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Ruptures of Possibility: Mexican Origin Mothers as Critical Translanguaging Pedagogues

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Abstract

In U.S. schools, educators are often regarded as knowledge producers and sole pedagogues, whereas parents (particularly of Color) are perceived as not engaged or interested in their child(ren)'s education (Colgrove, 2019; Nuñez, 2019; Ramirez, 2020). These negative stereotypes and white-centered discourses sustain raciolinguistic perspectives (Rosa & Flores, 2017) of families of Color and immigrant backgrounds. For the present study, we employed *critical discourse analysis* to explore *why* and *how* Mexican mothers raise bilingual children by examining how their experiences inform us about their powerful roles as critical translanguaging pedagogues. Drawing on border thinking and pedagogy of border thinking, the findings revealed two main themes: (1) how mothers recognize and draw on the *ruptures of cultural and linguistic worlds*, and (2) how they *sustain language through family and cultural practices*. Lastly, we share implications for educators, teacher educators, and policymakers.

Keywords: Bilingualism, Biliteracy, Borderlands, Translanguaging

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Language has been a tool for exclusion, marginalization, and surveillance of communities of Color, immigrants, and/or indigenous communities (Nuñez, 2018; Nuñez & Urrieta, 2021; Rosa & Flores, 2017; Valdés, 1997). Language, used for these purposes, has reinforced dichotomous relationships between parents and educators and has defined their asymmetrical roles in education. In U.S. schools, educators are often regarded as knowledge producers and sole pedagogues, whereas parents (particularly of Color) are perceived as not engaged or interested in their child(ren)'s education (Colgrove, 2019; Olivos, 2006; Ramirez, 2020). These negative stereotypes and white-centered discourses sustain raciolinguistic perspectives (Rosas & Flores, 2017) of families of Color and immigrant backgrounds. They are used as rationalizations for imposing interventions and/or training to "help them" develop the tools and knowledge for supporting the language and literacy practices valued in schools.

Recent scholarship is recognizing Latinx¹ parents as being language pedagogues: (1) because they make decisions about language, monolingualism vs. bilingualism, bilingual education, and biliteracy (Cioè-Peña, 2021; Ek et al., 2013); and (2) because they enact translanguaging pedagogical practices (García & Wei, 2014) that sustain their children's bilingualism (Alvarez, 2014; Nuñez, 2019). These studies, in particular, have focused on the role of mothers from Latinx and immigrant backgrounds as the primary decision-makers on how language is used and experienced at home. As language pedagogues, mothers draw from their experiences as border crossers navigating multiple world(s) to nurture translanguaging practices that are used across various contexts including, but not limited to, the home, community, and with family (Zentella, 1997).

In this article, translanguaging is a way of being and doing language as reflected in bilingual communities of Color (García, 2009). Some studies have noted the thoughtful strategies and authentic translingual² pedagogical practices (i.e., translating, language brokering, dynamic language use) that mothers implement to support bilingual and biliteracy development (Alvarez, 2014; Noguérón-Liu, 2020; Nuñez, 2019; Showstack & García-Mateus, *in press*). García and Kleyn (2016) explain translanguaging pedagogy as having a critical stance towards supporting bilingualism, intentional implementation, and valuing flexible and dynamic language

¹ We use the gender-neutral label, Latinx, to promote the concept that identity construction is not static. This article capitalizes Latinx to give credence to the struggles of a racialized group that shares cultural, political and historical experiences.

² We use translingual and translanguaging interchangeably.

practices. In a recent study, Nuñez (2019) focused on Mexican mothers who spoke Spanish only and developed creative translingual pedagogical practices. For example, they had their children watch movies with English audio and Spanish captions to make sense of the content and expose them to both languages. These practices supported the development of their children's English, Spanish, and overall biliteracy through the use of technology (iPads, tablets, phones) available in their homes.

