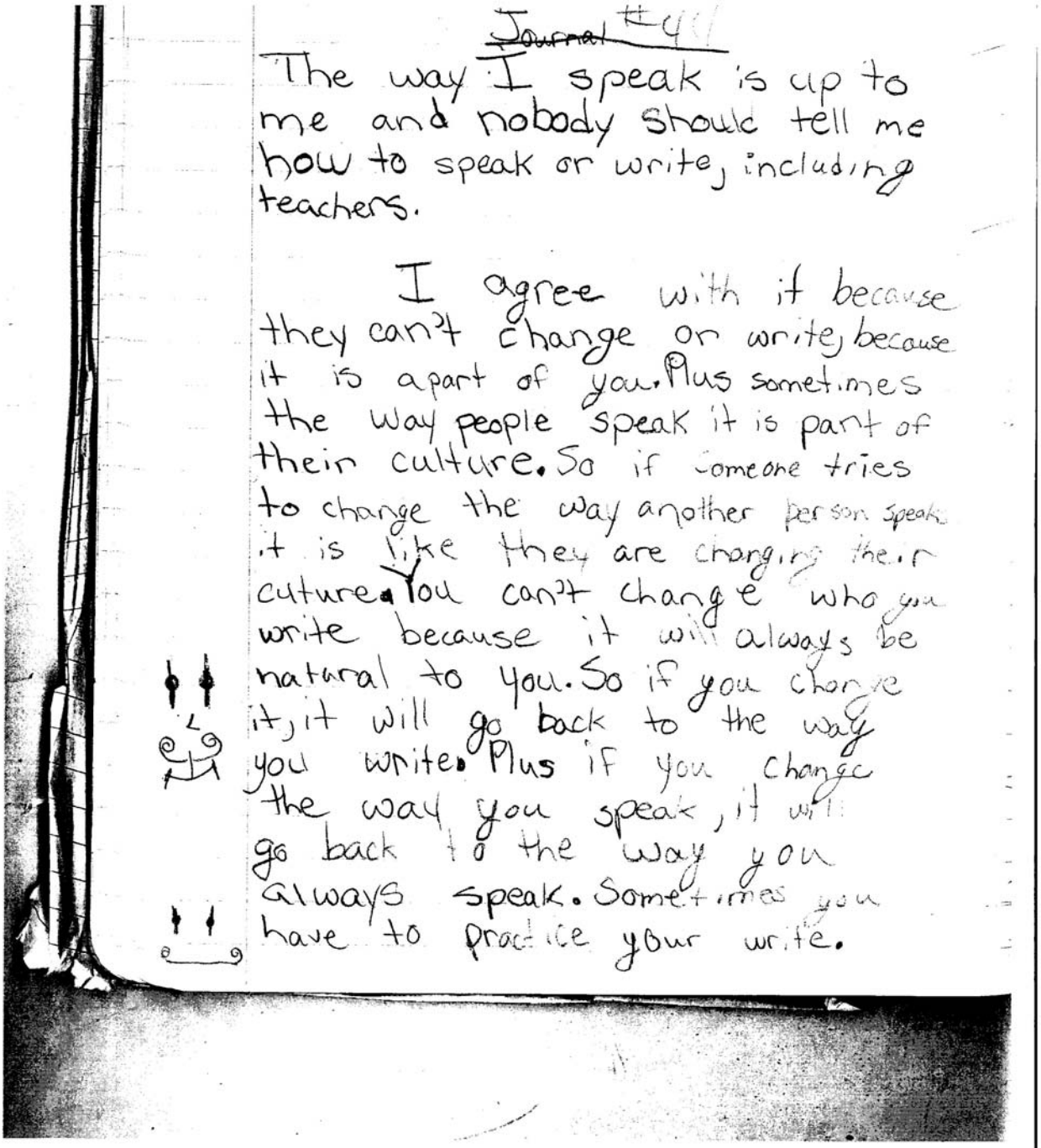
① Do you think students should learn to speak "properly" in school. Why or Why not.

I do think they Should Speak properly because If they dont no one will understand what they said or going to say.

② How do you feel about teachers who constantly "correct your way of speak?

I feel kind of wired because its the way I talk and I just cant change it by someone correcting me.

