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Un Día De Lo Padre: a multigenerational Plática with bilingual pre-service teachers and their elders, sharing perspectives about translanguaging and bilingual education

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ABSTRACT

In university bilingual educator preparation programs, we frequently discuss issues across and around language, culture, and teaching. Topics inevitably emerge regarding the dialogue first generation college students have with their family members about maintaining the 'purity' of a language vis-à-vis navigating the waters of a translanguaging *corriente* [current]. In this article, we examine these perspectives after having witnessed a snapshot of this dialogue. In fall 2018, a group of Latin@ undergraduate bilingual pre-service teachers in our university Second Language Acquisition course invited their elders to class. Amidst food, music, tears, and *risas*, we were honored to enter into this robust conversation about the tension between the potential of translanguaging and the power of the idea of language 'purity'. While the professional field and course content offered students grounding in theory and pedagogy, parents offered personal and deeply felt convictions; both aimed to support and sustain Latin@ bilingual and immigrant identities. After sharing our thematic analysis of recordings of class conversations on that day and others, student reflections, and follow-up student interviews with elders, we discuss what these critical conversations mean to bilingual pre-service teachers and bilingual preparation programs in the university.

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Introduction

Lo más pequeño que sean los niños, lo más difícil va a ser mantener el idioma. Por eso creo que lo más importante es practicar en casa y seguir aprendiendo el idioma... Ahora nosotros seguimos aprendiendo español de mis papás, pero mis papás aprenden también de nosotros. The younger the child, the harder it is to keep one's language. For that reason, I believe that it's important to practice at home and continue learning the language. My siblings and I continue to learn Spanish from my parents, while my parents also learn from us. (Valeria)¹

Valeria was one of Mitch's students, a Latina in the cohort of bilingual preservice teachers taking a Second Language Acquisition course taught at a large urban university in Texas in fall 2018. Acknowledgement of what *their parents had done* to support their own bilingualism abounded in student reflections while questions were posited about what *they should do* moving forward as bilingual educators. Family pressures, linguistic/cultural maintenance, and understanding themselves as border-dwellers (Anzaldúa 1987) all emerged as themes that semester. Students were asking themselves questions such as whether they should separate their languages while teaching, and how they could support their future students' acquisition of formal and informal English while also valuing and maintaining the language and cultural practices of the home.

The voices lingering in the background of these dialogues were those of the students' own parents. Over the course of the semester it occurred to Mitch and to the cohort that they should invite the students' elders into their university classroom for a conversation about language, language maintenance/shift, and translanguaging. So, on November 7, they did! This article shares the story of that encounter: what led the students and Mitch to decide to invite parents into the typically prohibited space of the college classroom, how they prepared for the visit, and an analysis of the conversations that transpired. We end with reflections about the lessons learned both by the students in that class and by the authors in carrying out and reflecting upon this encounter, considering the potential of translanguaging pedagogies for bilingual preservice teacher preparation.

Review of literature

Latin@ and bilingual parents' engagement in their children's education is a topic of significant research (Baquedano-López, Alexander, and Hernández 2013). Much of this work is dedicated to exploring Latin@/bilingual parent engagement among the parents of K-12 students. While some exist, there are fewer studies regarding parents' engagement with their children's post-secondary education (Cuevas 2020; Villalba et al. 2014). Scholarly work has demonstrated a positive impact of Latin@ parents' *consejos*, or moral support/advice, to instill persistence and drive in their children, leading to greater success in higher education (D. D. Alfaro, O'Reilly-Díaz, and López 2014; Auerbach 2006; Ceballo et al. 2014). Along these lines, research also documents first generation Latin@ students' tendency to remain connected to family and community (Hernandez 2002) and Latin@ parents' high level of interest in helping their children through their university endeavors (Auerbach 2004). Thus, while many factors - including poverty, inadequate resources in their K-12 schooling, and a lack of access to dominant-culture social capital - can leave Latin@ undergraduate students struggling to navigate the university's 'whitestream' spaces, students who are most successful tend to be those who find ways to bring their own community cultural wealth (CCW) (Yosso 2005) of resources to bear upon their university learning experiences (Delgado Bernal 2001; Hernandez 2002).