Studies have also outlined how family language and literacy practices such as storytelling (Reese, 2012), translingual digital literacies (Noguerón-Liu & Driscoll, 2021), dichos (Espinoza-Herold, 2007), language brokering practices (Orellana & Reynolds, 2008), among others have been critical to helping children and youth sustain their home language and, ultimately, their bilingualism, biliteracy, and biculturalism. To further extend on the role of Latinx parents, Colegrove (2019) adds that when schools provide the space for parents' voices to be heard, it can not only be empowering for them, but it also opens up opportunities for teachers and school administrators to critically listen (Heiman & Yanes, 2018) and learn from parents. Furthermore, parents' practices and approaches can inform the kinds of pedagogies, curriculum, and language policies that should be fundamental to implementing bilingual programs (García, 2009; Valdés, 1997, 2021).

This article contributes to changing the discourse about Latinx parents and the perceived notion that they are uncritical in the (bilingual) education of their children. To do so, we ask the following research questions, (1) How do Mexican origin mothers support their children's translanguaging at home? (2) How do these translanguaging practices contribute to their children's bilingualism, biliteracy, and biculturalism? And (3) Why do they choose to support their children's bilingualism, biliteracy, and biculturalism? These questions allowed us, Idalia Nuñez and Suzanne García-Mateus, to critically listen to mothers guided by the premise that Mexican mothers³ are pedagogues who can sustain the translanguaging practices central to their children's bilingualism and biliteracy.

³ While our data specifically included and examined Mexican origin mothers, we recognize that caregivers from various backgrounds and identities could have similar approaches as cultural pedagogues.

Theoretical Framework

Theoretically, we draw from *border thinking* (Anzaldúa, 1987; Mignolo, 2000) and the critical components of *pedagogy of border thinking* (i.e., straddling, translanguaging, and testimonios) (Cervantes-Soon & Carrillo, 2016) to center, amplify, and honor the voices and brilliant work of Mexican-origin mothers, and to help us understand and gain insights about their decisions on their children's language trajectories. Border thinking is the critical thinking and agency that stems from people on the margins used to transcend the limitations set by physical and metaphorical borders (Anzaldúa, 1987; Mignolo, 2000). Border thinking from Mignolo and Anzaldúa's work helped us conceptualize the work of Mexican mothers who are the focus of this study by delinking from Western and European ideals, or what Morrison (1994) has called the ever-present *white gaze* that has been imposed upon people of Color. Instead, we focus on the voices and actions of those who have been silenced. Specifically, we focus on what it means to be bilingual in an English-dominant society and how we, as women and *madres* of Color, decide to raise bilingual and bicultural children *on our terms*.

Anzaldúa has theorized how borders are porous, with ruptures of possibility where people of Color can imagine and design what being and doing in the world means for us, and we emphasize *on our terms*. Ruptures are the moments when individuals recognize and name structural injustices, act on disrupting systems of oppression, and imagine a new reality for themselves. Ruptures occur when individuals delink their thinking and actions from the *white gaze* or their colonial ways of being from a particular local space (such as a U.S. public school). Instead, individuals choose to ground themselves on the borderland's possibilities (both literally and figuratively), where the margins are sites of being and doing, and for *sobrevivencia* as racialized beings. Ruptures supported these *madres* of Mexican origin in aligning their cultural heritage and lineage to a place where they can exert their agency and resist being further marginalized through critical border pedagogy.

Pedagogy of border thinking is grounded in the work of Cervantes-Soon and Carrillo (2016), where they theorize this critical pedagogy as including three important components: straddling, translanguaging, and testimonio. Straddling is the naming of inequities through critical dialogue with our students/children that cultivates critical consciousness. Part of translanguaging as a pedagogy of border thinking includes fostering the co-construction of positive identities and students' border thinking (Mignolo, 200). Translanguaging refers to the language practices

