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Coalition-Building in TWBE: Activism, Allyship, and Empowerment as a Way Forward

Sofía E. Chaparro, PhD
University of Colorado, Denver

Abstract

This article explores the potential for coalition building in integrated two-way bilingual education (TWBE) programs. I begin with an ethnographic poem as a point of departure. The poem is based on the relationship between two kindergarten girls who were participants in my study; I envision what one might say to the other based on observations, field notes, and the analysis of interactions between them over their first year as classmates. Drawing from the literature on integration and cross-cultural friendships within and outside the TWBE literature, I explore tensions and possibilities in TWBE settings, and provide ethnographic examples of activism, allyship, and empowerment in integrated TWBE contexts as a way to build coalition-spaces for social justice.

Keywords: bilingual education, two-way immersion programs, ethnographic poetry, racial integration, social justice, cross-cultural friendships, equity in TWBE

Freedom Dreaming in TWBE: The Potential for Coalition-Building

In her manifesto on abolitionist teaching, Bettina Love (2019) stresses the importance of freedom dreaming—"dreams grounded in a critique of injustice" (p.101)—as the starting point when teaching for social justice. She further states,

> Freedom dreaming is imagining worlds that are just, representing people's full humanity, centering people left on the edges, thriving in solidarity with folx from different identities who have struggled together for justice, and knowing that dreams are just around the corner with the might of people power. (p. 103)

A necessary component to abolitionist teaching is working with allies, or what Love calls co-conspirators, who actively move beyond allyship through the critical work of self-reflection and critique of inequities and the systems that perpetuate them (Love, 2019). In this article, I pose the following questions: what if we dreamt of two-way bilingual education (TWBE) as potential *coalition-building spaces* for social justice? Where children and families not only examine inequality and their role in it, but a place where children and families who have historically experienced oppression feel empowered, and where children and families of privilege understand how to become allies—nay, co-conspirators?

By way of an answer, I present an ethnographic poem based on my research within a TWBE program, where I envision how one former TWBE classmate might address another, reflecting on her own positionality and their experiences as children and now as adults. Building on the literature on integration and cross-cultural friendships and using ethnographic data, I argue that integrated TWBE programs have the potential to become coalition-building spaces for social justice, in spite of the challenges to equity that they represent.

Poema a una compañera (O, para mi amiguita la güera)

El más grande regalo
Entre todos tus privilegios
Es de hablar mi lengua
Y de tenerme en tu colegio

Tus padres te inscribieron en esta escuela
Para no repetir los errores del pasado
Para que estuvieras expuesta
A los que vivímos del otro lado

Y sí, te fue mejor a ti que a mi
Después de varios años
No solo dominabas tu lengua
Sino también la mía

Pero, no me domines a mi

A veces en nuestra amistad ingenua
No entendíamos lo que nos separaba
Ni lo que nos unía

Después llegamos a entender
Que en nuestra sociedad
Tu lugar y mi lugar son tan diferentes
Como la noche y el día

Ahora bien, te digo amiga
Usa este regalo
Úsalo bien para ser mi aliado
Que mi lugar en esta tierra
Siempre esta siendo interrogado

Así que ven, amiga
Lucha a mi lado
Y usa bien
Este regalo

-23 de Octubre, 2019
Denver, CO

A Poem to My Classmate
(or, For My Little White Friend)

The greatest gift
Amongst all your privileges
Is to speak my tongue
And to have me learn by your side

Your parents wanted you to come here
So as not to repeat errors from the past
So that you may be exposed
To those of us who live on the other side

And yes, you did better than me
After several years
Not only did you master your language
You mastered mine too

But don't rule over me

Sometimes in our naive friendship
We didn't really know
What brought us together

Nor what set us apart

Then we came to understand
That in this world
Your place and mine
Are as different as night and day

Now then, I tell you friend
Use this gift
Use it well
Be my ally
That my place on this land
Is constantly being questioned

So come, my friend
Use this gift
Use it well.
Fight alongside me.

Research Context: How the Poem Came About

From 2014 to 2016, I conducted ethnographic research on a new Two-Way Immersion (TWI) bilingual program commencing within a public school in Philadelphia. For 18 months, I followed the first cohort of children to participate in the program. I logged many hours of observations, audio and video recordings of children's interactions, along with parent, teacher, and stakeholder interviews. I was fascinated by the diversity of this first cohort and by what was happening in the city that made this program possible: immigration from Spanish speaking countries into areas of the city that were also slowly being gentrified, along with a movement of college-educated parents—a majority White and non-Latinx—who chose to send their children to public schools despite their bad reputation. In addition, there was financial instability in the city's public schools and incredible pressure on school leaders to keep enrollment up in order to avoid closures. This created the perfect storm—or what I've called the "fertile grounds" for this program to come about when it did (Chaparro, 2021).

