The Bilingual Review
VOL. XXXVII • NO. 1 • April 2025
La Revista Bilingüe
OPEN-ACCESS, PEER-REVIEWED/ACCESO ABIERTO, JURADO PROFESIONAL

"Es Como Kind of Tonta": Challenging Gendered Master Narratives Through Children's Literature in Bilingual Classrooms

Gilberto Lara, PhD
University of Texas, San Antonio

Abstract

This article challenges gendered master narratives by incorporating interactive read-alouds in three bilingual classrooms in the Southwest U.S. Using a Latina/Latino Critical Race Theory (LatCrit) framework, data in the form of recorded bilingual read-alouds, classroom discussions, and writing extension activities were collected and analyzed. The one-way bilingual classrooms in this study were each led by a male Latino teacher who chose children's literature that covered such topics as intersections of gender and race/ethnicity in children who choose to play the role of Peter Pan, gender roles in selecting a future career, adherence to strict familial traditions and gender norms (as depicted by a family of wolves), and subversion of sexism or domestic abuse in a heteronormative relationship (depicted by turtles). Through literary critical encounters, structures of gender were made visible and tangible to bilingual children in kindergarten, third grade, and fourth grade. In addition, as the teachers engaged their bilingual students with the chosen texts, illustrating the disruption of normed gender roles, they were able to guide them to develop the ability to question majoritarian tales (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002) or master narratives (Fránquiz et al., 2011). This was most effective when the teachers could bridge connections to their bilingual students' prior experiences and position those as valid tools for learning and making sense of readings.

Keywords: Children's literature, master narratives, bilingual, gender

Over the past 40 years, there have been modest gains in achieving gender parity in representation, with an increasing number of gender nonconforming characters appearing in children's literature. However, we still have a long way to go concerning gender and racial representation in children's books (Buchanan et al., 2020; Leija et al., 2023). A quarter-century into the millennium, boys continue to feel pressured to conform to normative heterosexual "hegemonic masculinities" (Connell, 1987, 1995; Messerschmidt & Messner, 2018; Wargo, 2022). This pressure compels boys to take on traditional male roles and engage in dominant behaviors while girls are expected to embody "emphasized femininity" (Connell, 1987, 1995; Davies, 1997; Kostas, 2021) and adopt more passive identities.

There have been several shifts in discarding a pathology paradigm (Pyne, 2014) toward gender nonconformity and replacing it with understanding gender variance as part of our humanity's more considerable diversity. Indeed, society has recently shown more acceptance and tolerance for boys and girls to engage in non-gender-typical activities; the field of youth and children's literature has steadily encouraged conversation for six decades (Casey et al., 2021). Books about girls exerting agency in typically male-dominated activities are common topics in new children's literature. Nevertheless, there has always been trepidation on the part of teachers when it comes to broaching topics of sexual identification and nonconformity in classrooms (Buchanan et al., 2020; Robinson, 2002).

As a site for social interaction and discussion, the classroom is a setting where these tensions play out. As can be expected, schools and states quickly label certain topics as non-discussables (Barth, 2007) and engage in book challenges (Koss & Paciga, 2025). To name a few, states like Texas, Idaho, and Florida (Jaeger et al., 2023; Powell, 2021; Rahman, 2024), have recently upped the ante when it comes to the number and types of books that are now being removed from school and public library shelves for content that parents or legislators deem to cause guilt, anguish, or discomfort. These mandates have implications for educators' self-censorship as in the Texas context described in Lammert and Godfrey's (2023) study of preservice teachers.

Teachers often express caution and reluctance when dealing with tensions in discussions about race (Wessell-Powell, 2022) and gender equity but most often with sexual identification (Lau, 2013; Möller & Allen, 2000) and feel ill-equipped to handle conversations related to this topic. As it often happens when issues of race are brought up in schools, one reactionary response has been to engage in colorblindness (Lewis, 2001) with the aim of downplaying the existence of race or racism. Likewise, the same dynamic takes place with topics that may portray gender-nonconforming youth or families of same-sex parents; both are met with erasure (Robinson, 2002) or avoidance unless there is an incident necessitating the discussion. Cultural diversity is often synonymous with race and ethnicity but rarely includes gender (Robinson & Ferfolja, 2001; Rycroft-Smith & Andre, 2019).

This study emphasizes the urgent need to address issues of gender and sexual identity, as well as nonconformity, by promoting the use of children's books to broaden the understanding of multiculturalism. While discussions of multiculturalism in the classroom often focus on race and ethnicity, it is essential to include gender identity—particularly LGBTQ-themed literature—as a critical aspect of multicultural practices (Logan et al., 2016). The present study explored inclusive gender read-alouds in three bilingual classrooms, underscoring the importance of discussing gender with bilingual elementary school children. The approaches taken by the three Latino[1] educators

[1] All three self-identified as Latino. I will use Latino where it is cited as such in works or Latiné to be more inclusive when referring to the population as a whole.

involved in this study conducted in the southwestern United States, helped challenge dominant and conventional ideas surrounding rigid gender norms.

Literature Review

There is a richness of children's literature that readily explores a wide range of contemporary issues; it centers upon children's understandings that can reveal the complexity of characters and real-world dynamics. Scholars have explored students' reactions to children's literature on racial discrimination (Braden et al., 2022; Enciso, 2021). DeNicolo and Fránquiz (2006) illustrate how quality multicultural children's literature can create spaces for conversations through "critical encounters." Taking hold of these "pivotal" moments creates opportunities where the text disrupts the traditional pattern of talk replete with "transformative possibilities" (p. 157). Using more inclusive literature, argue DeNicolo and Fránquiz, allows students to see themselves represented and provides them opportunities to see characters in situations that may be challenging as a way to "question negative stereotypes, discriminatory language, or unfair acts directed toward characters in stories" (2006, p. 158). The selection of books must be deliberate and intended to create critical encounters to encourage an examination between the reader and their understanding.

To address the issue of gender roles in the classroom through books, scholars have sought to illustrate the abundance of feminist texts and children's responses (Burton, 2020; Davies, 1993; Filipović, 2018; Martínez-Roldán, 2005). Davies (1993) noted how even though educators and researchers go to great lengths to present children with deconstructed fairy tales and feminist texts, there are always examples of intransigence in participants due to societal forces. Indeed, attention to gender and multicultural literature can allow students to "explore their own histories and the histories of others in gaining a more positive and multidimensional understanding of the various cultures of diverse groups" (Jetton & Savage-Davis, 2005, p. 30). Ryan and Hermann-Willmarth (2019) tout the benefits of including LGBTQ books in classroom read-alouds that allow the creation of ideal spaces to interrogate social justice notions.

Great examples of efforts to increase our understanding and deconstruct binaries in the early school years and upper elementary grades have been illustrated by several authors (Hermann-Wilmarth et al., 2017; Hermann-Wilmarth & Ryan, 2016; Jiménez, 2021; Jones et al., 2024; Möller, 2020). Other examples of deconstructions in children's literature have come from Chicana feminist retellings. One such example is Gloria Anzaldúa's Prietita y La Llorona (1995). Illustrated by Chicana feminist Maya Christina Gonzalez, both the author and illustrator provide a counternarrative of the "child-stealing she-monster" (Avilés, 2018). They depict a Llorona who guides the protagonist to find remedial herbs to cure her mother—all while keeping her safe from the Texas Rangers. Anzaldúa's concept of "mestiza consciousness" (Anzaldúa, 2007) appealed to think beyond binaries and conceptualize how Latines embodied these borderlands or hybrid spaces of in-betweenness. These Nepantlas included third spaces of gender, sexual identification, race/ethnicity, class, and language (Anzaldúa, 2007). In Anzaldúa's (1993) first children's book, Friends from the Other Side, this sense of straddling two worlds comes up for Prietita, the book's protagonist. At a critical juncture in the book, Prietita stands up to members of her peers who intend to brutalize a young man named Joaquin because he is undocumented. Calling them out as "a bunch of machos against one small boy" (pg. 10), Anzaldúa (1993) is purposeful in providing an example of Prietita as a heroine who understands the complex nature of South Texans' layered identities of subordination by whites and their subsequent subordination of women and the undocumented.