that value our students'/children's linguistic and cultural practices and aim for social transformation (García & Wei, 2014). The act of translanguaging is a way of doing and being for bilingual families, communities, and students (García & Kleifgen, 2019; García-Mateus & Palmer, 2017; Orellana & Reynolds, 2008; Zentella, 1997). It is languaging that exists in contexts and competing discourses of power that shape and inform how language is perceived, expected, and performed. For example, translanguaging can be performed through flexible moving in and across named languages. In this study, translanguaging represents the linguistic agency of Latinx bilingual families who make decisions on how language should be experienced and learned for and with their children (King, 2016). And third, Testimonio, a tool for critical consciousness through collective dialogue that historicizes the body, mind, soul, and experiences. Testimonios are the personal narratives and stories shared to reveal oppressive structures and injustices experienced by those who reside on the margins (Delgado et al., 2012). Saavedra (2019) adds that linguistic liberty through translanguaging in testimonios is necessary for humanizing the process of sharing stories that allow us to understand the critical perspectives and practices people used to navigate and survive everyday experiences. Furthermore, as Cervantes-Soon and Carrillo explain, these are articulations of theory in the flesh and border thinking. Meaning, thinking and actions are deeply connected and informed by the racialized body's sensitivities and lived experiences.

We drew on these conceptual frameworks to understand the critical work of *madres mexicanas* who are raising their children bilingually in an English dominant educational system that has historically tried to tame the *lenguas* of Mexican (Anzaldúa, 1987) immigrant children and families.

Method of Inquiry

For this study, we combined the data from our individual research projects. Each of our projects was deeply guided by critical ethnographic approaches (Villenas & Foley, 2002). According to Villenas and Foley, critical ethnographies should "reveal oppressive relations of power" (p. 177) and can incorporate typically deemed as non-traditional qualitative methodological practices such as testimonios. In this case, testimonios were "both a product and a process" (Delgado et al., 2012) that allowed us to recognize the understandings and practices of *madres de origen mexicano* in supporting their children's bilingualism where monolingual ideologies prevailed

Positionality

We identify as *madres de origen mexicano* raising multilingual children living in the U.S. Idalia identifies as a first-generation immigrant and *transfronteriza* raised on the Texas-Mexico borderlands. Suzanne identifies as a second-generation immigrant from the borderlands. We are both bilingual teacher educators as assistant professors at higher education institutions, first-generation college students, and former bilingual teachers at Title I schools in Texas, and Suzanne also taught in Missouri. We consider ourselves as "insiders" coming to our work as *madres mexicanas* who are making daily critical decisions about the bilingual education experiences of our children, like the mothers in our study.

Contextualizing the Study

As aforementioned, we combined data from our individual research projects. We drew from a total of 20 audio-recorded semi-structured interviews of both first- and second-generation immigrant *madres mexicanas*. Idalia collected data from three participating *transfronteriza*⁴ mothers. The mothers participating were from Mexico, and two of them still lived in Mexico, and their children attended school in the U.S. that offered an Early-Exit Transitional Bilingual program. However, that bilingual program in that school was implemented as an English immersion program. Through the transitional program, the children were supposed to get support in their home language in the process of learning English as a second language but instead only received English-only instruction. This school was located in a small rural city on the south Texas border. Idalia's data included: three audio-recorded semi-structured interviews per participant, photos taken by participating mothers regarding how language was part of their everyday life. The photos, in particular, served as anchors in the sharing process of some of their testimonios about language.

Suzanne had ten mothers and one *abuelita* as participants in her study. The participating mothers lived in Texas, and their families were originally from Mexico. Their children attended an elementary school in central Texas that offered a two-way dual language bilingual education program. While dual language bilingual education (DLBE) programs are considered an additive form of schooling, there is a growing body of work problematizing DLBE programs functioning as subtractive schooling experiences for students of Color (Flores, 2016; Flores & Rosa, 2017).

⁴ *Transfronteriza/o/x* refers to individuals living on the U.S. or Mexican side of the border, but who frequently cross the physical, national border (de la Piedra, et al. 2018; Nuñez, 2018). They understand what life is on both sides of the border.

Children learn English and a minoritized language, typically Spanish in the state of Texas, through content area instruction (e.g., Math in English, Languages Arts in Spanish), and the goal is to become bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate. This school was located in a suburban city in central Texas. Suzanne's data included: audio recorded semi-structured interview with each participant, and a questionnaire focused on describing their cultural backgrounds and how participants used their home language to support their child(ren)'s bilingualism.