The poem is inspired by two focal participants in my study, two girls whom I call Zoe and Larissa. Zoe and Larissa were classmates who sat next to each other most of the kindergarten year. Zoe was White and the oldest child of two girls; her parents were both White and college-educated professionals, property owners, citizens, and fluent English speakers. Larissa was Latina, was the second of three sisters, and was raised by her mother who immigrated from Mexico to the United States as a young adult; her mother had to negotiate life as an immigrant, in a new language she didn't know well. During the analysis of data, I examined how each girl was being positioned differently in terms of their language and literacy abilities. I published this analysis in 2019. In it, I examined how race and class were critical to how each girl was positioned through interactions with each other and with their teachers, including me (Chaparro, 2019). Indeed, this analysis helped form the basis for the concept of *raciolinguistic socialization*, or the process by which race and class impact how children's bilingual development is evaluated and how children are socialized in

spaces where raciolinguistic ideologies link ways of speaking to racialized and classed speakers (Flores & Rosa, 2015).

Looking at their interactions over time, it became poignant how Zoe was consistently uplifted, her bilingualism was celebrated, and her confidence when taking up the role of leader and teacher during interactions with Larissa. Conversely, Larissa, while she was less confident in school and often sought out help, had moments when she vied for recognition of her work and progress, yet she felt more comfortable taking Zoe's lead and receiving her help, even in Spanish, her own native language.

From 2017 to 2019, I had the opportunity to share my work with various audiences. I remember well two key instances. During a teaching demonstration as part of a job talk, I was asked to teach and present to a group of undergraduate pre-service teachers. We were at a local school, and a good number of the students were Latina pre-service teachers. I presented excerpts from Zoe and Larissa's interactions, and during both the "turn and talks" and the whole group discussion, Latina students' visceral, emotional reactions were evident. They saw themselves in Larissa. They identified with her struggles, with her low confidence, and with feeling inadequate in English and Spanish.

Once the article was published, I was invited to chat with a group of students that were part of a summer institute for bilingual teachers and who had just read the article. It was a privilege to hear, firsthand, how bilingual teachers reacted to my article. Once again, Latinx teachers' reactions were emotional. I remember a Latina teacher brought to tears as she described her reactions and thoughts. These moments stayed with me, and in a moment of inspiration, I wrote the poem presented here.

In writing the poem, I thought about what it means that children like Zoe and Larissa learn side-by-side when so much educational malpractice has been done unto Latinx and low-income children of color, like Larissa. I thought about what it means when you have the beautiful goals of bilingualism and biliteracy for all children and when the gifts and rich funds of knowledge that children like Larissa bring into schools are finally recognized and leveraged for learning only to be damped by the reality of the oppressive institutional racism that continues to devalue Larissa's gifts, even in bilingual programs. I thought of my own optimism and idealism slowly receding to the background, first as a TWI teacher and then as a graduate student and researcher of these programs.

It also made me reflect on my accountability as a researcher, both to my participants as well as to the field. In this field site, my positionality was multifaceted. As a Spanish-speaking Latina and former TWI teacher, I gained access as a supporter of the TWI program that was being newly implemented and quickly formed a relationship with the kindergarten teacher—also a Spanish-speaking, middle-class Latina woman. Sharing a common language and a cultural identification with Latinx culture, I was able to gain the trust of Latino families through interactions with them in and out of school times. At the same time, my privilege as a highly educated, middle class bilingual woman and United States citizen allowed me to navigate White institutional spaces and form relationships with college-educated White parents. My status as a graduate student in a prestigious university also allowed me access to stakeholder school and community meetings. My positionality impacted my time in the field, and afterward, in the various ways I communicated such research. I have grappled with this question through methodologies such as antropoesía (see Chaparro, 2020), which I believe is a justice-oriented, humanizing way to present research with Latina immigrant women. As someone who has benefited from bilingualism and positive educational experiences, I also believe I owe it to my communities to dream of possibilities that go beyond critique and pointing out societal inequalities. In other words, as a researcher who no longer works with the school, families, or community that is the focus of this work, what is my responsibility in

communicating such research? And what do I owe not only them, but the Latinx (and other minoritized) teachers, students, and families that see themselves reflected in the experiences of Larissa?