One aspect of CCW that deserves more attention in university bilingual teacher preparation classrooms is language. Researchers have examined Latin@ students' experiences developing their linguistic repertoires and pedagogical language competencies in bilingual teacher preparation programs (Aquino-Sterling 2016; Ek, Sánchez, and Quijada Cerecer 2013; Guerrero 2003). Some have argued bilingual preservice teachers' (BPT) linguistic repertoires lack the specificity and depth required by state language exams (Aquino-Sterling

2016; Guerrero 2003). In fact, many BPTs experienced subtractive, marginalizing and dehumanizing pedagogies in their K-12 schooling related to their language practices (Ek, Sánchez, and Quijada Cerecer 2013), and struggle to demonstrate competency on exams designed for monolingual Spanish speakers (Flores and Schissel 2014; Guerrero 2003). At the same time, others have begun to develop pedagogies that intentionally leverage BPTs' hybrid and vernacular home language practices for classroom learning (Caldas, Palmer, and Schwedhelm 2019; Alfaro 2019). These practices, known increasingly as translanguaging pedagogies, have proven to be a powerful tool to support bilingual and emerging bilingual students in a range of contexts. The classroom of focus in this project was aligned with this research; as will become clear below, Mitch maintained a *translanguaging stance* and his classroom was a *translanguaging space*, which allowed for a translanguaging corriente of communication (García et al., 2017). While we did not begin this project as a research study, we returned to the experience and the data after the fact with the following research question in mind. *What happened when* a linguistically/culturally diverse group of Texas undergraduate preservice bilingual education teachers, in collaboration with their professor, invited their elders (parents, grandparents) to visit their university language acquisition class to talk about issues raised in the course?

Methods

We employed methods of ethnography and discourse analysis to explore participants' beliefs, stated practices, and in-the-moment applications related to language separation and translanguaging. Because we did not begin this project as research, but as practice, this was more specifically participatory critical ethnographic research in that the students and Mitch conceived of the experience and shaped it around their questions for their elders. As Palmer and Caldas (2015) explain, participatory critical ethnographic research works directly with community members in an ongoing dialogue with those being researched. Subsequently, we came along and carried out an analysis of the conversations that resulted, making sure to remain true to their original intentions. The resulting article examines essentially the same questions they had.

Early in the semester, Mitch secured permission from the students to audio record conversations. The data presented here emerged from these recordings of twelve sessions of class including the *Día De Lo' Padre'*, student written reflections, and students' follow-up interviews with their parents about the visit. Mitch transcribed the event word for word and, following Saldaña's (2016) notion of descriptive coding, generated themes based on his analysis. In order to establish trustworthiness in the data analysis, authors conferred with one another about interpretations of parents' and students' comments regarding translanguaging. All discussion related to translanguaging or the separation of language use was selected and analyzed for themes to include in this article. Additionally, a form of triangulation was established as students interviewed their parents after the fact, audio recorded it, and wrote about it as a final assignment for the course.

Positionality

Mitch was beginning his third year as a university instructor and doctoral student during the fall of 2018 semester. He was born in the city where the university is located and had

taught at nearby elementary schools for fourteen years. He has an intimate knowledge of Latin@ culture and has been speaking Spanish since childhood while working with his dad in construction. He recognizes the social position that he occupies: middle-class white adult male, university employee, and the students' instructor—all of which are likely to influence their perceptions and interactions. As much of this article is written from his perspective, other parts of this article are written in first person.

Deb is a white middle-class bilingual (English/Spanish speaking) woman in her 50s who also taught this course in the past and supported Mitch throughout the process of data collection and analysis for this project. Both authors are teacher educators and former elementary bilingual education teachers who share a mutual interest in the everyday language practices of minoritized individuals as understood through a culturally-sustaining lens and a commitment to advocating for marginalized communities through their teaching and research.