While our analysis was from all participating mothers, we only used data from four participants (see Table 1) to illustrate the findings. The first two participants listed in Table 1 are from Idalia's work, and the last two listed are from Suzanne's study.

Table 1

Participant and interview information

| Name (Pseudonym) | Background Information | Language | Number of Interviews |
|-------------------------|--|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| Sra. Patricia Gonzalez | Mexican Born 1st-generation ⁵ Living in Texas | Spanish | (3) Interviews (45+) Photos |
| Sra. María Ortega | Mexican Born Living in Mexico | Spanish | (3) Interviews (15) Photos |
| Frida Martínez | U.S. Born 2nd-generation ⁶ Living in Texas | Bilingual | Interview Questionnaire |
| Abigail Orozco | U.S. Born 2nd-generation Living in Texas | Bilingual | Interview Questionnaire |

⁵ First generation immigrants are defined as individuals who migrated to the U.S. as older youth or as adults.

⁶ Second generation immigrants are defined as individuals who were born in the U.S. and at least one parent is considered a first-generation immigrant.

Data Analysis

We employed *critical discourse analysis* (Johnstone, 2008) to help us understand *why* and *how* Mexican mothers raise bilingual children by examining how their experiences inform us about their powerful roles as critical language, border, and cultural pedagogues. Our primary cycle coding (Tracy, 2019) was informed by the theory of border thinking and the conceptualization of pedagogy of border thinking. Some examples of our initial theory-driven conceptual codes (DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2011) were: ruptures, language, cultural practices, family practices, agency, resistance, among others. From this coding process, we noticed "resistance" was present in connection to "language practices," "culture," and "family." In our second round of coding, we focused on the data that highlighted emerging patterns to employ focused coding (Saldaña, 2016). We focused on the mother's articulated strategies of *how* they maintained, resisted, and/or sustained their child's bilingualism. Then we coded for rationales of *why* they were raising bilingual children. This analysis led to two major findings: (1) *Ruptures of Cultural and Linguistic Worlds*, (2) *Sustaining language through Family and Cultural Practices*. In the subsequent section, we use data examples from our combined data sets to explain each of the findings.

Findings

Ruptures of Cultural and Linguistic Worlds

Ruptures of cultural and linguistic worlds focuses on the concept of ruptures that we conceptualize as openings to envision an empowering future, based on *madres'* border crossing experiences whose daily efforts have made and continue to make bilingual transnational children stronger. As a concept, *ruptures* help these mothers imagine a future with possibilities for and with their children. Other scholars (Anzaldúa, 2015; Merla-Watson & Olguín, 2017) have described the concept of ruptures as *Latinx Futurism*, a related concept that enables us to intentionally design and live (in) a future with and for Latinx communities *without* the ever-present white gaze. The futures that these Mexican mothers imagined were centered on their children's bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural potential.

We start with Sra. Ortega; her role was to support her son in getting through the borders he experienced in a subtractive "English immersion" schooling space where his transfronterizo Mexican-American experiences, his translanguaging, and knowledge were

ignored and silenced. Sra. Ortega recognized and used the ruptures created by the U.S. and Mexico's economic and educational conditions on the borderlands to help her son understand her critical perspective and motivate him. In regards to these ruptures, Sra. Ortega said:

Yo, le digo a mi hijo tú allá estás en La Gloria, allá tu escuela está con aire y todo, no sufres calor, ni en frío sufres frío, uno aquí sí...estabas en el salón y tenías todas las chamarras porque 'taba bien helado...Bien helado y este, y le digo yo, le digo tú allá la escuela allá son mejores que las de aquí. Yo le digo tú échale ganas porque yo, a mí me hubiera gustado estudiar allí y haber aprendido inglés le digo...uno aquí hace el sacrificio. (I. Nuñez, interview, May 27, 2016)

Sra. Ortega shared her testimonio with her son where she named the different conditions she faced in her experience going to school on the Mexican borderlands. She critically compared the conditions she experienced to a better reality that she envisioned and has been able to provide for her son through sacrificios. These testimonios served to motivate her son to survive and thrive in a school that did not affirm his cultural or translingual identity. The translanguaging practices of Sra. Ortega's son included speaking Spanish at home with his family while drawing from his full linguistic repertoire to navigate the school's restrictive language practices.