Thus, I thought about the silver lining, about what can be salvaged, about alternate realities, and about how we can learn to do it better. I thought about what it would mean for Zoe to have learned by Larissa, about what kind of adult she could become precisely because of this experience; perhaps Zoe would be someone who dedicates her life to working along-side Latinx Spanish speaking communities for the better or a teacher in these programs or even a researcher of bilingual education. I thought about how Zoe would—or could—use this gift of not only becoming bilingual and biliterate but having shared her elementary experience with Latinx children learning alongside her. I thought about what she would take with her.

I thought of Larissa, too: of how much better off she was by having attended this bilingual program where she had the opportunity to learn in her familial language, the opportunity to maintain her bilingualism to eventually feel confident in her reading, writing, and speaking skills, and the opportunity to become a confident bilingual. I wondered whether she would harbor any resentment towards Zoe who would do "better" in school (in both languages) moved through the world with the privilege of a White bilingual, and was afforded more opportunities, accolades, and recognition. I imagined Larissa as a young adult becoming an activist advocating for her community, and I imagined her inviting Zoe into this work.

Integration, and For Whom?

In the poem, I address the motivation of the parents of the "amiga," as wanting to "right the wrongs" of the past. This is specifically in reference to data from White parents who actively sought out diversity as part of their children's schooling and life experience. Indeed, many White professional parents were opting to live in the city with high urban density and diversity for that precise reason. Liberal-minded professional couples were the core of a movement in Philadelphia, at the time known as the "Friends of" movement, where groups of current and future parents would support their neighborhood public school, both out of a sense of moral obligation and in order to support the school their children (or future children) might attend (Chaparro, 2021; Carlson, 2016; Good & Nelson, 2020).

Parents in this movement often mentioned the benefits of integration as one of the motivations and drivers for this work. Indeed, researchers of school segregation/integration have specifically called for TWI to be a viable strategy for integration (Uzzell & Ayscue, 2021), drawing on literature that demonstrates the negative impacts of segregation as well as the positive benefits associated with integrated schools. Research on segregated schools with a high concentration of students of color has shown these schools experience higher rates of teacher turnover, have teachers with less experience and qualifications, have higher dropout rates and lower graduation, and exhibit overall lower academic achievement (for review, see Ayscue et al., 2017). Conversely, when integrated in racially diverse learning environments, similar research has shown the positive effects on students: lower dropout rates; higher academic achievement; and, importantly, the development of positive intergroup relations (Ayscue et al., 2017).

It is hard to argue against the goal of integration, yet the research mentioned above can easily be interpreted into the racist notion that simply learning alongside White students improves the outcomes of students of color (Ladson-Billings, 2004), when it is the fact that factors such as funding, high quality teaching, and challenging curriculum are provided to White-majority schools

and denied to majority-minority schools. Add to that the complex layers and cumulative impacts of poverty, discrimination, and environmental racism that impact economically disadvantaged neighborhoods and communities of color; these factors inevitably impact students' ability to learn in school. Thus, the focus on desegregating and integrating schools is in and of itself not necessarily going to disrupt the inequities in schooling for students of color. Ladson-Billings (2004) writes one of the main costs of the implementation of the *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision was the focus on desegregating by race as opposed to addressing the need for quality education. Similarly, Horsford (2021) critiques the integration research for the same focus on racial integration as opposed to racial justice:

> [A]dequate and equitable resources must be granted *before* true integration can be realized and sustained. This redistribution of resources, with less concern on the "separate" and a greater focus on the "equal" must be used to provide children with access to caring, demanding, and well-prepared teachers with high expectations, a curriculum that teaches the history of their group, and a supportive and affirming environment that fosters self-knowledge, self-confidence, and self-respect. (p.25)

In the same vein, while TWI can be a space for integration, it must *first and foremost be a space of equitable, quality bilingual education for linguistically minoritized students and families*. Indeed, in tracing the early history of bilingual education in the United States, Flores and García (2017) describe bilingual educational spaces as "racialized basements," spaces with little funding and where Latinx students and teachers were separated from peers. These spaces were nonetheless places where Latinx youth and teachers could come together to affirm pride in their culture and language. While researchers agree the isolation of emergent bilinguals has negative impacts on language development and learning overall, there are benefits to learning with peers who share similar identities and experiences and, more importantly, teachers who support, value, and teach their students to their potential. García and Bartlett's (2011) ethnography of Luperon High School in New York City is one example of a school serving a majority of Dominican and Latino students, with a committed Latino-majority faculty who was successful precisely because of the shared cultural and linguistic norms among the teachers and students. In other words, segregation is not always negative in and of itself, and can, indeed, have some positive elements for students of color when it means being part of a space that values their language, culture, and ways of being.