Context/participants

The cohort was in their first semester of a four-semester professional development sequence leading to certification to teach elementary grades in Texas with a bilingual endorsement. The course sought to engage students in meaningful dialogue around the complexities of language acquisition both from a theoretical and practical perspective. A central theme of the course was problematizing subtractive discourse (Valenzuela 2010) and deficit understandings about language while foregrounding pluralist communication that, as Durán and Palmer (2014) articulate, 'assume that multilingualism is both normal and worth cultivating.' (p. 2). We also understood a prestige dialect, such as 'standard' English or Spanish, to be merely a matter of context and power (Fromkin, Rodman, and Hyams 2018). As an example of this, the course syllabus was bilingual. Regarding *lenguaje de instrucción* [language of instruction] it stated:

Esta clase se conducirá de una forma bilingüe... Se espera que complete trabajos escritos en ambos idiomas y que ambos tengan el mismo nivel de calidad con el propósito de desarrollar su identidad profesional bilingüe. [This class will be conducted bilingually... Written work will be completed in both languages with the same level of quality in order to develop your professional bilingual identity.]

Course readings and assignments offered students an additive, asset-based framework to guide conversations through the semester. The content addressed the topics of first and second language acquisition as required by the State of Texas, but held open spaces to allow for conversations around themes of language, culture, and identity, to the extent possible remaining student-centered. Concurrent courses in the program centered critical and socio-cultural perspectives on language, culture and identity.

From the earliest of interactions that semester, the chemistry was excellent. Seventeen extraordinarily insightful and eager students would appear for the three-hour class. In addition to our shared and diverse Spotify playlist, we used a *pared de palabras* [word wall], filling the whiteboard with words that emerged in conversation in order to promote metalinguistic awareness and validate our trans-dialectical discourse. Because we had established a culture of *confianza* [trust] (Kvam 2017), vulnerability was customary and not hindered, as it can be, by fear of making mistakes. This rapport was instrumental in providing the environment in which students felt comfortable inviting their elders to class.

The students were all bilingual speakers of Spanish and English. We had speakers of Spanish from Mexico, Texas, New York, Chicago, Peru, and Spain. Out of the seventeen, thirteen spoke Spanish as their first language, two spoke English as their first language, and two spoke other European languages along with Spanish and English. The majority of the students and their families had experienced marginalization, linguistic insecurity, and language loss; at the same time, they had also experienced pride and strength due to their bilingual/bicultural identities. All of these themes repeatedly surfaced in students' class discussions and written reflections.

Findings

La Chispa

One day in mid-September, forty-five minutes into our morning class, as we were discussing what it meant to be a teacher, the idea of parents coming to class sprung forth as a possibility: 'Can I bring my parents?' one student said smilingly. Another exclaimed, 'We could have a Padre Party!' Another jokingly instructed me to 'act really white when they come' so as to prank their parents with a thick gringo accent. The seed had been planted.

Three themes emerged from the initial conversation that morning. First was *career-choice validation*. Following the initial ask, another student mentioned the desire for her parents to 'understand' and 'appreciate' her choice of being a bilingual teacher. Second was the idea of *shame*. Also immediately after the suggestion to invite parents to class, a student interjected, 'But don't shame them!' Another echoed this hesitancy, exclaiming: 'Oh no, I couldn't,' while a different student qualified, 'You gotta understand that my parents only have a 3rd grade education.' Students from working-class backgrounds expressed concern that their parents would feel out of place at the university.

The final theme was about *tensions* between home and school. A seemingly unscalable wall stood between concepts discussed in our classroom and students' home worlds. This barrier inevitably involved the language(s) and the attitudes *about* language that students and parents associated with both spaces. It was a boundary that the notion of translanguaging—a reconfiguration of the acceptable form of how these bilingual/bicultural students *do languaging* or even how they *do college*—could perhaps circumvent. With their enthusiasm, talk of food to be prepared, and jocularly, the students implied that a key tool that might have the power to knock down that wall was the *confianza* that we had built in our classroom.