4b. Student 42 (Nov.)
"Anne"



~~Journal~~ #4

The way I speak is up to me and nobody should tell me how to speak or write, including teachers.

I agree with it because they can't change or write, because it is apart of you. Plus sometimes the way people speak it is part of their culture. So if someone tries to change the way another person speaks it is like they are changing their culture. You can't change who you write because it will always be natural to you. So if you change it, it will go back to the way you write. Plus if you change the way you speak, it will go back to the way you always speak. Sometimes you have to practice your write.

4c. Student 27 page 1 (Nov.)

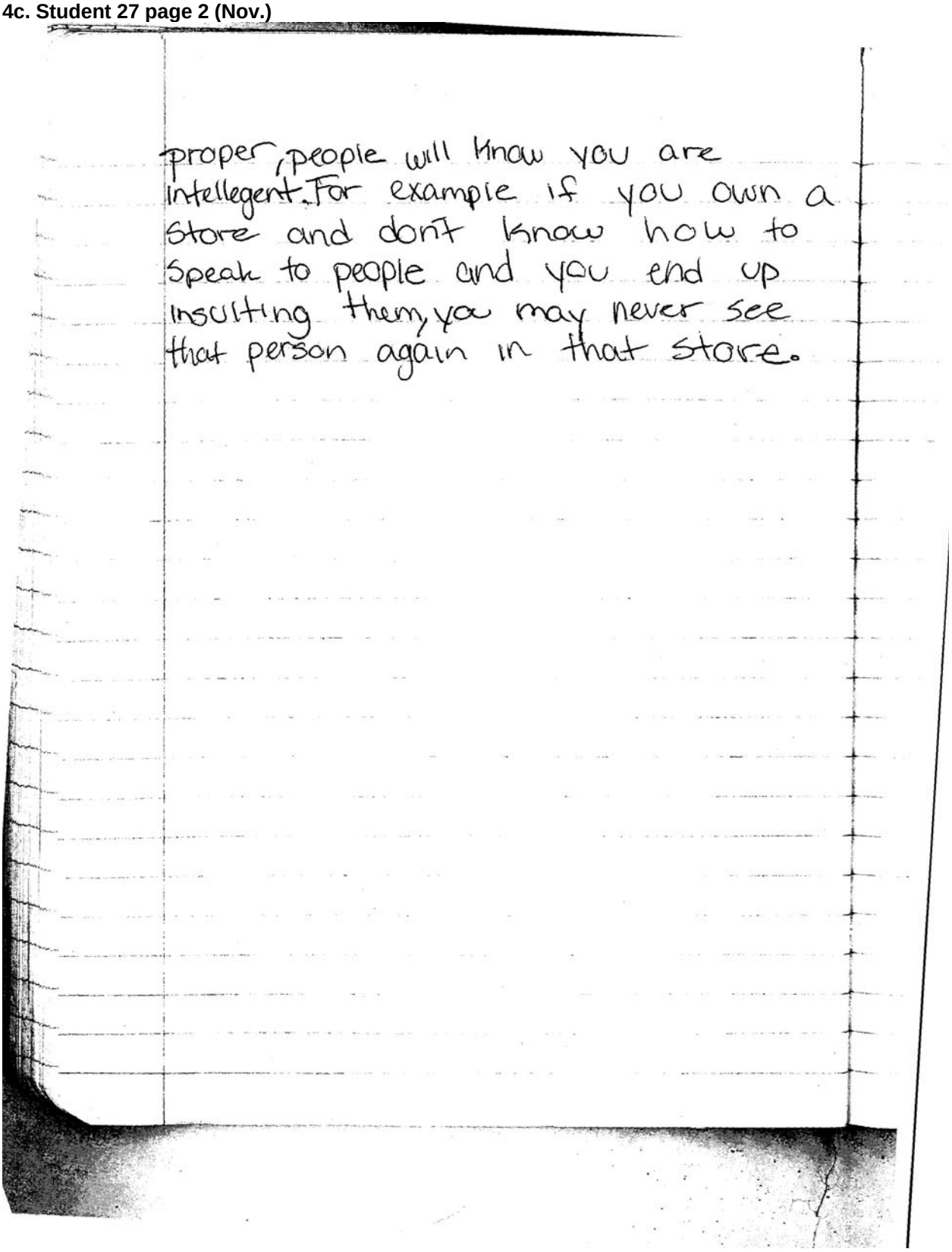
Journal #44

~~thos~~ Choose one of the statement from the anticipatory guide.