Thus, the question of who benefits more from TWI integration is one many scholars have raised. While no doubt a bilingual education model for minoritized bilingual students is preferable over an English-only or transitional model, scholars have lamented and critiqued the fact that, in many contexts, bilingual education has become a "commodity" that few have access to (García & Flores, 2017). For example, in Colorado, even when it was the only state to have beat the English-only movement, it has not necessarily been a place where bilingual education has thrived (Escamilla et al., 2023). Transitional models continue to be the most common form of education for linguistically minoritized youth in the United States. The fact that bilingual education has shifted from being a remediation program for linguistically minoritized youth to being an enrichment program for the select few has meant less students have access to it (García & Flores, 2017). Scholars have termed this the gentrification of TWI dual language education (Valdez et al., 2016), both in real terms—that is, to describe the changing demographics of bilingual programs—and in ideological terms, when the original social justice goals of bilingual education are replaced with neoliberal arguments over economic benefits of bilingualism divorced from the cultural, social, and identity benefits for minoritized bilinguals (Bernstein et al., 2021). In fact, Chavez-Moreno (2023)

emphatically critiques using dual language education as a racial integration strategy, stating that an equitable bilingual education for Latinx students must instead contend with the material inequalities of segregated schools for Latinx students.

In Valdés (1997) early cautionary note about dual immersion programs, intergroup relations were one of the factors she urged the field to consider, especially when children and families come from such unequal positions in society. She was especially worried about the differential linguistic expectations on children and the impact on minoritized children, especially when their White counterparts' bilingualism is "enthusiastically applauded" and their own bilingual development ignored. I, too, have wondered how Zoe's more celebrated success and confidence in school impacted Larissa. Thus, these critiques of TWI have been pivotal in urging the field to center Latinx children and children of color in TWI bilingual education programs. The call for critical consciousness in TWBE is one example of the kind of scholarship and praxis that can help better serve students of color (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017). Similarly, the call for ideological clarity for teachers in dual language programs is critical, as the literature has documented the key role social-justice-oriented teachers play in creating culturally sustaining learning environments (Alfaro & Bartolomé, 2017; Garcia-Mateus, 2021; Heiman & Yanes, 2020).

Thinking with the critiques of both the literature on integration and the critical scholarship on TWI programs, there is still room for hope in the integrative nature of these programs because of the possibilities for cross-cultural friendships in these programs, and, beyond that, the potential for allyship they can provide.

Cross-Cultural Friendships

Mostly emanating from the field of psychology, research on cross-group friendships has consistently shown it is associated with positive intergroup attitudes (see Davis et al., 2011 for review). These studies are guided by Gordon Allport's 1954 contact hypothesis, which posits increased interactions and contact with members of different groups can lead to more positive attitudes and less prejudice. Specifically, Allport posited three optimal conditions for positive intergroup attitudes: 1) groups hold equal status; 2) members of each group cooperate, i.e. "cooperative interdependence"; and 3) relevant authorities or institutions support the intergroup contact (Wright & Tropp, 2005). Recent developments in this theory add to it the importance of cross-group friendships, since they involve contact over time and the development of a meaningful relationship (Davis et al., 2011; Pettigrew 1997). Research on Allport's contact hypothesis have extended this to a concept called *extended contact*, which posits that even when individuals themselves do not necessarily create cross-cultural lasting friendships, knowing *about* cross-cultural friendships may achieve a similar effect, albeit smaller (Zhou et al., 2019).

Early research on TWI programs looked at cross-cultural friendships as part of sociocultural competence (Cazabon et al., 1993). Indeed, integration was one of the main reasons the Amigos program was started in Cambridge, Massachusetts in the late 1980's. Lambert and Cazabon (1994) writes,

> [A] second major focus of the program is to provide children with the opportunity to cultivate friendships with children from different ethnic groups and with different values and outlooks on life, and to enrich (or develop, if necessary) knowledge about their own cultural distinctiveness (p.1).

In their research on the program, Lambert and Cazabon specifically added sociometric measures to their survey in order to gauge whether (and to what extent) children were creating cross-linguistic friendships. Based on their research, students in the upper elementary grades who had been in the program from the start reported a preference for friends from both linguistic groups and reported favoring having mixed classes (Lambert & Cazabon, 1994).