En Preparación

Following Cuban educator-researcher Nedelcu (2015), I encouraged the students to suggest topics that would guide our time with their elders. As an exit-ticket activity, I asked them to write down the questions they would like to converse about with their parents. Reading through them, I generated five *Temas Para La Plática* [Topics of Discussion] (see [Appendix](#)) that would give the group a conversational direction for Día De Lo' Padre: (1) *Educación² de Ud. y su familia* [Personal/Family Education] (2) *Educación en general* [General Education] (3) *El idioma (español e inglés)* [Language; Spanish and English] (4) *Cultura* [Culture] (5) *Política* [Politics]. Beneath each heading were the questions the students

generated. In the subsequent class, we discussed the themes to ensure that all topics were represented. Finally, we sorted out who would bring what food and drink as we prepared for the anticipated convivencia.

El Gran Día

On November 7 around 9am, students and their parents began to trickle in. Handshakes, hugs, and kisses were exchanged, and nervous excitement ran through us all. To my surprise and delight, a set of grandparents had accompanied one student's parents. Families sat randomly around four large tables. Our three-hour meeting was conducted almost exclusively in Spanish. Though this was appropriate for the event, it was anomalous in this prestigious research institution where English readily prevails. This translanguaging move, where we collectively adapted our language practice to a situated context for a specific purpose, was also adorned with students' humorous bursts of English to affiliate with classmates or occasionally to draw on an English word to express an idea.

We began, of course, with food. The students and their elders served themselves chips, sodas, vegetables, cookies, and the chili *con chile* that I had made. One of the students mirthfully announced that my dish was not spicy enough. We all shared a laugh and I agreed, indexing to the guests that it was safe to lovingly poke fun at each other while genuinely speaking truth—a hallmark of *confianza* (Covarrubias 2002; Kvam 2017). When I noticed that *panzas* were *llenas* and *corazones* were *contentos*, I began with introductory remarks. As Nedelcu (2015) suggested, I endeavored to have participants direct the conversation as much as possible. Parents volunteered remarks of gratitude and support for their children's educational trajectory. A student's *abuela* [grandmother] shared tears of joy as she expressed her thankfulness for the opportunity that her *nieta* [granddaughter] had to continue her formal education—an opportunity unavailable to her as a youth in Mexico.

I drew participants' attention to copies of the *Temas Para La Plática* (Appendix) on their tables and encouraged them to choose a topic to discuss with those around them. Conversations erupted as I circulated. After 15-20 minutes, I brought us all back together. Our discussions touched upon many topics, but three major themes emerged and aligned shockingly well with the three themes from the morning we conceived the idea of Día De Lo' Padre': career-choice validation, shame around identity, and tensions in language practice. Focusing on the second two, the following vignettes illustrate how the concept of language catalyzed these themes.

Hay personas que se avergüenzan

Jimena was the first to respond to the whole group.

Jimena: *Pues nosotros hablamos de la, sobre la, educación o la cultura, de ellos que se avergonzaban de su cultura, y que sí conocíamos personas que eran así ... yo le dije hay personas que se avergon, a-ver-gon, [Well we talked about, education or culture, if they ever were ashamed of their culture and that we knew people that were like that. I said that there are people who get asha-, asham- (stuck on the conjugation of the verb)]*

A few mothers: *avergüenzan* [become ashamed]

Jimena: *Y hay veces que, es raro porque, tienen, como, nopal en la frente ((carcajadas)). Y dicen que no hablan español para nada.* [And there are times, it's weird because, they have “cactus on their forehead” ((laughter)). And they say that they can't speak a lick of Spanish.]

Jimena characterizes individuals who are ashamed of their culture as she struggles to conjugate the verb *avergonzarse* [to be ashamed]. The student carefully hedges around the idea that there are those who have ‘*el nopal en la frente*’ and are not able to speak Spanish. This is a phrase in Mexican Spanish to describe someone of Mexican origin that possesses a naïve understanding of how things work in the US. It is affiliated with trying to mask one's rural Mexican-ness, unsophistication, and being out of place. Jimena then locates shame in the intersection of having the appearance of being Mexican (‘*nopalud@*’) with ‘*que no hablan español para nada*’ [not knowing a lick of Spanish]. This sense of in-betweenness has been well described by Anzaldúa (1987) as she employed the Nahuatl concept of *nepantla*, a liminal space of being neither from here nor there. Borderlands identities were a frequent topic during class discussions as many of the students struggled with societal expectations or judgment linked with their (lack of) ‘pure’ native language. Regarding language purity, two differing ideologies emerged from parents that day about whether Spanish should be intermingled with English as their children spoke to them at home.