Abigail, a second-generation mother living in the Texas borderlands, also recognized the power of ruptures. In this quote, Abigail said:

A lot of my cousins, especially the ones in Washington State, a lot of them don't [speak Spanish]. We actually have a friend whose daughter doesn't speak any Spanish at all. Her dad is from Mexico, but her mom is mainly only English, so we talk in Spanish, and she doesn't really understand. So that's what I tell them, it's important. One thing because it's gonna be good to help people and it's also because of family. We still have a lot of family that don't speak English even though they've been here, in the U.S., for many years. And it's like I want you guys to have those relationships with them, [and to] speak in Spanish. (S. García-Mateus, interview, October, 9, 2018)

Abigail drew from her border thinking and experiences of straddling dos mundos, which included translanguaging. In other words, she drew from her linguistic repertoire according to the context and interlocutors present. In the quote above, Abigail explained how being able to

speak and understand Spanish *and* English also meant sustaining relationships with both friends and family. She described encountering the challenge, or awkwardness, of her friend's child not being able to understand their conversations in Spanish and translanguaging so she could understand. She recognized this *rupture* and named it as a testimonio for her children when she explained that staying connected to family means understanding *and* speaking Spanish. Abigail also modeled for her children how being bilingual includes the flexible ability to translanguage when she spoke to her friend in Spanish and English.

Speaking Spanish, for Abigail, meant nurturing and maintaining the relationships she had with her extended family so that her children could also have those relationships with family. Abigail also touched on the ability to *help people* who may not speak English. Being able to *help people* was a common theme in Suzanne's interviews with second-generation madres, like Abigail, who grew up translanguaging (i.e., translating/language brokering) for their parents, grandparents, and, sometimes, strangers in the community. In fact, this is one reason why Abigail purposefully enrolled her children in a dual-language program. She also recognized that for her children to gain a sense of investment in becoming bilingual at school (García-Mateus, 2020), Abigail had to bring awareness to the reasons why it was important for her children to use their linguistic repertoire in purposeful and mindful ways both at home and in the community.

These Mexican mothers critically examined their lived experiences at the intersection of their cultural and linguistic world(s). They understood that sustaining their language and culture was not a simple task for their children in the face of English hegemony. The reflections and observations of these mothers were not representations of defeat or of surrendering to cultural and linguistic oppression; instead, their complex understandings were representations of resistance and agency. Aligned with Cervantes-Soon and Carrillo's (2016) conceptualization of pedagogy of border thinking, the mothers' testimonios shared how they drew from border thinking to model how to translanguage and straddle *dos mundos* lovingly for their children. They used these ruptures as opportunities to imagine and live a better life if not for them, for their children. More importantly, this vision decentered the white gaze (Morrison, 1994) and claimed translanguaging, which encompasses bilingualism, biliteracy, and biculturalism (García & Kleyn, 2016; García-Mateus & Palmer, 2017; García & Wei, 2014) for their children's future.

Sustaining language through Family and Cultural Practices

Sustaining language through family and cultural practices refers to the articulations of how madres supported and sustained Spanish through specific translanguaging practices at home. We distinguish intergenerational family and cultural practices as rooted in the idea that both are socially constructed, historically informed, and contextually diverse. Family practices are the practices that have been passed down by family members, and cultural practices are the practices culturally sustained through generations by a community, families, or within a particular context.