In general, there is not much research that has focused specifically on cross-cultural friendships within TWI programs. Researchers have noted self-segregating patterns amongst students, especially during lunch times (Armein & Peña, 2001; Cazabon, 1993; Freeman, 1996). In her study on cross-cultural integration, Hausman-Kelly (2001) found cross-cultural groupings were more than fifty percent of her observations yet noted that out-of-school interactions were limited, and that gender was a bigger consideration for friendships than language or race. At the same time, Bearse and DeJong (2008) found that students in a secondary TWI program reported valuing their friendships highly and reported strong friendships within and across ethnic/racial/linguistic groups. Finally, in studying integration in a TWI program in California, Muro (2016) found what she called "symbolic integration," or integration at a very surface level between White and Latinx children that did not go beyond the classroom or school.

And yet, while integration in many contexts may stay at the surface level or may not go beyond the confines of the school, there is at least one study that points to the impact of integration within a bilingual education program. Wright and Tropp (2005) studied the effects of Spanish/English bilingual education on the intergroup attitudes of White English-speaking children, as compared to White children in English-only programming. The authors studied students in K-2nd grade, a time when children begin to develop ideas about ingroup/outgroup members and found bilingual education had a significant positive impact on White children in terms of their intergroup attitudes. That is, White children had greater tendencies to select Latino children as friends and as similar to themselves in the bilingual education group. The authors note that while integrated classes "can contribute to positive intergroup attitudes, it appears that language of instruction has an additional positive impact on [White] children's orientations towards members of an ethnolinguistic outgroup" (p. 322). Why the authors chose to study only White children is unclear—but, again, it begs the question of who benefits from integration. In this case, one could argue that it is a benefit both for society, and for White majority children themselves, to develop respect and appreciation for the minoritized language and the minoritized culture. But what about the impact on Latinx children/minoritized children in these programs? Perhaps, the question is not *who* benefits from integration, but instead, *what* are the different benefits of integration for children from different racial, socioeconomic, and ethnolinguistic groups?

At least one set of authors, Reyes and Vallone (2007), argue that "cross-cultural [attitudes] may have the strongest impact on majority students, while identity construction may be more relevant to minority students" (p. 5). In their review, the authors call for more research and focus on identity construction within TWBE settings. While Reyes and Vallone (2007) conceptualize identity and cross-cultural competence as separate, Feinauer and Howard (2014) include identity development as a major aspect of sociocultural development in their review of the third goal of TWI. In early TWI research, research on student attitudes towards each other and themselves revealed students not only developed cross-cultural attitudes but also saw themselves in a positive light. For example, Lindholm-Leary and Borsato (2001) reported students were "proud to be bilingual" (p.27) and more specifically, their results pointed to the development of resiliency particularly for Latino students and low-income students that included "internal traits, such as high self-esteem, a motivation to study hard, and a belief in one's academic competence" (p. 21). Indeed, it makes sense that officially sanctioning the minoritized language and valuing the

minoritized culture in school is a major factor in supporting minoritized children's sense of ethnic and linguistic identity development and belonging. And yet, what happens if/when minoritized children see their White majority counterparts excelling in school and being more recognized/celebrated for their bilingualism?

This takes us back to the question of the importance of what happens in TWBE classrooms and schools that are racially and socioeconomically integrated and who strive for racial and social justice. In their review of the rationale and research on integration in TWBE, de Jong, Barko Alva, and Yilmaz (2022) assert that "in order to leverage the transformative potential of student and program/school integration, meaningful and authentic third spaces must be created" (p. 293), where transformative pedagogies and transformative leadership can bring all the stakeholders together on an equal basis. This requires both critical consciousness (Palmer et al., 2019) and ideological clarity (Bartolomé & Alfaro, 2017), especially in having teachers be able to mobilize critical pedagogies in their classroom and be attuned to equity in their learning spaces as a way to create culturally sustaining bilingual education to minoritized children. The importance of teachers cannot be understated. Research from Palmer (2009), García-Mateus (2021), and Heiman and Yanes (2020) highlight the key role of teachers in making sure their minoritized students have an equal voice and participation in classroom discussions and learning. In Palmer's (2009) study, teacher Melanie, a White bilingual teacher, was clear on her sense of responsibility towards her Latinx students and was adept at managing classroom discussion so the White dominant children wouldn't always take the floor during discussions. Similarly, teacher Michelle, in Heiman and Yanes (2020), followed her own pillars of TWBE of "Spanish, love, content, [but] not in that order" (p. 174) and centered critical consciousness in how she discussed issues of power and inequality, how she centered Spanish as a language of empowerment, and how she prioritized the needs of her Latinx families over the desires of White dominant families.