"I want to know how to speak in different situations because that knowlege will open doors for me."

I chose that statement because I think that is true. For example If you know many languages, you can get a veriety of jobs such as a cop. If someone needs help and they don't speak english, you can know what they are saying and you can know what is wrong with that person. Also you can may even save that person's life. Another reason on why I agree with this statement is if you know how ~~te~~ to speak

4c. Student 27 page 2 (Nov.)



proper, people will know you are intellegent. For example if you own a store and dont know how to speak to people and you end up insulting them, you may never see that person again in that store.

4d. Student 15 (Nov.)

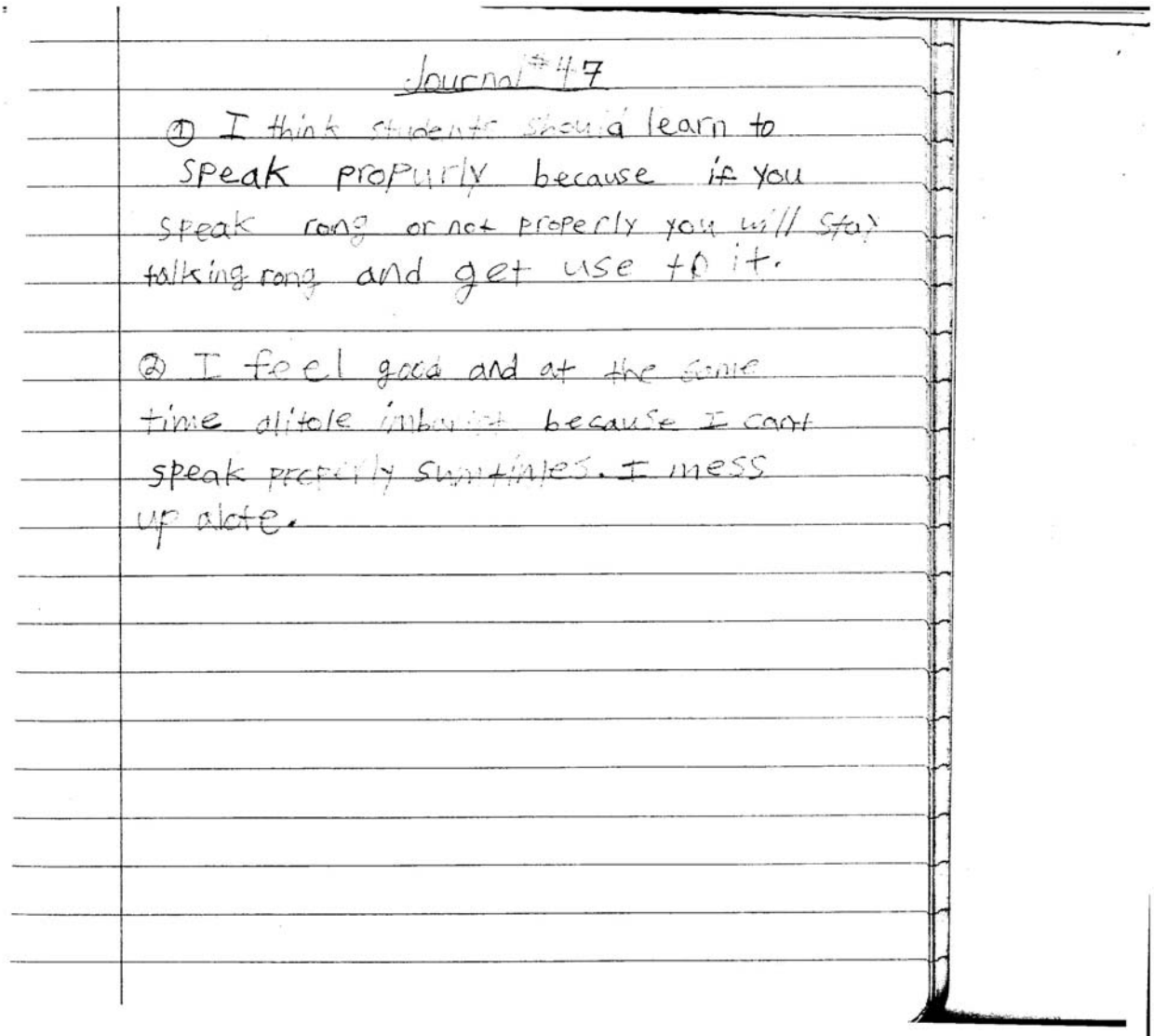
Journal #48

① Take the language "acntfating guide"

② choose one Statment ad write about it more fully.