¿Mix it or 86 it?

Knowing that language mixing was one of the topics that the students wanted to address with their parents in a setting beyond their homes, I queried the group, *¿Se puede cambiar del inglés al español, back and forth, como si fuera un río, o están a favor, o en contra, depende, ¿qué cosa?* [Is it possible to change from English to Spanish, back and forth, as if it was a river? Are y'all for it, against it, does it depend or what's up?]. A Mexican-American student and her mother shared the following conversation:

Isabel: *Yo creo que el code-switching es bueno porque algunas veces hay palabras que no conozco en español y unas palabras que conozco en inglés. Entonces es una manera... como cuando le hablo a mi mamá, le digo, “Oh, quiero hacer esto” y luego cambio al inglés. Entonces mi manera de tratar de, um, traducir... ¿translate? [I believe that code-switching is positive because sometimes there are words with which I am unfamiliar in Spanish and words that I do know in English. So it is a way...like when I speak with my mom, I'll tell her, ‘Oh, I want to do this’ and then I switch to English. So, it is my way to try and translate?]*

Mitch: *Sí [Yes]*

Isabel: *...traducir...lo estoy diciendo en inglés pero estoy tratando de traducirlo en español ya cuando lo digo en inglés, se lo repito en español. Y es, a mí me ayuda.[... translate...I'll be saying it in English, but trying to translate it into Spanish when I say it in English, and I repeat it to her in Spanish. And so...it really helps me.]*

Isabel's mother: *Y yo le digo en español y luego lo digo en inglés y ella me dice (de una manera chistosa), “No, Ma, así no es... [And I tell her in Spanish, and then I say it in English, and she tells me ((humorous tone)), “No, Mom, that's not it...”)((general laughter)) Y le digo, ‘Ok, fine.’ [And I tell her... ‘Ok, fine.]*

Both mother and daughter appear to be comfortable with the fluidity of intrasentential English and Spanish switches, prioritizing the objective of communication. Isabel explains a form of scaffolding sometimes known as *crutching* (Zentella 1997), which focuses on bilingual speakers' supposed inability to maintain fluency of *language* as a socio-politically defined code (see Otheguy, García, and Reid 2015) rather than their ability to maintain fluency of *meaning* while articulating thoughts across named languages. As she explains, she exemplifies the very concept of fluid communication by double checking to verify that her selection of 'traducir' for 'translate' is understandable. This nimble meta-pragmatic shift displays the functionality of drawing from her full linguistic repertoire to successfully communicate meaning. Isabel's mother highlights the utility of the concept in terms of language learning as she humorously describes her daughter correcting *her* attempts at communication in English. Then, to recapitulate the point and to mirror Isabel's discursive pattern, she cleverly bridges both languages: 'Yo le digo, "Ok, fine."'

A few weeks earlier, Isabel expressed a similar sentiment on her written midterm exam. She considered translanguaging a principle that she planned to implement into her classroom:

Quiero explicar mis dos principios que creo que son importantes en mi clase. El translanguaging es un término que determina cómo las personas usan sus idiomas dependiendo del contexto para poder entender conceptos que se le está enseñando. Es la manera que usan su conocimiento lingüístico para leer y observar el mundo; con el uso de los dos idiomas adquieren conceptos que serán comprensibles a ellos. Se puede decir que, al comprender un concepto en un idioma, lo pensamos en otro idioma, ¡pero entendemos lo que nos están diciendo! [I want to explain the two principles that I think will be important in my class. Translanguaging is a term that determines how people use their language depending on the context in order to understand concepts that are being taught. It is the way they use their linguistic knowledge to read and observe the world; with the use of both languages they acquire concepts that will be understandable to them. You could say that when we understand a concept in one language, we think about it in another language, but we understand what's said!]

It was plain to see how Isabel could embrace the notion of translanguaging, having her mother's stamp of approval. She continued, emphasizing the metalinguistic awareness developed when learning without the interference of language boundaries.