Prietita challenges the racist norms of her Chicano peers in what Anzaldúa (2007) described as a South Texan Latino male's "excessive compensatory hubris when around Mexicans from the other side" (p. 105).

As described above, children's books can serve as examples of counterstories that highlight the stories of gendered and raced folks by providing educators and their students access to these unheard stories that contest the status quo (Marshall, 2016). With the intention of teasing out the complexity of the intended messages, read-alouds are often implemented. The importance of interactive read-alouds is well-documented in the literature (Leija & Fránquiz, 2021). Sipe (2008) describes interactive read-alouds as social interactions where the children co-construct knowledge as they interact with the book, other children, and the reader. Alternatively, as Wiseman (2011) states, the children build meaning-making together. The collaborative storytelling process breaks away from positioning the students as passive listeners but instead constructs meaning and makes sense of the text by responding to it (Barrentine, 1996). The reader aids comprehension by providing prompts, questions, and commentary during the reading. In this social event, children are encouraged to interact with the text while monitoring their understanding of it (Worthy et al., 2012). A byproduct of this lack of interactive space is that it robs children of the opportunity to engage in what Worthy and colleagues (2012) describe as meaningful language use that allows children to "understand and engage with literature; develop and share ideas, opinions, and feelings; and develop an appreciation for multiple perspectives" (p. 308).

In bilingual language-learning classrooms, such as the ones in this study, interactive read-alouds have the potential to aid language acquisition and increase student achievement (Wasik & Bond, 2001). These gains come from learning literacy skills, acquiring vocabulary and oral language skills, and aiding in comprehension (Collins, 2010; Mitchell et al., 2012; Sipe, 2008; Wu, 2010). Research on interactive read-alouds in the bilingual classroom is still very scarce as of the writing of this paper (Degollado, 2023; Esquivel, 2020; Lara & Fránquiz, 2015; Leija, 2020; Osorio, 2018). To this point, and in the interest of exploring how males address gender issues in the elementary bilingual classroom, this work seeks to explore the following research questions: How do three bilingual elementary male teachers employ the practice of inclusive gender read-alouds in the bilingual classroom? How do students in bilingual classrooms take up inclusive gender read-alouds?

Theoretical Framework

This study uses a Latina/Latino Critical Race Theory (LatCrit) framework. To understand LatCrit, providing some background on Critical Race Theory (CRT) is vital. CRT activists, scholars, and lawyers came together in the mid-1970s after they noticed that the gains made during the 1960s civil rights era had stalled or rolled back (Delgado & Stefancic, 1993). Ladson-Billings (1998) describes how CRT is an outgrowth, a separate entity, or a departure from earlier critical legal studies (CLS). According to Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic (2012), critical race theorists are "interested in studying and transforming the relationships among race, racism, and power" (p. 2). CRT is constantly expanding into various branches like Critical Race Feminism (Berry, 2010), DeafCrit (Annamma et al., 2023), DesiCrit (Harpalani, 2013), DisCrit (Annamma et al., 2013), QueerCrit (Brooks & Leckey, 2010), TribalCrit (Desai & Abeita, 2017), to name a few. In addition, it is employed in various settings through context-specific variations due to its interdisciplinary

influences. Matsuda et al. (1993) show how CRT borrows from “liberalism, law and society, feminism, Marxism, poststructuralism, critical legal theory, pragmatism, and nationalism” (p. 6).

As a branch of CRT, LatCrit came about as a result of CRT’s tenets needing to be extended to address issues specific to Latine folks, such as language, immigration, ethnicity, culture, identity, phenotype, and sexuality (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). Other scholars use the variation of LatCrit’s definition of Latinx Critical Race Theory (Chávez-Moreno, 2024). As a “close cousin” (Valdes, 1996) of critical race theory, LatCrit is “supplementary and complementary” and meant to work in conjunction with CRT—not in opposition to or apart from it. An essential aspect of LatCrit that makes it appealing to use in educational studies is that apart from legal theory, LatCrit’s theory is an “antisubordination and antiessentialist project that attempts to link theory with practice, scholarship with teaching, and the academy with the community” (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001, p. 312). LatCrit allows researchers to better address the needs and experiences of Latines by focusing on the specific kinds of oppression that Latines are subjected to. LatCrit focuses on five fundamental tenets: (1) the centrality and intersectionality of race and racism, (2) the challenge to the dominant ideology, (3) the commitment to social justice, (4) the importance of experiential knowledge, and lastly, (4) the use of interdisciplinary perspectives (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001).

These frameworks allow us to see the emancipatory potential of bilingual classrooms. They depart from social reproduction theories that do not account for Latine’s agency or their ability to live out race, class, and sexual orientation in an intersecting manner and in ways that recognize their unique experiences. While institutions such as schools are influenced by the more powerful, normative, raced, and gendered discourses, there is room for resisting them by creating counterstories that value lived experiential knowledge.

Methods and Participants

For this study, I observed three Latino male bilingual teachers discussing gender identification and equity issues with their elementary school students through interactive read-alouds, discussions, and writing extension activities. These three teachers were purposively selected due to their unique approach to literacy instruction and willingness to engage their students with topics about gender. All three were in the same master’s degree program where they learned about (and put into practice) using books and discussions, emphasizing critical pedagogy, and employing culturally relevant literature in the bilingual classroom. Read-alouds were emphasized as a form of emancipatory social practice that can draw on children’s agency and help them to challenge majoritarian tales more informed (Fránquiz et al., 2011; Yosso, 2006).

Portraits of the Participants

Mr. Castañares[2] is a kindergarten teacher with a caring disposition who engaged his class with lively read-alouds where he employed animated voices. During read-alouds I often observed a lofty addition of an additional dozen children from the neighboring class that would be sent over to join his two dozen students. In total, he would often engage with and captivate over thirty students. At the time of the study, he had been teaching for about a decade. The second educator in this study, Mr. Manzanares, is a third-grade bilingual teacher who takes pride in encouraging critical thinking

[2] All names of people and places are pseudonyms.

through children's literature. He was well-liked by the parents with whom he engaged and maintained a broad sense of community; he had been teaching for over a decade. Finally, the third teacher participant, Mr. Pedernales, is a fourth-grade bilingual teacher who constantly strives to challenge his students to think beyond binaries; he employs examples of lived experiences and children's literature in his classroom. Having taught for about 15 years, Mr. Pedernales was adamant about teaching in a high-needs school to make connections with bilingual students and their families.

Mr. Castañares and Manzanares were born in Mexico and came into teaching later in life. Mr. Pedernales was born in the southwest of the U.S. and grew up as a simultaneous bilingual and bicultural individual, just like the other two participants; he, too, came into teaching later in life. All three teachers taught in one-way dual language bilingual classrooms at three different schools in Laguna School District in the southwestern U.S. One-way programs typically begin with an intense concentration of the student's home language—90% Spanish in kindergarten in this case. Eventually, Spanish is reduced to where an equal balance is reached with students in the upper elementary grades (Collier & Thomas, 2004); in some one-way programs, English takes precedence in content area instruction. The three schools worked with a mandated curriculum that designated a language of the day.