I dont really feel bad when teachers corract the way I speak but I the same time yes because it's where I am from and the first languge I learned was Spanish and not English. I dont really feel bad because teachers they really want the best for you so you can get a better living in life.

4e. Student 5 (Nov.) "Jose"



Journal #47

① I think students should learn to speak properly because if you speak rong or not properly you will stay talking rong and get use to it.

② I feel good and at the some time a little imbarist because I cant speak properly sumtimes. I mess up alote.

4f. Student 42 "Anne" (Feb.)

CODE-SWITCHING
Unit Survey

Your responses will not be graded, but they will be used for Ms. Cassar's study on how effective the unit on language studies and code-switching was.

1. What is code-switching in your own words?
Code-switching is when you translate informal English to formal English.

2. What is the purpose of code-switching?
The purpose of code-switching is for ya can understand the difference between informal & formal English.

3. How have your views on language changed by learning about code-switching?
I have learned that most of the time, I have been mostly been talking informal English.

4. Overall, how much do you think you've learned from this unit?
Very little Some A lot (An incredibly huge amount!)

4g. Student 27 (Feb.)

CODE-SWITCHING
Unit Survey

Your responses will not be graded, but they will be used for Ms. Cassar's study on how effective the unit on language studies and code-switching was.

1. What is code-switching in your own words?
Code-Switching is a way of saying something in a different way. It also means taking something said in informal english and saying the same thing in formal english.

2. What is the purpose of code-switching?
The purpose of code-switching is if you want to say something to an adult that you say to your friends, you will not use your "street language," you will use a proper way of saying what you want to say.

3. How have your views on language changed by learning about code-switching?
The way my views changed is now I correct myself when I say something to an adult in informal english. Now I see that I have been talking informal and now I can see what I said wrong and I can change what I've said.

4. Overall, how much do you think you've learned from this unit?
Very little Some (A lot) An incredibly huge amount!

4h. Student 6 "Manny" (Feb.)

CODE-SWITCHING
Unit Survey

Your responses will not be graded, but they will be used for Ms. Cassar's study on how effective the unit on language studies and code-switching was.

1. What is code-switching in your own words?
Code-switching is kind of like changing something to something else.

2. What is the purpose of code-switching?
The purpose for code-switching is to try new things.

3. How have your views on language changed by learning about code-switching?
My language has changed by learning code-switching is because Im learning a new way to speak my language.

4. Overall, how much do you think you've learned from this unit?
Very little | Some | A lot | An incredibly huge amount!
in the middle

4i. Student 47 (Feb.)

CODE-SWITCHING
Unit Survey

Your responses will not be graded, but they will be used for Ms. Cassar's study on how effective the unit on language studies and code-switching was.

1. What is code-switching in your own words?

Code-Switching is changing incorrect words and using the rule in order to get the right.

2. What is the purpose of code-switching?

Code-Switching helps people understand how and when to use formal and informal english.

3. How have your views on language changed by learning about code-switching?

I have learned how to seperate formal and informal english.

4. Overall, how much do you think you've learned from this unit?

Very little (Some) A lot An incredibly huge amount!

4j. Student 16 (Feb.)

CODE-SWITCHING
Unit Survey

Your responses will not be graded, but they will be used for Ms. Cassar's study on how effective the unit on language studies and code-switching was.

1. What is code-switching in your own words?
code switching is when you use formal language to your elders and informal language to your friends.

2. What is the purpose of code-switching?
The purpose of code switching is to feel comfortable to whoever you are talking to.

3. How have your views on language changed by learning about code-switching?
My views on language changed by learning about code switching because now I can easily change the way I speak.

4. Overall, how much do you think you've learned from this unit?
Very little Some A lot An incredibly huge amount!

4k. Student 29 "Raquel" (Feb.)