The ways in which teachers are able to discuss and confront issues of difference and inequality inevitably impact how children are able to conceptualize and talk about difference, which is especially critical in an integrated setting. One particular study speaks to this very dynamic. Using psychological theories of intergroup contact, Stolte (2017) examined cross-cultural understanding at two TWBE programs and found that how teachers talked about difference and addressed it in the classroom was correlated to how children did in a picture sort which asked them to choose racially and ethnically diverse children based on a variety of questions (such as who they might be friends with, who might be mean, etc.). At the school where difference was minimized over finding common ground, a discourse Stolte named "color-blind collectivism," both Latinx and non-Latinx children displayed a strong affinity for Latinx children and cultures in the pictures, demonstrating that the program was successfully valuing and uplifting Latinx identities. Yet, children also displayed negative attitudes towards the children in the picture sort who were Black and/or Muslim, and older elementary students were uncomfortable talking about racial and cultural differences. In contrast, at the other school, "dynamic dissonance" characterized the teachers' approach to difference. While teachers expressed discomfort with discussing difference, this discomfort led to productive struggle in addressing these conversations in the classroom, and this seemed to allow students to be curious about difference and address it in productive ways. This was evident in the picture sort activity, where students at this school displayed more positive attitudes towards all children of color, especially Black students. Contextual factors mattered here too: in this second school, the majority of students were Black, highlighting the importance of integration and cross-cultural contact with peers.

This leads me back to the issue of cross-cultural friendships. If we can envision settings where equity, ideological clarity, and critical consciousness are the norm, then how might these

enable cross-cultural friendships, and, in turn, impact children and their attitudes about themselves and each other? How might this impact their views on equity, social justice, and anti-racism in society and their own roles in these issues?

Coalition-building in TWBE: Activism, Allyship, and Empowerment

Drawing from Freirean and decolonial traditions, Palmer et al. (2019) define critical consciousness as having four elements: continuously interrogating power, historicizing schools, listening critically, and engaging with discomfort (p. 124). These elements should not only be prioritized at both the classroom and school level, but more importantly, these elements serve to radicalize and enhance the other three goals of TWBE: bilingualism, biliteracy, and intercultural competence. Addressing the third goal, the authors state,

> Teaching "sociocultural competence," the skills to negotiate across languages and cultures, becomes more profound as we historicize our communities within the complex power relations that have shaped them. We engage in the discomfort of realizing we are all implicated in structures of oppression, and *we take action together for social justice—allies from the dominant group alongside empowered children and families from nondominant communities.* (Palmer et al., 2019, p. 130; emphasis added)

There are two key factors in the ideas addressed above: *allies* from the dominant group, and *empowered* children and families from the non-dominant group. These can lead to powerful coalition-building in advocating for social justice and understanding activism in TWBE spaces. In what follows, I examine the question of what allyship and empowerment might look like in a TWBE context and how we can prioritize these goals within a framework of critical consciousness, drawing from my own research as well as Heiman and Yanes (2020).

Michelle Yanes, the co-author and teacher in the focal classroom of Heiman and Yanes (2020), is an example of a social-justice-oriented teacher who centered critical consciousness in her classroom. She did so by engaging students in reflections on power in their own school and neighborhood context through the curriculum, conducting meetings in Spanish, and caring deeply for her students, their families, and the Latinx community of the school. When a school board member in their district argued that bilingual education was meant to provide a quicker transition to English, Michelle's students rallied in support of dual language education. At the suggestion of one of the fifth-grade students, five students decided to attend the schoolboard meeting and testify—in Spanish—to the importance of dual language. In the article, Heiman and Yanes (2018) share the testimonies of two students, Leo, a Mexican-American student from a working class background, and Tatiana, a White middle-class student. Leo's testimony centered on the importance of language to his family and his culture, especially in regard to helping in important situations. Tatiana's testimony focused on her ability to use Spanish to communicate with her classmates, especially those who might have recently arrived from a Spanish-speaking country, and as a tool when traveling. Notwithstanding the different orientations to language in the students' testimonies, emanating from the students different ethnoracial and socioeconomic positions, the authors state:

> [T]he two speeches by Leo and Tatiana demonstrated critical consciousness around the "generative theme" (Freire, 1997) of their local school board representative speaking

> negatively about TWBE, which was the impetus for their powerful manifestations of Spanish as a "language of empowerment." (p. 184)

Thus, not only do the students experience the use of Spanish as a language of empowerment to defend dual language education in an official space of the Schoolboard in this moment, they also learn about what it means to advocate for something they believe in and how to do it *together*. How might this experience impact both Leo and Tatiana? What effect might the experience of having a White classmate use Spanish to advocate for bilingual education, something Leo also cares deeply about, have on Leo? What effect might the experience of having the ability to use Spanish to communicate and help her classmates, whom she might not otherwise be able to know or talk to if it not were for this program, have for Tatiana? And what about having the experience of being able to use that language to defend this program alongside Leo?