The Mexican madres' translanguaging at home was a result of their critical awareness regarding the cultural and linguistic hierarchies that took place in U.S.-based schooling. Even when their children were enrolled in bilingual programs, these mothers *knew* that schools did not fully acknowledge their Mexican or Mexican American culture and that English and whiteness dominated these spaces. For example, Frida, a second-generation mother from Texas, said:

Also, just our cultures, so observing cultural practices and cooking. You saw all the pots that I brought. So, using that and saying, "What's the word for this? *Son ollas de barro.*" I don't think that I could say "Speak Spanish, speak Spanish," but I'm speaking English because we're in this Mexican-American world where it's different. I'm not just first-generation, or I'm not from Mexico. But, when they see that and are able to feel pride, and this is who we are as a family, it makes sense to them to be pushed to learn Spanish to keep their tongue [and] where they come from. (S. García-Mateus, interview, November, 6, 2018)

Drawing on her border thinking, Frida responded to this situation by creating opportunities to engage in her Mexican culture and implement different cultural practices that motivated her children to embrace Spanish as embedded in translingual and transcultural⁷ ways of doing and being. During an interview, Frida had just finished gathering the ollas de barro she had used for a Día de Los Muertos event at the school where her two younger children attended. She described how she used *the act of preparing food* with Mexican pots to cook with her children

⁷ Transcultural is the transcending monocultural borders associated with spaces and people (Orellana, 2016); understanding culture(s) as dynamic, complex, and unconfined, and that can be experienced and embodied beyond national borders.

and saw this as an opportunity to embrace the Spanish language authentically. The ollas de barro represented both a family and cultural artifact used for cooking as she experienced in her family, but that also represented the Mexican cultural craftsmanship of these pots. In this case, Frida used the experience with her children to talk about the artifacts in connection to learning and sustaining language in concrete ways. Her example strategically moved from English to Spanish, focusing on naming the artifact. Similar to García-Mateus and Palmer (2017), the mothers' translanguaging pedagogies affirmed the cultural and linguistic practices and identities of the children but also complicated the meaning of language. This reflected language from a border crosser's perspective—one that is in reference to but not limited to borders—that elevates the language practices and cultural knowledge from the margins.

Frida described that in her home, she tried to make the use of Spanish meaningfully and connected to who they are as a family, which for them meant drawing on their use of Spanglish to straddle what she called a "Mexican-American world." She drew from her *border thinking* when she explained that she *also* speaks English because, as she said, "we are in a Mexican-American world where it's different." Further, Frida was imagining a world made for her and her children and enacted translanguaging that made that a reality for her children *at home*—embodying a border thinking pedagogy. In doing so, she was teaching and modeling for them *how* to feel proud of who they are as a family with Latinx roots. She hoped this sense of orgullo would encourage them to continue learning *their* lengua and gain a deeper sense of connection to their Latinx heritage.

In order to embrace this vision of raising bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural children while resisting monolingual expectations, transfronteriza mothers also exposed their children to Mexican cultural practices and their families in Mexico. They demonstrated a view and practice of a translanguaging pedagogy that does not separate language and culture but rather embraces them, the practice that Anzaldúa (1987) describes as intimately connected. Similar to Frida, Sra. Gonzalez shared, "Nosotros vamos cada fin de semana con mis papás para que él esté en México y aprenda y conozca allá. Lo llevamos a las fiestas cuando hay, o las ferias" (Interview #2). Here, Sra. Gonzalez consistently took her son to Mexico with her family in order for him to build connections to family, culture, and language in concrete ways (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Sra. Gonzalez's pictures of her son at the local community fair on the Mexican borderlands where her family lives.



Sra. Gonzalez's translanguaging pedagogy was grounded in local cultural and family experiences that showed her son how language was used where he, too, interacted with the vendors and artists in authentic ways and experienced through multiple modes (i.e., linguistic, auditory, gestures, spatially). For example, in the first picture, a woman was wearing a traditional Mexican skirt and blouse representing cultural traditions. In the second picture, Sra. Gonzalez's son was

interacting with vendors such as the one illustrated here selling local artisan jewelry. Both the artesanías and the folkloric outfits, music, among other performances, were authentic representations of how Spanish was used in and through interactions and as part of the context. In this testimonio, translanguaging was lived and defined within the sociocultural context, among members of the community, and embodied across modes. As García and Wei (2014) posit, translanguaging was positioned as a way of being—more than just an autonomous linguistic system—and drawn on to uphold their heritage background.