Research Setting

Laguna is an urban school district located in a large metropolitan city in the southwestern U.S., in a state that borders México. The city is mostly still segregated, split by an interstate highway that runs down the middle of its city center. The land adjacent to the freeway has undergone gentrification in the last decade. The three research sites were located away from the city center, and in terms of ethnicity, Carranza Elementary School, where Mr. Manzanares taught, comprised about 750 students from pre-kindergarten through fifth grade. Regarding ethnicity, Carranza Elementary comprises 90% Latino students, 6.4% Black students, and 2% white students. As for other demographics, 54% of the student body was classified as EL or emergent bilingual. A more sobering statistic was that 97% of the student population was identified as economically disadvantaged.

Madero Elementary is where Mr. Pedernales taught. This campus had about 700 students enrolled from pre-kindergarten through fifth grade; just like Carranza Elementary, Madero Elementary's population is mainly Latino: 94% Latino, 5.3% Black, 4.7% white, and 1.2% Asian. Indicating a greater need for language instruction, 75% of the student body was classified as emergent bilingual, while again, a large portion of the student population (94%) was economically disadvantaged.

Lastly, Obregón Elementary, where Mr. Castañares taught, had an enrollment of about 500 students from pre-kindergarten through fifth grade. Like the two previously described elementary schools, Obregón's population was predominantly Latino, 93%, with 6% identifying as Black and .5% white. Regarding other demographics, only 42% of Obregón's student body was classified as emergent bilingual, while, again, much of the student population (96%) was economically disadvantaged.

The three male Latino bilingual teachers, who were part of a more extensive study focusing on elementary teachers, were known for their ability to conduct interactive read-alouds in their respective classrooms. The author did not personally teach the students but employed snowball sampling to find participants. The participants were asked about their willingness and availability to

incorporate children's literature on equity and gender in their interactive read-alouds. Upon obtaining Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, consent from the teachers was obtained, parents were provided with consent forms they returned, and students assented. Children whose parents did not return the forms were excluded from data collection and analysis.

The three teachers worked with me, the researcher, to brainstorm a list of two dozen book titles in both English and Spanish, from which they selected some texts to read to their classes based on the language of the day—prescribed by the district's bilingual education program model—and the grade level they were teaching. A common practice in the read-alouds was that the three focal teachers usually began by drawing on bilingual students' prior knowledge and predicting the book's plot. The teachers typically used document cameras to project the book onto a large screen in front of the class while the students followed along. At other times, the teachers sat in a chair reading while the students gathered around, sitting on the floor. All three teachers in this study had the flexibility to employ read-alouds in their bilingual classrooms as opposed to a mandated curriculum for reading instruction. This gave way to bringing in books tied to state and local standards.

Researcher Positionality, Data Sources, and Data Analysis

I am a former bilingual education and ESL public school teacher working as a teacher educator in a large, Hispanic-serving university. I identify as cisgender and heterosexual. In addition, I am a Chicano who grew up in Mexico and the United States; therefore, I consider myself a transnational, bicultural-bilingual-biliterate individual.

Data sources for this study with the three Latino teachers included audio recordings of the pre/post-reading interviews I conducted with each educator over an entire semester; these were unstructured interviews. Each teacher read 7 to 10 books (from our agreed-upon list) to their bilingual class using the designated language of the day and stretched out in-class literacy activities for the week. While the books themselves did not translanguage (García, 2009), children were observed using a mixture of languages, unlike the teachers who adhered closely to the language of the day but did not force the students to speak in one language exclusively. Their resistance to forcing their students to use only one of their linguistic repertoires came as a result of their MA coursework that focused heavily on resisting monoglossic (García, 2009) or language separationist ideologies (Lara et al., In Review). Interviews typically lasted 20 to 30 minutes during the teachers' prep times or after school, before and after reading their chosen books. They often occurred in Spanish, English, or a combination of both. In these instances, the teachers translanguaged which was not observed during teaching when they adhered to the language of the day in lessons and read-alouds. Other data types included video recordings of interactive read-alouds, ethnographic fieldnotes (Marshall & Rossman, 2006), and literacy artifacts created by the students or teachers.

The audio and video recordings were all transcribed. Using an approach of iterative analysis cycles, the data was sorted and coded to aid in identifying emerging patterns and themes (Miles et al., 2013). Initially, descriptive codes (Saldaña, 2021) were developed using my theoretical framework and concepts from the literature review. Data was condensed and reduced into smaller units. Next, trends were identified in the data through pattern coding, where recurring phrases were grouped and represented by categories (Miles et al., 2013). The teachers acted as member checks, where they could read over coded transcripts of conversations and artifacts and discuss the preliminary findings. This was done to establish trustworthiness (Mathison, 1988). Finally, the data was organized into the final themes, using the theoretical frame of the study and existing literature.

Findings

The readings illustrated several situations and complex issues relevant to school-age children. Most of the books chosen included animal characters. This use of anthropomorphism has been known to help bring complex topics into the classroom where the protagonists as animals mirror the experiences of children and adults, enabling students to examine social beliefs by creating a space where there is the intellectual and emotional distance to become reflective and critical of social issues (Burke & Copenhaver, 2004). The teachers in the study selected books to discuss issues of gender expectations with a vision to create a pedagogical space for discussions and for students to reflect on the characters' actions and connect to their lives. Three themes emerged: (1) illustrating intersectionality by illuminating gendered master narratives, (2) counternarrating as a tool to challenge heteronormative norms, and (3) channeling reactionary behavior into action. The first theme focuses on how teachers chose books that illustrated the complexity of multiple forms of subordination through intersectionality. The second theme illustrates the teacher's efforts of providing their children with counternarratives in both the book topics and with examples of their own lives where they challenged or witnessed others challenge gender norms. The final theme shows one example of how the teachers worked toward taking a stance that advanced social justice efforts and redirecting some of the rage, energy, and urgency that students often felt into the introspection of their own lives.

Illustrating Intersectionality by Illuminating Gendered Master Narratives

The three Latino teachers in this study indicated that it was important to provide their bilingual students with opportunities to begin questioning their assumptions about gendered activities and roles. In particular, they wanted to tackle gender role master narratives. This issue was complexified by adding layers through intersectionality. One book that Mr. Castañares chose to encourage his early childhood students to question their assumptions was *La Asombrosa Graciela (Amazing Grace)* by Mark Hoffman and Caroline Binch (1996). Using the district's assigned language of the day in the one-way classroom, this story was read to thirty-two kindergarten students and discussed in Spanish. *Amazing Grace* focuses on a young African-American girl who is told she cannot be Peter Pan for the class play because she is both female and Black. Mr. Castañares used energetic voices for each of the characters in the book and often paused to question and engage his students regarding critical points in the text. In this example (see Excerpt 1), Mr. Castañares employs a questioning technique to help his students reflect on the story's intersecting gendered and racial conflicts:

***Excerpt 1: Questions about* Amazing Grace**

Mr. Castañares: [Reading to his class] Graciela supo al instante qué papel quería hacer. Cuando ella alzó la mano, Raj dijo, "Tú no puedes ser Peter Pan, es un nombre de niño." Pero Graciela no bajó la mano porque ella quería ser Peter Pan. [Addressing his class] ¿Peter Pan es un niño?[3]

Students: Sí. [Chorus] Yes!

[3] Graciela knew instantly which character she wanted to be. When she raised her hand, Raj said, "You can't be Peter Pan, that's a boy name." But Graciela kept her hand up because she wanted to be Peter Pan. [Addressing the class] Is Peter Pan a boy?