There are various ways to define what it means to be an ally, and this depends very much on the context (i.e., allyship between citizens and undocumented students, White allies to people of color, allies for LGBTQ+ communities, etc.). Indeed, Love (2019) takes it a step further in calling for co-conspiratorship, an active form of allyship where allies have done the internal work of understanding not only their sociocultural privilege but also examined Whiteness, racism, sexism, and other historical forms of oppression. That being so, what might it mean to begin to develop an allyship mindset or to learn to become an ally and co-conspirator, as a White and/or socio-economically privileged child in a racially and socioeconomically integrated TWBE program? And what conditions are necessary or conducive for this to happen? Part of the answer, as evident in much of the aforenoted research, lies in what happens in the classroom if critical consciousness is prioritized and the needs of minoritized communities centered. Indeed, the four elements of critical consciousness, as proposed by Palmer et al. (2019), seem to be what are needed to become an ally for folks from dominant communities: engaging in discomfort, critical listening, interrogating power, and historicizing inequality in schools and other institutions.

While schools are important institutions that serve as one of the main contexts for the development of children, a child's home, family, and community play an equally (if not a more) pivotal role. Thus, other important contexts for the development of TWBE allyship are the home, the families of students, and whether critical consciousness is also part of the home's pedagogy. To highlight an example, I turn again to two children and their families: Zoe and her parents; Mary and John; and Belén and her parents, Inés and Roberto. Zoe, Belén, and their families were participants in my research and part of the first cohort of families that enrolled in the TWBE program. Belén was a driven student, academically motivated, and a gifted artist. Her first language was Spanish because her parents Inés and Roberto were both from Mexico. She also felt quite comfortable in English, having attended pre-k in English and having an older sister in middle school who had already developed the language. Inés and Roberto were actively involved in Belén's education and formed a strong relationship with Ms. O, the kindergarten teacher. Mary and John, Zoe's parents, were also very involved in the TWBE program and the school; they formed a relationship not only with Ms. O, but also, with the school's principal. Mary and John were both college-educated professionals who worked in the non-profit sector.

At the time when Belén and Zoe began kindergarten, Philadelphia Public Schools were experiencing a financial crisis, and Mary became active as an advocate for public schools in various forums, including testifying at district hearings against approving charter schools (which many believed were responsible for the district's financial woes). She testified at City Hall to advocate for increased city funding for schools, for a proposed city soda tax to be passed in order to fund pre-K in the city, and for Zoe's school at the district level. Mary, as evidenced in our conversations and

interviews, was also engaging with the discomfort of realizing her class and race privilege, as she reflected on her ability to navigate some of these official institutional spaces. In our interview, she ruminated on how, even though she didn't expect herself to be advocating in the way she had been, Mary realized that's where she might be more useful, stating, "I think in a lot of ways that's where someone like me is probably most useful."

Mary was developing a more critical stance around the discourses of choice prevalent in the city, in the "Friends" movement, and among her White college-educated peers. Later on in the interview, she expressed her discomfort in acknowledging her privilege (and her Whiteness) and discomfort that, because of those privileges, she attracted more interest and funders:

> [H]onestly, the program and the school, I think, it sells itself, but you do NEED and this is—on so many levels—is kinda frustrating [...] in order to bring more resources and more people back into our public schools, you need someone who looks like me [...] I've wanted for that not to be totally true, but it's, you know, and the reason I wanted so badly for [Inés] and [Roberto] and you guys to be at that council hearing was because I don't want it to be that way always. You know? So, I mean it's probably generations before that's, you know, totally changed.

In this excerpt, Mary explicitly addresses how she can advocate for more support and funding as well as attract more middle-class White parents into her public school given her positioning as a college-educated White woman. At the same time, she understands she doesn't represent the majority of children who are educated in Philadelphia public schools and actively sought to have more participation from Latino parents in various events. In the excerpt, she is referring specifically to the time when she invited Inés and Roberto to testify at City Hall alongside her in support of increased funding for schools. I came along with them, acting as translator. It was a powerful moment, one that perhaps Inés, Roberto, and I were not prepared for.

While Mary had been active in these conversations and meetings, Inés and Roberto—and even myself—had mostly been following the news and were somewhat familiar with the situation. Yet, in the grandeur of the City Hall building in front of the microphones, with members of City Hall before us, and students holding up signs in support of their schools behind us, we realized the weight of the moment. When called to testify, the three of us went up together. Without much preparation, Inés and Roberto spoke passionately from their hearts. Inés spoke of the moral responsibility to educate children as well as the fear of sending her children to school on days they did not have a nurse. Roberto also spoke about the moral obligation to support children's education, remarking that everyone in the room had benefited from education, and that even when he made little money, he gladly contributed his part to ensuring schools were adequately funded.