El translanguaging tiene una connotación más positiva por la razón que este término es más usado en contextos donde los estudiantes reconocen lo que están aprendiendo sin tener ningún problema con el idioma. Es como mi caso, si alguien me pregunta en inglés cuántos dedos tengo, inmediatamente voy a contar mis dedos, pero contaré en español, y contestaré en español. Otro ejemplo de translanguaging puede ser cuando el/la maestro/a pregunta algo en inglés y un estudiante contesta la pregunta en español. [Translanguaging has a more positive connotation for the reason that this term is more used in contexts where students recognize what they are learning without having any problem with the language. It is like my case, if someone asks me in English how many fingers I have, I will immediately count my fingers, but I will count in Spanish, and I will answer in Spanish. Another example of translanguaging can be when the teacher asks a question in English and a student answers the question in Spanish.]

Isabel points out the efficacy of translanguaging as a tool shared by interlocutors. Students throughout the semester often envisaged the use of language similarly—as future teachers interacting with their students around the content of lessons.]

By contrast, immediately following Isabel's mother, Mirta's mother expresses her family's decision to maintain a strict separation between languages at home, in which the focus was on clear communication not in *a* language, but in *each* language.

Mirta's mother: *Nosotros en la familia hemos optado que cuando nos quieren hablar en inglés, lo sueltan todo en inglés. Si nos van a hablar en español, todo en español. Pero que no nos digan, "Soy, este, like, uh..." ; ¡No!* . [In our family, we have agreed that when they want to speak to us in English, that they let it fly completely in English. When they are going to speak to us in Spanish, all in Spanish. But don't tell us, "Soy...este, like, uh." No!]

((laughter, applause))

Mitch: *Sí, sí, sí. ¿Y si no saben la palabra? ¿Les ayudan a saber lo que..., cómo se diría?*
[Yes, yes, yes, and what if they don't know a word? Do y'all help them to know..., how it is said?]

Mirta's mother: *Sí, porque, cómo decir qué cosa: Déjenos toda la...toda la frase, todo lo que quieras decir, tus sentimientos que quieres expresar. Dalo todo en inglés para que te, te, te salga lo que quieres expresar. Pero, luego el español. Ahí viene la corrección en español.*[Yes, because, how to say something. Lay it all out, the whole thought, everything that you what to say, the feelings that you want to express. Give it to us all in English so that you, you, you can say it how you want. But then in Spanish, and that's when the correction happens in Spanish.]

Isabel's mom: *¡Exactamente! Y la corrección en inglés para los padres es peor...¿verdad?*
[Exactly! And the correction in English for us parents is worse, right?]

((laughter))

Also a few weeks earlier, Mirta expressed *her* thoughts on the midterm exam about this:

Thus far, we've spent quite a great deal discussing the term "code-switching" and whether it should or should not be acceptable in the classroom. Some claim that their submersion to the English language helped them more In other words, having the "pressure" of only speaking English helped them more, rather than hinder their learning. Another point made has been the fact that students get confused and they won't learn the word/phrase/sentence if you're allowing them to speak in whichever language they prefer. I can personally relate to this first claim. When I began learning English, at age 10, I felt extreme pressure to acquire it, since I was placed in a class that was ...[not] bilingual. Fearing that I would stay behind and be considered "at risk" pushed me to submerge myself in learning English. This was very helpful for me because it allowed me to pick up my L2 way quicker than others and be more in sync with my classmates. I even carried this mentality, of "pushing" kids into learning their second language, for quite a few years. However, as I've grown older and continue to inform myself in relevant teaching methods, I've come to change my mind as I've seen it in practice in the actual classroom, and the many articles we've read in class and others that give research and evidence (quotes some class readings as evidence). A bilingual pre-kindergarten teacher I've been observing and interviewed, [said]: "In pre-k ... Even when they know it's English time, they will still talk in Spanish, and I don't mind, but it's me who has to talk to them in English, and vice versa. I don't care how you say it to me. As long as I understand you and you understand me, that's all that matters." If as teachers we have this mentality of "helping" our students learn another language through a forceful method, our students will never speak... We need to allow them to express and get their point across in whichever language they can do it. When we lower the affective filter in class, the rest will come naturally...