CODE-SWITCHING
Unit Survey

Your responses will not be graded, but they will be used for Ms. Cassar's study on how effective the unit on language studies and code-switching was.

1. What is code-switching in your own words?

It is when you change the way you speak for different reasons.

2. What is the purpose of code-switching?

So you can speak more formally.

3. How have your views on language changed by learning about code-switching?

Actually it has not changed because I still talk in Slang.

4. Overall, how much do you think you've learned from this unit?
   Very little Some A lot An incredibly huge amount!

4l. Student 20 “Vanessa” (Feb.)

CODE-SWITCHING
Unit Survey

Your responses will not be graded, but they will be used for Ms. Cassar's study on how effective the unit on language studies and code-switching was.

1. What is code-switching in your own words?

Code-switching is the form informal english to formal english.

2. What is the purpose of code-switching?

The purpose of code-switching is to make a language [illegible] [illegible] correctly.

3. How have your views on language changed by learning about code-switching?

My views on language changed alot because now I know the formal [illegible]. Now I [illegible] [illegible] informal.

4. Overall, how much do you think you've learned from this unit?

Very little   Some   A lot   (An incredibly huge amount!)

4m. Slang Dictionary (both classes contributed)

Slang Dictionary

6th grade, 2008

Slang: Casual or playful words or expressions that come and go with generations and are specific to a group or region.
Dialect: Informal rules or variations of the English language, more often spoken or written in dialogue.
Standard English: The formal rules of the English language; the rules according to traditional grammar books.

A

Aite: (adv) Agreed. Ex. "Yo, you aite?"
Ayow: (int) Come here. Ex. "Ayow, little boy, come here."

B

Ballin: 1. (v) Spending a lot of money. Ex. "You ballin'". 2. (adj): Cool, tight.
Bang'n: (adj) Awesome music. Ex. "That's bang'n"
Bangin': (adj) Cute. Ex. "Those shoes are bangin."
Bawling: (adj) Scored, awesome.
Beastin': (v) Over the top; causing unnecessary aggravation. Ex. "Ms. Cassar is beastin'!"
Bestiezx: (n) Best friends.
Burnt: (adj) Wrong or mad. "You feeling burnt right now."

C

Cannon: (adj) Angry.
Cheeseball (adj): Over the top. Ex. "You is a cheeseball."
Chillax (v): Chill and relax.
Chilling: (v) In one place, relaxing. Ex. "I'm chilling."

D

Deaded (v): Cut.
Dead butt: Serious, no playing. Ex. "Yo, I'm dead butt."
Ducesz: (adj) Peace out, bye. Ex. "Ducesz, ma dude."
Dudes: (n) male friends. Ex. "You ma dudes."

F

Freak: (n) Crazy person.

Fresh: 1. (adj.) New or hot. Ex. "Your coat look fresh." 2. (adj): Cool. Ex. "You get fresh."
Fallback: (v) Calm down. Ex. "Joey, fallback."

G

Gangsta: (adj) Cool. Ex: "He is gangsta."
Grilled: (v) To look at someone funny. Ex. "Why is you grillin' me?"
Groupiezsx (n): Friends.

H

Homey (n): Friend. Ex. "What up, homey."
Hot: (adj) Good looking. Ex. "That's hot."

I

I'm a G: (expression). Ex. "I'm such a G, yo."

M

Madd (adv.): A lot. Ex. "They madd cool."

N

Na: (adv) No. Ex. "Na, na, she's wrong."
Neze (n): My dude. Ex. "What up, my neze?"

P

Peace (int): Goodbye. Ex. "Peace, homes."
Poppin': (adj) Something that's really good. Ex. "You poppin." Or "That party was poppin'".

T

Tight: (adj) Mad or angry. Ex. "I'm tight."
Totally: (adv) Really. Ex. "That is so totally cool."
Tripping: (adj) Overreacting. Ex. "I don't know why she's always tripping."

W

Wats poppin: (expression) What's up or what you doing? What happened?
What cracking: what's going on? Or hello.
What up?: (expression) How are you doing?
Wilding: (v) Going crazy. Ex. "You be wilding".
Word: (int) An expression of agreement. Ex. "Word yo!"

Y

Yo! (int) To call a person. Ex. "Yo, what's going on?"