On the car ride home, we all felt an adrenaline rush. Even though we had all felt nervous, and perhaps wished we had been better prepared, Roberto stated, "Esto nos hace crecer. Yo creo que a todos nos ayudó. Me gustó esta experiencia. Yo le enseño a mis hijos que no tengan miedo."[1] Inés, who had been so poised and confident during the hearing, stated, "Yo me encomendé a Dios. Lo único que me separa a mi de ellos es que ellos tuvieron la oportunidad de tener carrera. Es lo único."[2] Months later, Inés and Roberto would recall this experience as one of the most significant in terms of their participation in the TWBE program as parents. It was clear they felt empowered that their voice mattered. It also made an impact on Belén. As soon as we got back to school the day

[1] This makes us grow. I think this helped us all, I liked this experience. I want to teach my children not to be scared.
[2] I entrusted myself to God. The only thing that separates me from them is that they had the opportunity to study and have a profession. It's the only thing.

of the hearing, Belén eagerly asked me a series of questions: had I been with her parents? Had they been with Mary? Had they spoken at the meeting? I smiled and told her to ask her parents when she got home. Belén knew Mary often spoke at important meetings and advocated for their school, and she was so excited and proud that her parents did this time too.

For Belén and Zoe, I am hopeful of the impact of seeing their parents work together in defense of public schools. This experience was possible because of the integrated nature of this TWBE program; because of Mary, Inés, and Roberto, their involvement in their children's education; and because of mediators like myself and Ms. O, who often advocated for more communication between English-speaking and Spanish-speaking parents. This is where hope and optimism lie, in the impact these experiences could have on children and their future. I end with one final example.

On February 16th of 2017, there was a nation-wide protest. Under the banner of #DayWithoutImmigrants, millions of immigrants marched, demanding not only a recognition of how vital their labor is to this country, but also demanding better working conditions and respect for their human rights. In the upheaval of the 2016 election and its aftermath, I often thought about the children and families of the TWI program. By this time, I no longer did research at the school, so I thought of the immigrant families—most of whom were mixed status families—whose parents were undocumented but whose children were citizens. I wondered how they must have felt. I thought of the White middle-class families and children; what must it mean to witness the effects of the overt racist discourse that that election brought to the surface? How must it feel to know classmates and their parents who were directly affected by this? Was it ever discussed in the classroom, among the children, or at home. By this point, I no longer had daily contact with them, save for the social media of mothers who had befriended me. On February 15, I noticed that María, one of the Latina moms involved in getting the TWI program started and now the mother of a TWI first grader, posted on Facebook about the march. She shared the following publication, with a message encouraging parents not to take their children to school. I wondered how many would follow suit.

Through Mary's post, the next day I had my answer. Mary wrote only nine students in Zoe's second grade class attended school, and only 14 students attended Zoe's sister, Grace's, kindergarten class. She said the students were kept home for the Day Without Immigrants strike,

and that the principal not only excused but also explained their absences in his morning announcements to the whole school. Mary stated her children understood exactly why their friends were absent and why it was crucial that they stood up for their rights and the rights of their families. She then expressed the following:

> After dinner in our primarily immigrant Philadelphia neighborhood, we were walking home and came upon a protest of immigrant families passing our house. The girls and I raced to catch up and join them. [Zoe] surveyed the crowd and said, “Do you think my friends are here?” [Grace] responded, “They’re ALL our friends!”

While it’s important to point out that Mary’s family wasn’t necessarily planning on attending the march but happened upon it, reading this post reminded me of the profound lessons that being in a TWI can provide for children and the great potential there is in bringing together children and families from disparate experiences, despite the challenges it entails.

When TWI programs are socioeconomically and racially integrated, I often think of them as what Mary Louis Pratt (1991) called “contact zones”: “social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power" (1991, p. 33). This is especially true for programs like the one I studied, the product of both gentrification and immigration, where Spanish speaking families and English-speaking families came from very distinct migration trajectories; these differences fell along lines of race, class and language. Yet, even in these circumstances, if there is a critical understanding of the processes that result in inequalities and if there is a priority on critical consciousness, as my colleagues have argued, then these “contact zones” might also be potential coalition-building spaces that strive to create more equitable social conditions, build more empathetic human relationships, empower those who are minoritized, and teach the dominant majority what it means to be an ally.

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