Mirta candidly articulated the tension between the important role that 'submerging' herself in English played in her own schooling, and the experiences she has had since—

especially in her education courses and fieldwork. Myriad tensions surfaced throughout the course between students' homes/families and their future careers. Students struggled between the cultures/expectations of their elders, and the cultures/expectations of the school districts that would be their future employers; between their past and their future; between traditional ways of knowing and school curricula. All of these tensions, as students brought them up, seemed to be symbolized through language practices.

Mirta's mother's strong opposition to language 'mixing' typifies that of many Spanish-speaking parents living in the US (Lutz 2008). The students, throughout the semester, interpreted their parents to mean that they longed for a form of *purism* in each language in order to ensure that the students would not lose their home language or culture. Similar arguments are made in dual language education about the need to 'separate' languages in the classroom (e.g. Fortune and Tedick 2019; Cloud, Genesee, and Hamayan 2000) and teachers have demonstrated similar ideologies of language purism (Martínez, Hikida, and Durán 2015; Mortimer 2018). However, parents' rationales seemed to be more nuanced than their children's interpretations had allowed; Mirta's mother later commented in a follow-up interview with Mirta, *Nos conservamos con nuestra personalidad y con nuestra cultura. Si nosotros no la mantenemos, va a llegar el momento en que no somos de aquí ni de allá.* [We preserve ourselves with our personalities and our culture. If we don't maintain it, there will come a time when we are from neither here nor there.].

This brief quote by Mirta's mother is replete with implications. Note her heavy use of the collective pronoun (nosotros/we). Five times out of a 28-word snippet she emphasizes 'we' (*nos conservamos, nuestra personalidad, nuestra cultura, si nosotros no..., no somos*). The message is simple—if *we* (as Latin@s) do not conserve our personality and culture, *we* will drift into becoming attenuated. Because of historical and sociopolitical factors in the US, *our* nondominant language and culture will be melted away, leaving an inauthentic or incomplete version of who *we* are. Wong Fillmore (1991) explores the consequences of schools' erasure of students' home languages and cultures, suggesting that 'parents need to be warned of the consequences of not insisting that their children speak to them in the language of the home' and that 'teachers should be aware of the harm they can do when they tell parents that they should encourage their children to speak English at home,' (p. 346). She illustrates the collateral damage made not just to children's facility in their first language, but to their identities. Language separation, then, became a tool for Mirta's family to mitigate this phenomenon and employ a culturally sustaining practice at home (Paris 2012).

On the other hand, for Isabel and her mother, translanguaging was a natural tool for meaning making for bilinguals. They utilized both Spanish and English interchangeably to maximize effective communication. Throughout the semester, students seemed overwhelmingly in favor of the idea of linguistic flexibility, not because it allowed them to circumvent learning a word in English or Spanish, but to facilitate teaching, learning, or to demonstrate nuances for content.

Discussion/conclusion

To dichotomize while arguing against dichotomy is illogical; language separation is not always wrong, just like 'language-mixing' is not always appropriate. Though there remains debate in the field in many areas (Fortune and Tedick 2019; MacSwan 2017), researchers

in bilingual education increasingly embrace theories of holistic/dynamic bilingualism and translanguaging pedagogies to account for the cognitive and linguistic practices of bilinguals like these Latin@ pre-service teachers as they learn and live across the boundaries of two or more named languages. The goal of both language separation and translanguaging, *in this context*, seemed to be to support and sustain identities. However, the crux emerges as to *which identity*. The elders, who had spoken primarily Spanish and built their lives in that language are in a different place than their children, who are building bilingual lives straddling Spanish-dominant homes and English-dominant schools. We speculate that this tension echoes a larger tension between immigrants and their children: while parents and grandparents, mostly from the immigrant generation, orient towards their home and primary language and culture—having begun their lives as monolinguals—their children are developing bilingual/bicultural identities that are more compatible with a translanguaging orientation (Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco 2009).