Translanguaging manifested in distinct yet interconnected ways for all the mothers. For example, Sra. Gonzalez, who resided in Mexico, focused on contributing to her child's translanguaging by supporting the development of Spanish through various modalities. The mothers residing in the U.S. modeled translanguaging for their children by moving flexibly between named languages such as Spanish, English, and Spanglish. Here, their pedagogy presented language as part of a larger context they lived in and navigated, as part of the family, and as part of their culture. This pedagogy was informed and shaped by intergenerational family practices and local community sustained practices that were deemed important to the mothers' experiences with language. Furthermore, these were representations of translanguaging as a way of *doing* and *being* bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural in and across world(s).

Conclusions and Implications

We argue that mothers should be considered critical border and translanguaging pedagogues (Alvarez, 2014; Noguérón-Liu, 2020; Nuñez, 2019; Showstack & García-Mateus, *in press*). Mexican-origin mothers modeled and acted as *agents of change* where they envisioned a future for themselves and their children that was rooted in how *they* have navigated their transnational and translanguaging *ways of being and doing*. These mothers understood and fostered bilingualism and biliteracy in contextualized ways, as opposed to an autonomous system that is disconnected from students' everyday lives or complex language abilities. Moreover, they implemented critical language pedagogy that included the elements that Cervantes-Soon and Carrillo (2016) deem necessary for a border pedagogy (i.e., straddling, translanguaging, and testimonios) in order to envision and create a future where they could claim bilingualism, biliteracy, and biculturalism as part of their children's worlds and realities. In other words, the mothers were preparing their children, as mothers do in a variety of ways

(e.g., establishing healthy routines, being polite, sharing), for how to embrace, embody, and sustain their cultural heritage and/or language practices in the face of reductive and unjust language ideologies and policies. Similar to Latinx futurism (Merla-Watson & Olgún, 2017), these mothers saw the world beyond their lived experiences and imagined a future that centered on their Mexican and Mexican-American experiences, culture, and identities—decentering from the white gaze. Instead, they engaged their children in authentic language learning, which was deeply rooted in who they are and where they live. That said, we cannot help but ask, *what would bilingual education and bilingualism look like in our schools and in our society, outside of the white gaze, when marginalized parents, like madres mexicanas' border thinking and pedagogies are centered and regarded as part of language teaching and learning?* The Mexican madres supported their children's dynamic language practices as closely connected with their cultural experiences and identities as transnational bilinguals. They have demonstrated to us what it means to normalize and center on the translanguaging and transcultural practices of young bilingual children. The mother's testimonios and border thinking highlight why raising bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural children go beyond the cognitive and economic benefits. For them, as it is for us as madres mexicanas, and scholars, raising bilingual children is and will continue to be a way to honor and celebrate our cultural heritage and deconstruct oppressive schooling experiences.

Practitioners and scholars in bilingual education need to include and work alongside mothers and other caregivers for guidance on how to design and implement equitable bilingual education programs that center the translanguaging experiences of students who carry the "English language learner" label. The Mexican mothers' knowledge in regards to translanguaging in their home can shed light on the possibilities and opportunities teachers can draw from to support the dynamic translanguaging practices of young bilingual students for the development of bilingualism, biculturalism, and biliteracy.

In a similar vein, we also see these findings as advancing teacher education in two ways: (1) encouraging teacher educators to intentionally include and implement translanguaging as a critical component of bilingual teacher education programs; and (2) supporting teacher educators to reframe how pre-and in-service teachers see the role of families from being in the periphery to being key contributors to innovative and critical approaches to translanguaging and bilingual teaching. The mothers in this study taught us how to imagine and implement

translanguaging pedagogies. That is, by mindfully discussing and deconstructing inequities they experience and created learning opportunities that connected to the children's cultural and language practices to content learning. Their approaches can serve as critical blueprints and guides to planning bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural education and destabilize the power given to monolingualism in academic settings.

Furthermore, we believe it is important to critically listen (Heiman & Yanes, 2018) and learn about, understand, and value the decisions, motivations and approaches that mothers or caregivers of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds embody. Understanding these decisions can be both liberating, emancipatory and better inform our decisions in classroom spaces, our approaches to language, and our relationships with both students and families.

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