Mr. Castañares: Okay, vamos a ver. "Tú no puedes ser Peter Pan, susurró Natalia. Él no es negro." Pero Graciela no bajó la mano…Cuando llegó a la casa, Graciela se veía triste. ¿Por qué Graciela se sentía triste?[4]
Diana: Porque no la dejaron ser Peter Pan.[5]
Mr. Castañares: Muy bien, a lo mejor estaba triste porque no la querían dejar ser Peter Pan. ¿Por qué más crees que se sentía triste, Jesús? [Silence] ¿Estrellita?[6]
Estrellita: Porque le dijeron que Peter Pan no es negra.[7]
Mr. Castañares: Hay, oigan, ¿eso creen que es bueno decirlo?[8]
Students: [Chorus] No.
Mr. Castañares: ¿Por qué no, Hortensia?[9]
Hortensia: Porque, am, porque eso es como bullying porque, porque se ponen tristes todas las niñas que les dicen… bullying.[10]
Mr. Castañares: Mmm. Es feo decirle a un niño que no puede hacer algo por su color de su piel o porque es niño o niña. Okay, vamos a seguir con Graciela.[11]

Mr. Castañares' ability to keep questioning his bilingual kindergarteners helped them to objectivize the positional identities of the characters in the book as they relate to the larger dominant narrative which stresses that Peter Pan is white and male. Mr. Castañares allowed his students to notice power relations between gender and race. Estrellita's answer, "They told her that Peter Pan is not Black," indicates her understanding of the book's characters' interpretation of the master narrative. In books and films, Peter Pan is usually depicted as a white boy or male who fights to exert his masculinity. In this dichotomized narrative, girls are positioned as opposites whose sole purpose is to be wooed or rescued. Acknowledging the complexity of the multiple intersecting identities that students navigate and embody is important. Positioning and, eventually, discrimination can happen on several axes of intersectionality. Girls of color, for example, often must live with being "twice a minority" (Melville, 1980; Takaki, 2008). Speaking to this, Parker and Lynn (2002) argue that racism sustains and rearticulates sexism and that in the case of Black women, race does not exist outside of gender, and gender does not exist outside of race. In this literacy event, Mr. Castañares deliberately chose to stop at the juncture in the book that illustrated intersectionality and ask questions to help the students identify and talk through the two types of discrimination in the story.

During the read-aloud, Mr. Castañares also invited his kindergarteners to discuss whether they had ever been told they could not do something because of their gender. Matilde and Sebastián shared the following in Excerpt 2.

[4] Okay, let's see. "You can't be Peter Pan, whispered Natalie. He isn't black." But Grace kept her hand up... When Grace got home, she seemed rather sad. Why did Grace feel sad?
[5] Because they did not allow her to be Peter Pan.
[6] Very well, maybe she was sad because they did not want to allow her to be Peter Pan. Why else do you think she felt bad, Jesus? [Silence] ¿Estrellita?
[7] Because they told her that Peter Pan is not [a] Black [female].
[8] Aye, listen, do you think that is a good thing to say?
[9] Why not, Hortensia?
[10] Because, um, because that is like bullying because, because girls become sad when people tell them … bullying.
[11] Mmm. It is cruel to tell a child that they cannot do something because of the color of their skin or because they are a boy or girl. Okay, let's continue with Graciela.

Excerpt 2: "Have you ever been told you can't do something because of gender?"

> Matilde: Una vez mi papá me dijo que yo no podía lavar el carro porque era niña.[12]
> Mr. Castañares: ¿Y cómo te sentiste?[13]
> Matilde: Triste, pero luego cuando él se fue, yo y mi mamá lo lavamos juntas.[14]
> Sebastián: Mi abuelita me dijo que no podía hacer tortillas porque era hombre.[15]
> Mr. Castañares: ¿Y cómo te sentiste?[16]
> Sebastián: Bien.[17]

Kellner (2020) asks us to consider the end goal of resistance; he proposes that "difficult discriminations must be made as to whether the resistance, oppositional reading, or pleasure in a given experience should be understood as progressive or reactionary, emancipatory or destructive" (p. 15). In this manner, Matilde accepted her positioning and understood that she was restricted to engaging in specific gendered tasks. However, Matilde's mother illustrates a sense of emancipatory agency when she shows her daughter that they can clandestinely resist. While the example illustrates a willingness to defy contradictory positionings, there are limits within which both the mother and daughter work. Sadly, the father was not there and did not change his perspective; nonetheless, Matilde's mother illustrated resiliency to her daughter in the end. Immediately after Matilde's tale of agency, Sebastián offers a contrasting tale. What is noteworthy, however, is that while both instances lead to children's curiosity and initiative being smothered—perhaps due to the hassle of hard water stains on a car or slowing down the tortilla-making process, or even safety from being burned by a comal (griddle)—Sebastián's reaction indicates a particular privilege where he is not to be bothered in learning domestic duties. When asked how he felt, he responded nonchalantly, "Fine." Both instances need further exploration, and without having interviewed Matilde's parents or Sebastián's grandmother, it is difficult to fully comprehend the adult motivations behind the gendered exclusion. Still, Matilde's mom shows a willingness to challenge cisgender norms.

Another participant teacher shared a similar story about parents and their appreciation of his treatment of gender equity. Typically, parents may be at odds with discussions about gender identification and sexuality. However, gender equity was typically supported. Mr. Manzanares brought up how some parents appreciated the issue of gender equity. His third graders' parents often chat with him about their discussions with their children about their school day or in-class readings. During one of my interviews with him, Mr. Manzanares stated,

> If we as teachers don't do anything about [sexual identification and gender equity], then where [will kids learn it]? The school is sometimes the only place that these issues will be touched upon. The parents this year would tell me all these things—no one had ever talked about these things [and] I had never seen this at school—and it's true. School goes by, and the things that affect them, the things that affect us as Latinos, men, and women, are not touched upon. So, there is no critical consciousness.

---

[12] One time my dad told me that I could not wash the car because I am a girl.
[13] How did you feel?
[14] Sad, but when he left, me and my mom washed it together.
[15] My grandma told me that I could not make tortillas because I was a male.
[16] And how did you feel?
[17] Fine.

Part of the responsibility to teach about social justice must also recognize the intersectionality of race and gender and the importance of the school and bilingual classroom as places of socialization; it is crucial to recognize that these may be the only spaces where these topics are ever tackled. As Latinos, the teachers in this study often recognized their position and the opportunity to provide counternarratives to their bilingual students. Nevertheless, Mr. Manzanares and the other teachers only referred to and chose books about empowering boys and girls to engage in nontraditional roles or activities. In a sense, they further reified gender binaries with the books they chose: books that drive home the theme that they, too, can do what boys do and run the danger of still positioning themselves in a subordinate role; or books that highlighted transgender, gay, or lesbian characters were never actually read in class. One teacher who ventured into non-discussables (Barth, 2007) in his interviews was Mr. Pedernales, whom I will highlight in the following theme.

Counternarrating as a Tool to Challenge Heteronormative Traditions

Among other titles that explored notions of gender and characters who challenged gender roles, I examined the use of Max, the Stubborn Little Wolf (Judes, 2001). Judes' book is about a young wolf who wants to be a florist against the wishes of his father, who wants his son to become a hunter like all the other male wolves. The father, unwilling to accept his son's career choice, devises several ways of discouraging Max from becoming a florist. Mr. Pedernales read the book to his bilingual fourth graders in hopes of generating discussion about gender norms and acting on commonly held master dominant ideologies and narratives. Before reading the book, he shared the following with me:

> My hope is that the students will be able to identify the stereotype and challenge it. Most students can tell when something is unfair, even when they don't know how to express it in the right terms. Hopefully, by talking about the situations in the book, the students will know the language, words, and feelings for certain stereotypes. They will be able to look at their own world and life and be able to spot situations similar to what went on in the book and challenge it out in the real world, not just in the classroom.