Language policy and planning is and always has been an effort to insert ideological goals into people's natural languaging processes, whether to erase the language practices associated with a culture and community or to preserve and sustain the same (Menken and García 2010; Shohamy 2006). Family language policies are no different (King, Fogle, and Logan-Terry 2008). Even as we encourage preservice bilingual teachers to develop classroom language policies that embrace holistic bilingualism to support and develop bilingual identities for themselves and the students in their future classrooms, we must remember to honor the power of the language policies their elders created and enforced throughout their childhoods; these were the homes that created and sustained their bilingual selves. There was not a single elder in the meeting who did not see the value of their children learning both languages. In order to sustain this wealth, however, some of them had opted to build language separation into their family practices with the express purpose of maintaining Spanish in the shadow of English dominance. Most were keenly aware of the allure and implications of progressing towards the force of English, and the danger of allowing the intimacy of their familiar Spanish, and all that it imbues, to steadily wane (Rodríguez 1983).

Día De Lo' Padre' reimagined cultural rules by surmounting the walls that usually prohibit elders from entering their children's university classrooms. Similarly, throughout the encounter we prioritized communication by embodying our community's bi(multi)lingualism in our dialogue itself. As we commit to opening dialogues such as these, we hope to gain understanding about how to mitigate tensions that may exist between Latin@ pre-service teachers and their families regarding language practices while simultaneously equipping them for what lies ahead for them as bilingual educators. We hope this example might encourage further conversations in bilingual teacher preparation that include young teachers' elders in order to focus on an aspect of language that transcends the words that we utter or the syntax we employ—that which embodies the communication that helps us understand each other more profoundly.

Notes

1. All names are pseudonyms
2. The word *educación* in Spanish encompasses more than the English-language notion of a formal education (Delgado-Gaitan 1994); rather, it includes ethical and moral character. Being merely “book smart” is generally less a priority than being relationally smart, well-mannered, and respectful.

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The authors report there are no competing interests to declare.

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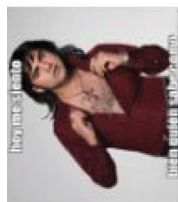
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Appendix



¡Temas Para Nuestra Plática!



<u>La educación de Ud. y su familia.</u>	<u>Educación en general</u>	<u>El idioma (español e inglés)</u>	<u>Cultura</u>	<u>Política</u>
<p>¿Cuáles son sus experiencias en la escuela? ¿Y cómo era aprender el inglés?</p> <p>¿Qué cambiarías de su experiencia escolar? ¿Y la de su hija/o?</p> <p>¿Por qué escogió Ud. las escuelas que asistieron sus hijos?</p> <p>¿Han cambiado su perspectiva acerca de la educación?</p> <p>¿Cómo se sienten de la experiencia que ha tenido su hija/o aquí en UT?</p>	<p>¿Cuáles son sus opiniones de la educación bilingüe? ¿Es importante o no?</p> <p>¿Qué opina Ud. del sistema educativo en los EEUU?</p> <p>¿Hay una necesidad de maestros bilingües?</p> <p>¿Por qué o por qué no es importante seguir aprendiendo el español?</p> <p>¿Cuáles son las dudas que tiene Ud. acerca de la carrera que escogió su hija/o.</p>	<p>¿Cómo se siente Ud. del bilingüismo?</p> <p>¿Qué opinión tiene Ud. sobre el intercambio de idiomas dentro de la misma conversación?</p> <p>¿Cuál ha sido su experiencia con el español? ¿El inglés?</p> <p>¿Deberíamos tener nuestra lengua?</p> <p>¿Conoce algunos dichos, refranes, modismos que le gustaría compartir?</p>	<p>¿Debemos mantener nuestra cultura?</p> <p>¿Cuáles son algunas maneras que podemos hacer esto?</p> <p>¿Deberíamos de tener vergüenza de nuestra cultura?</p> <p>¿Cuál es el papel que desempeña el sentido de humor/relajo/chistes/bromas en su vida?</p>	<p>¿Cuál ha sido su experiencia con los de otras culturas aquí en los Estados Unidos?</p> <p>¿Temas sociopolíticos deben de ser parte de las conversaciones en la clase?</p> <p>¿Por qué no pudo seguir con la educación bilingüe mi hija/o?</p>