To better engage with *Max, the Stubborn Little Wolf*, Mr. Pedernales led a brainstorming activity, and the students came up with a general list of occupations (see Figure 1). When asked to place these jobs in categories based on gender, the bilingual fourth graders agreed that men and women could perform most jobs. There was some discussion about the rigid gender requirements for teachers and firefighters; the students suggested they were exclusively for females and males, respectively. During this part of the conversation, the boys in the participating class tended to offer snarky comments to which the girls had quick responses, as depicted in Excerpt 3.

Excerpt 3: Gendered Career Expectations

> Mr. Pedernales: Can girls also be a host?
> Several Male Students: No.
> Several Female Students: Yes
> Mr. Pedernales: Now, when I see what I wrote I see… FBI, singer, basketball player can go in both of them. Can girls also be TV host?

Myrna: Yes.
Mr. Pedernales: A TV show or a game show, it's not only boys that are hosts, right? Teacher, how come nobody said a boy can be a teacher.
Valdemar: Porque no les gusta batallar con los niños.[18]
Fidel: There's only two male teachers.
Mr. Pedernales: Mr. Jones, Mr. Ramírez, Mr. Farias, Mr. San Miguel, Mr. Rivas, Mr. McCoy, Mr. Álvarez, Mr. De Soto. So, what do you mean there's only two? So can we put teacher on here also.
Several students: Yes! Si!
Mr. Pedernales: What about nurse?
A couple of students: Yes!
Several students: Doctor.
Chabela: Both.
Mr. Pedernales: So, boys can only be doctors but not nurses?
Flavio: Nurses, no! [Laughs]
Lucha: Yes, they can.
Chabela: Yes.

Even when presented with facts, it was difficult for the children to comprehend the extent of their gendered socialization fully. The boys in the class downplayed the number of male teachers in their school despite being unusually higher than the national average (Lara, 2022; Lara & Franquiz, 2015). Those boys who responded tended to view qualities associated with child-rearing as feminine traits. This self-fulfilling prophecy is a key factor that keeps men out of the teaching profession. The limited presence of men in teacher education and schools reinforces the idea that a lack of male role models is an important reason why men may choose not to enter the field (McDowell, 2023; Pollitt & Oldfield, 2017). However, the ideologies expressed by the boys were not restricted to teaching; they also influenced perceptions of medical professions where, in their mind, only women could be nurses and men doctors. Research has shown that both female and male nurses often face gendered discrimination. Men in this field are sometimes mocked for their choice, while at other times, they are positioned as doctors and receive more respect than their female counterparts (Gauci et al., 2023).

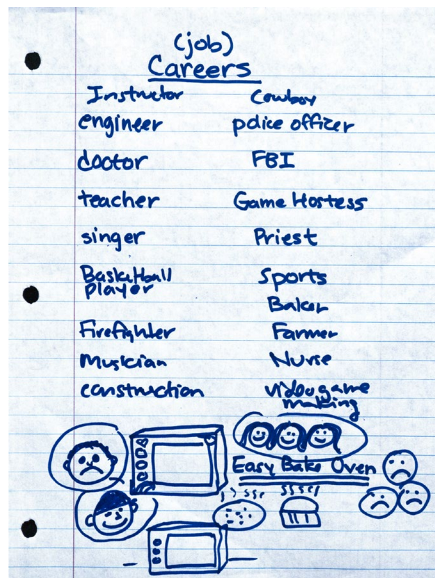
Notably, the girls in the class asserted their agency by speaking up against the boys, ensuring their voices were heard. The boys' laughter indicated that some remarks were intended as banter and performance. This boys' use of hyperbole reflected a broader societal commentary, highlighting the rigid pathways that shape gendered discourse. These comments, even if snarky or facetious, are part of everyday speech that socializes the girls and boys in the class. Nevertheless, the girls who have often been marginalized due to strict gender norms felt compelled to advocate for gender equity in careers, emphasizing the importance of making those choices for themselves rather than having them dictated by societal expectations.

As a result, Mr. Pedernales offered a counternarrative to his bilingual fourth graders by giving an example of a female firefighter he met at his brother's firehouse. After some teasing and "oooh" sounds from the class, the discussion shifted to sharing a counterstory tale. To illustrate commonly held beliefs about gendered activities, Mr. Pedernales shared a counternarrative about his childhood and how only his female cousins initially played with an Easy-Bake Oven (see

[18] Because they don't like to struggle with children.

bottom of Figure 1). He wanted to bake, too, but there was pressure from everyone for him to play football and other games with his male peers. When he finally broke away from the boys and began playing with the girls, the other male cousins admitted that they, too, wanted to play with the Easy-Bake Oven. To keep the kids from fighting over the toy oven, in the end, the parents had to buy a second one. With his examples, Mr. Pedernales sought to provide counterexamples for gendered binaries.

Figure 1
Mr. Pedernales' In-Class Career Brainstorm



It was not uncommon for the three teachers in my study to provide counternarratives for their students to help them challenge their heteronormative master narratives. For example, Mr. Pedernales would find opportunities in everyday interactions by sharing with his students how he engages in the activities that his students often ascribed to women, like cooking and cleaning. In a post-interview, he gave an example: "One Direction [the musical group] is huge with the girls, and so when there's a girl with a pencil pouch or lunch box with 1D on it, we all squeal. I feel like I can joke around like that, and then the boys can think maybe it doesn't really matter." In choosing to turn certain gendered expectations on their head, Mr. Pedernales hoped that the boys would not adhere to heteronormative masculine gendered norms.

With *Max, the Stubborn Little Wolf*, the students were exposed to a counternarrative, which developed their ability to question gendered pathways and recognize the possibility of creating new narratives. Excerpt 4 illustrates a critical juncture that generated discussion about gendered expectations in Mr. Pedernales' fourth-grade bilingual classroom.

Excerpt 4: Critical Juncture

> Mr. Pedernales: [Reading to his class] "Finally, he laid down the law. 'Wolf fathers and sons are hunters, have always been hunters, and always will be hunters. You, my son, will follow the family tradition, and that is that.' 'But I don't like hunting,' said Max.

‘That’s impossible!’ roared the big wolf. ‘All wolves love to hunt.’” [Addressing the class] So, what is papa wolf’s big problem? Chabela?

Chabela: That the tradition is that the boys and men of the pack, they all hunt, but I think that some traditions are kind of, like, dumb and not right, you know?

Mr. Pedernales: I guess some traditions are not right or dumb. I like how you put it. Right?

Chabela: And then also, it’s just like, he’s just being, um, himself. Being what he wants.

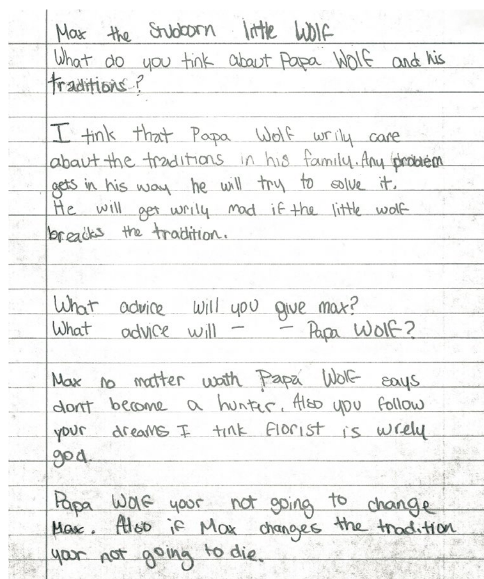
Mr. Pedernales: He’s just trying to be himself. Now, what do you guys think about what Chabela said? That some traditions are kind of dumb when it comes to—well, you should only do this, or you should only do that. Who agrees with Chabela that sometimes traditions are kind of dumb? [Several students raise their hands.] Lucha, can you explain why you agree with her?

Lucha: Because, like, it is dumb because some people can do whatever they want and, it is true, you don’t know what they like, and you don’t know what that person wants.

In Mr. Pedernales’ classroom, both girls and boys participated in the discussions. However, the girls appeared particularly energetic when raising their hands and requesting to be called on. Chabela and Lucha were aware of the tension between traditional gender roles and Max’s aspirations. They described these gendered traditions as “dumb” because of their rigidity and failure to recognize individual agency and personal aspirations. Critical Race Theory uses intersectional perspectives, and LatCrit examines explicitly how language, immigration, ethnicity, culture, identity, phenotype, and sexuality intersect to shape the experiences of Latiné individuals, for better or worse (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). In a classroom filled with Latiné children, they were undoubtedly aware of the rigid gender norms present in Latino culture, which often leans toward hegemonic masculinity and emphasized femininity disguised as tradition.

In the book for the day’s read-aloud, Max, as a young male wolf, must navigate the multiple forms of how he is being subordinated. Breaking with the gendered hunting tradition is difficult for Max’s father to accept when traditions are static in his mind. Seizing this momentum at the end of the book, Mr. Pedernales asked his bilingual fourth graders to write about what they thought about the dad’s traditions and to give the book’s characters some advice. Lucha tried to reason with Max’s father (see Figure 2), writing to him that “he is not going to change Max” and that he “won’t die if [Max] breaks with tradition.” Lucha recognizes that the father’s response to Max is to change or “fix” Max, positioning him as having a disorder or confusion and needs to be set “straight.” Lucha shows an ability to recognize Max’s aspiration as part of the “self” that he wants to be respected as opposed to the father who sees his identity as something that is to be pathologized or fixed, aiming to conform to societal expectations (Abreu et al., 2019).

Figure 2
Lucha's Response



Channeling Reactionary Behavior into Action

Mr. Manzanares' third-grade girls were vocal about the female character not standing up for herself in Arturo y Clementina (Turin, 2012). The boys in the class seemed to remain quiet, mainly in a conversation that moved quickly, had many overlapping remarks, and was challenging to get a word in edgewise. Turin's (2012) book details the journey of Clementina, a female turtle who, along with her partner, Arturo, dreamed of traveling during courtship. Unfortunately, once married, their lives become routines. Arturo leaves for work while Clementina stays home to take care of their belongings. Throughout the book, Arturo continually uses gaslighting (Sweet, 2019). He ties their ever-growing mountain of furnishings onto Clementina's shell, claiming he must do so because he believes she is absent-minded and might lose them. When Clementina tells Arturo that being confined and weighed down by all she must carry and clean is boring, Arturo belittles her by saying, "Solo los tontos se aburren."[19]

The frustration was palpable during the reading of the book in Mr. Manzanares' third-grade bilingual classroom, especially among the girls. Mr. Manzanares cultivated a class through social justice-oriented, interactive read-alouds that focused on the civil rights movements of various underrepresented groups and even environmental rights through literature circles and read-alouds. The students had gone from reluctant to talk to empowered students who voiced their opinions and made connections to other texts and real life. While still at a stage of reactionary behavior (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001), the students seemed uncomfortable and upset at the book and characters. This critical encounter allowed the teacher to create the pedagogical space to begin questioning certain gendered narratives. Before arriving at that point, however, the students shifted from being angry with the aggressor, Arturo, to being angry with the victim, Clementina. Excerpt 5 depicts this:

[19] Only fools get bored.

Excerpt 5: Anger at Both Characters

Mr. Manzanares: [Reading to his class] Y aquella misma noche, Arturo llegó con un hermoso gramófono, y lo ató bien a la casa de Clementina, mientras le decía: "Así no lo perderás ¡Eres tan distraída!" Clementina le dio las gracias. Pero aquella noche, antes de dormirse, estuvo pensando por qué tenía que llevar a cuestas aquel tocadiscos tan pesado en lugar de una flauta ligera, y si era verdad que no hubiera llegado a aprender las notas y que era distraída. Pero después, avergonzada, decidió que tenía que ser así, puesto que Arturo, tan inteligente, lo decía. Suspiró resignada y se durmió.[20]

Mayela: ¡No! Maestro. [Conversation switches to English] No! Teacher.

Asunción: What about her?!

Rosalía: That's not true!

Ali: He is the dumb one!

Rosalía: He is dumb.

Mr. Manzanares: Why, Rosalía?

Rosalía: Cause he is being mean to her. It's not fair, she, she . . .

Mayela: She is very polite, and the man is . . . Ugh! Ugh! [Throws hands up in frustration.]

Rosalía: Es como kind of tonta…[21]

Mayela: Mr.? . . .

Mr. Manzanares: [Laughs] Kind of tonta. Okay.

Rosalía: Because, like because. Porque ella no sabe...[22] It's just, he just. She wants to go and make herself (inaudible).

Mayela: Why doesn't she just break up with him?! That's easier. [Bringing hands up to her face]

Dionicio: I think the mujer[23] is being tonta, Mr. Manzanares.

Mr. Manzanares: Rosalía has not finished her idea.

Rosalía: [Holds her head with hands, flings arms, and then crosses arms] I don't like this.

Mr. Manzanares: Why, why don't you like this, Rosalía?

Rosalía: Porque ella dice que él, que él va a ser, que él es más inteligente y luego ella va a creer que todos son más inteligentes que ella.[24]

Mr. Manzanares: Pero tú dices, she's kind of tonta, why do you say she is kind of tonta?[25]

Rosalía: Because she kinda is, es, es sonsa porque, porque, like. ¿Por qué no se defiende?[26]

Amelia: She doesn't break up with him.

Mr. Manzanares: Okay, el hecho de no defenderse . . . Rosalía me gustan tus, tus ideas, que

---

[20] That same night, Arturo showed up with a beautiful gramophone, that he tied very tightly to Clementina's house while he told her, "This way you will not lose it, because you are so absent minded." Clementina thanked him but before going to sleep, she asked herself why she had to carry that very heavy gramophone instead of a light flute, and if it was in fact true that she was so absent-minded and incapable of learning the notes. But later, slightly ashamed, she ultimately accepted that, yes, surely it was true what Arturo was telling her because Arturo was very smart.

[21] She's like kind of foolish…

[22] Because she doesn't know…

[23] woman

[24] Because she says that he, he is going to be, that he is more intelligent and later she is going to think everyone is more intelligent than her.

[25] But you say she is kind of foolish, why do you say she is kind of foolish?

[26] Because she kinda is, is dumb because, because, like. (1.0) Why doesn't she defend herself?

porque no se defiende.[27]

The students' anger toward Arturo was understandable because of his actions, yet their frustration also extended to the female character for not "standing up for herself." Rosalía struggled to find the words to describe how she felt about Clementina; she came up with tonta, which translates to the female-gendered form of "fool," a word that Arturo had used. In her opinion, Clementina should have acted and left the abusive relationship or, in the eyes of the classroom girls, stood up for herself. Rosalía's frustration was well placed; even though she referred to Clementina as tonta, her main concern was that the protagonist was buying into the sexist and psychological abuse that Arturo was dispensing as gaslighting.

Arturo played on societal norms of inter alia, husband/father knows best, and exploited the power dynamics to the point where Clementina would start buying into the master narrative. Rosalía understood, "She is going to believe others are more intelligent than her." Domestic abuse is a rather complex issue that the book brings up. While the students understood the sexist and verbal abuse, they may not have realized the complexity of financial abuse that prevented Clementina from breaking free and refraining from victim blaming (Latishaw, 2015). One may notice how most of the speech in this small exchange among classmates was dominated by female students. Dionicio, who typically spoke quite a bit, contributed but was overshadowed by the quickly moving conversation.

Further in the book, as Arturo continued to belittle Clementina and tie even more objects to her shell—symbolizing the amount of control he had over her by burdening her with domestic responsibilities, Mr. Manzanares paused to make clear why he was reading the book to the class as a response to the frustration expressed by the students. This is depicted in Excerpt 6.

Excerpt 6: Mr. Manzanares's Reasons for Reading the Book to His Class

Sylvia: Maestro me dan ganas de gritarle bien fuerte a ese…[28]
Mayela: Y yo le quiero gritar a ese hombre que sale en el libro y después le jala a los hilos.
Sylvia: Calm down, calm down.[29]
Sandra: Pero se va a ca..., ¿qué va a pasar si eso se quiebra?[30]
Mr. Manzanares: [Addressing the class] Yo sé que ustedes están molestos con el libro y espero que, en sus vidas, bueno tengo la confianza de que ustedes van a defenderse. Eso es el propósito de todo esto. Que ustedes [Pauses] sepan a defenderse, los círculos literarios, que hagan escuchar su voz. Entonces, en estos libros, no solo leerlos, enojarse, y que se enfaden, al contrario, es algo que los va a ayudar en sus vidas.[31]

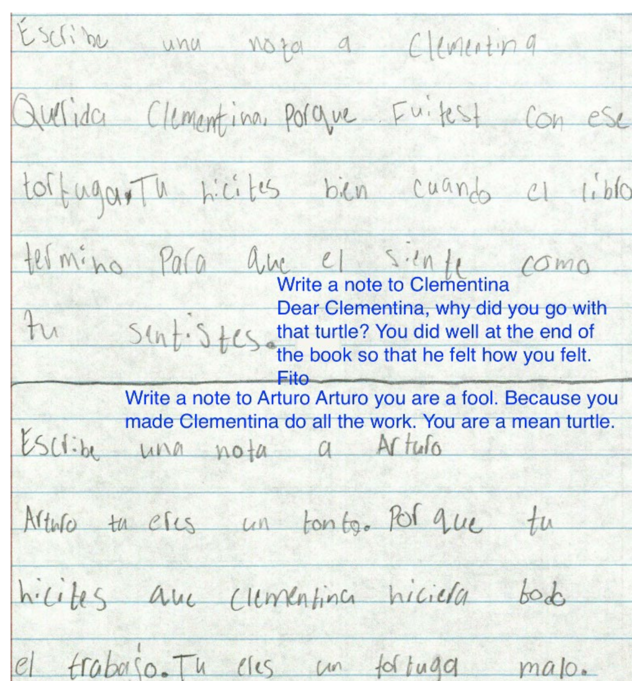
[27] Okay, the fact that she doesn't defend herself, Rosalía I like your, your ideas, that because she doesn't defend herself.
[28] Teacher, I feel like yelling really loud at that . . .
[29] Speaking to self, closes eyes and makes a Sukhasana pose, breathes in and out.
[30] But it is going to fa . . .what is going to happen if that gets broken?
[31] I know you are angry at the book, and I hope that in your life, well not hope, I have faith that you will defend yourselves. That is the purpose of all this. That you, that you learn to defend yourselves, the literature circles, that you speak your voice. In these books, it is not just about reading them, getting mad and becoming frustrated, instead it is something that will help you in your life.

Mr. Manzanares challenged his bilingual third graders to take emancipatory action and get past being angry, which Solórzano and Delgado Bernal (2001) call “reactionary behavior.” He hoped that his students would eventually engage in what Solórzano and Delgado Bernal (2001) refer to as “transformative resistance,” where they, the actors, are aware of their oppression in terms of race, gender, and class but base their resistance on social justice motivations. Moving students past anger into an active phase became the lesson’s focus.

In an attempt to channel the energy of the class toward a product, Mr. Manzanares asked the class in that day’s follow-up language arts activity to write a letter to one of the characters in the book. Many students chose to write to Clementina. However, several students suggested that both characters warranted their own letters. Some demanded that Arturo had to be written to and not just Clementina. In a playful tone, trying to one-up each other, the third graders adamantly asked for extra paper in large increments as they intended to write Arturo a long letter. The students’ sense of agency is highlighted here as they approached the assignment—not just as a static task to be completed but as one in which they had some ownership.

Figure 3

Fito’s Letters to Clementina and Arturo



Escribe una nota a Clementina

Querida Clementina, porque fuitest con ese tortuga. Tu hicites bien cuando el libro termino para que el siente como tu sentistes.

Write a note to Clementina
Dear Clementina, why did you go with that turtle? You did well at the end of the book so that he felt how you felt.
Fito

Write a note to Arturo Arturo you are a fool. Because you made Clementina do all the work. You are a mean turtle.

Escribe una nota a Arturo

Arturo tu eres un tonto. Por que tu hicites que Clementina hiciera todo el trabajo. Tu eres un tortuga malo.

Fito’s letter to both characters (Figure 3) illustrates engagement in a co-constructed, idealized community created by a shared imagination or “cultural imaginary” (Medina & Wohlwend, 2014), where language and literacy practices intersect with agency. Medina and Wohlwend (2014) describe these cultural imaginaries as “classroom legitimated child-directed writing practices and author identities, positioning children as creative authors” who import “media as literary resources and print to create their own original scripts or, more typically, variations” (p. 81). Where the female students in the class mainly had taken up time and space in the read-aloud conversations, Fito also engaged with both characters but in writing. Acknowledging that Clementina had the last say in the relationship was cathartic; in addition, he turned Arturo’s words

back on him, highlighting how unfair and abusive he was. At the same time, the students knew that they were writing to fictional characters, but they still chose to engage in additional letter-writing work. Humanizing work occurred in this space of playful, non-scripted improvisations (Medina et al., 2022).

In fast-paced conversations that took place during pauses in read-aloud sessions, there were numerous opportunities to unpack discussions and analyze certain words. For instance, instead of simply labeling Clementina and Max's father's actions as "dumb," exploring the reasons behind their socialization would have been more insightful. The tendency to blame victims, as seen in the case where Clementina is referred to as "dumb," warrants further examination to understand why using the very language that Arturo ascribed to her is problematic. Audre Lorde (1983) reminds us that "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house" (p. 95). Junctures such as the ones the teachers and their students arrived at can be generative points also to discuss how we should engage in "empathy through perspective taking" (Magill & Salinas, 2019) and try to understand others by walking their shoes. In the case of Clementina, students can be asked to consider why she reacted the way she did instead of defending herself. Asking critical questions is one way to gain new understandings in moving past the anger reaction students might feel at first and toward more productive growth.

Nonetheless, the teachers' willingness to engage with these sensitive topics in such a charged environment is commendable. The teachers in the study aim for their bilingual students to recognize unfair treatment in terms of race and gender and to exert their agency when faced with similar challenges in real life. In reflecting about the limits of their ability to fully engage in deconstruction, Mr. Pedernales elaborates:

> I wish there were more gender issue books, especially for boys. I obviously can't read My Two Uncles and Daddy's Roommate to the kids without the headache of dealing with parents, religious leaders, and needless drama. But a book like Max, the Stubborn Little Wolf can bring up similar thoughts and ideas for discussion. It's subversive and cute, and I love it! Sure, the little wolf wants to be a florist, a typical gay career for a man, but it allows you to bring up the subject of gender roles and stereotypes without all the political or religious stuff that surrounds it. I just wish the book included other boy wolves in the story that were okay with Max's decision.

Burke and Copenhaver (2004) highlight children's literature with animal characters and anthropomorphism as a valuable practice to help students examine their dispositions. Portraying animals in real-life human scenarios softens the message because it can be perceived as having some distance from the characters. However, this is where the connections to real life and in-class discussion become essential to keep students from losing focus of the idea behind the book and making the connection from the text to their world. Notwithstanding, Mr. Pedernales brings up the issue of wishing others were portrayed as supportive of Max. While the book is an entry point into challenging a dominant narrative, in the end, the book has a cliffhanger where the advancement of social transformation and action is lost when Max's parents are never shown to accept Max's identity. While the book about Max offers a counternarrative to traditions and traditional gender roles, as Mr. Pedernales notes, it falls short of depicting a counternarrative of family members or peers who accept them as different which would be great for children to see.

Teaching in a very conservative state, with an ever-expanding list of banned books and very contentious school board meetings that dissuade any form of social issues in the curriculum, none

of the teachers in this study chose available books that focused on LGBTQ characters. During the brainstorming sessions we held, the three Latino teachers acknowledged that they knew about books like *Oliver Is a Sissy* and *My Daddy's Roommate*. However, these were never chosen or requested for read-alouds. Mr. Pedernales offered a justification for his trepidation to go beyond the binaries of boy and girl books and incorporate LGBTQ topics:

> Parents will say stuff like, "I don't want him teaching my kid." That would really hurt for them to say that, especially since I've been there a long time. I've proven myself. When it comes to stuff like that, people are completely irrational. One moment, they can be donating to charity, doing charity work, and helping kids save the Earth. Then all of a sudden, "Gays! Burn in hell!" It's very hard to predict how parents in the community will react.

While heteronormative traditions were challenged in the above examples, absent from the discussion were topics that explored gender beyond binaries, such as gender fluidity and queer identities. All teachers in my study saw empowering children as a social responsibility and the classroom as a place to foster tolerance for difference. However, LGBTQ topics remained the proverbial elephant in the room. Teachers may be "in loco parentis," but the children's parents still weigh heavily in the bilingual classroom—even when they are not physically present.

Significance of the Study and Conclusion

There were questions guiding this study: "How do three bilingual elementary male teachers employ the practice of inclusive gender read-alouds in the bilingual classroom?" and "How do students in bilingual classrooms take up inclusive gender read-alouds?" Book choice was critical in the implementation of the study. As a social construction, gender categories can create rigid and inflexible norms and communicate hierarchies of dominance and power through socialization processes in everyday school and classroom activities. For this reason, children's literature proves to be a medium by which these master narratives and structures of gender are made visible and tangible, particularly through critical encounters (DeNicolo & Fránquiz, 2006). Reading children's literature in the bilingual classrooms of the three Latino male teachers in this study went from the mundane, prescribed, or "busy work" to literature discussions that provided students with mirrors to see into their own lives and the "windows" of the lives of others. While the teachers admitted that there was always the potential for parental resistance toward issues of non-gender conforming texts (Hermann-Wilmarth & Ryan, 2019), they also understood that school is a critical place for gender socialization—not only in the positive ways that the three teachers illustrated in their classroom teaching but also in the negative ways when nothing is done. From a social justice orientation, schools cannot take a colorblind or gender-blind approach.

Mr. Castañares, Mr. Manzanares, and Mr. Pedernales explicitly created moments of critical dialogue through their inclusive gender read-alouds. They asked their bilingual students to question their perceptions or to share experiences as counterstories (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). Students recognized how certain book characters— Graciela's peers, the wolf father, and Arturo the turtle—carry fixed notions of gender and problematic discourses rooted in hegemonic masculinity and majoritarian tales. They recognized how the construction of self is situated and influenced by those around them. As the teachers engaged their bilingual students with the chosen texts, illustrating the disruption of normed gender roles, they were able to guide them to develop the ability to question

majoritarian tales (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002) or master narratives (Fránquiz et al., 2011). Learning to question and challenge dominant narratives comes as a result of the teachers' abilities to bridge connections to students' prior experiences and position those as valid tools for learning and making sense of readings. The teachers in this study had the end goal of encouraging bilingual students to make the connections from the texts to their larger world and eventually write upon their world (Freire & Macedo, 1995), thus creating their own counternarratives as a form of advancing transformational resistance (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001) rooted in social justice.

The classroom is a part of the power structure that helps regulate the behaviors of children. Therefore, it is also an ideal place to begin questioning problematic norms and reaffirming diverse identities. The critical encounters highlighted in this study illustrate the potential of children's books that address sexual identity and gender equity and the importance of creating a pedagogical space where these themes can be openly discussed. Children learn about social roles through everyday social interactions, including those reinforced by classroom dynamics. The three teachers in the study fostered a classroom environment that challenged traditional gender notions and provided opportunities for exploration. More importantly, through the examples used as counternarratives, students were encouraged to examine their own agency in how characters, including the teachers, construct their identities while respecting each individual's sense of self.

The girls in the various classrooms in this study—especially third and fourth grade—offered more examples of intertextual connections between their lives and the books chosen by their respective teachers. While male students tended to dominate classroom talk and often acted as "turn sharks" (Erickson, 2004; Martin et al., 2006) at all levels of schooling—from elementary to university—las niñas in Laguna School District often furthered the conversations in this small study. The disquieted quietness of many of the boys were spaces when the three Latino teachers could have engaged in activities to elicit their thoughts, such as asking, "Who haven't we heard from?" and "What voices are missing?" (Bahruth & Steiner, 2000). Even though Bahruth and Steiner (2000) initially employed those prompts to counter male dominance in class discussions, interrogating the silences is equally valid and was needed in the present study.

Additionally, though the teachers in this study often touched on gender equity during many instances of their interactive read-alouds, they also missed several opportunities to discuss the notion of gender identification beyond a boy/girl binary. Children's literature, like Maya Christina Gonzalez's (2014) book, *Call Me Tree/ Llámame Árbol*, encourages us to think of humans as simply *humans*. Books like *Call Me Tree* "imagine futures outside the limits of binary gender relation, behaviors, structures" (Avilés, 2017, p. 41). The limitations in furthering a truly equitable classroom and just society are becoming more complex every day. There is no shortage of books emerging that explore these topics in more thoughtful ways. However, the ability of teachers to enact a critically-minded approach toward read-alouds and garner strength to avert or rise above book bans is in shorter supply.

This study highlights that children as young as six to ten years old can begin to understand the problematic nature of rigid gender roles. While teacher education programs may focus on social justice education (Hytten & Bettez, 2011), they often fall short of exploring more complex topics beyond that of race and ethnicity, often neglecting to engage in these discussions during their teacher preparation programs (Vlach, 2022; Wessel-Powell & Bentley, 2022). As expected, teachers typically only address issues related to gender identity when they become significant concerns. However, the bilingual teachers involved in this research demonstrate the importance of embracing diverse perspectives and fostering reflection well before these conversations become unavoidable. These dynamics have important implications for teacher education and in-service teachers when it

comes to addressing complex topics in the classroom. The teachers in the study were all advanced professionals, having graduated from programs that equipped them to question norms surrounding language, race, and gender. Future research could explore whether novice teachers adopt similar stances in their classrooms.

As a cisgender heterosexual male researcher, I acknowledge that being an armchair pedagogue is easy for me. I recognize I am speaking from a privileged position that needs to interrogate the use of binaries. The real work is done by teachers who actively engage within their spheres of discretion (Hupe & Hill, 2007). The larger context in which this study took place has engaged in banning certain multicultural books at an unprecedented rate. In addition, in many university settings, we can no longer have diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging offices (Gretzinger et al., 2024). The teachers in this study exemplified the importance of the classroom creating a safe and brave space (Arao & Clements, 2013) where counterstories can be recognized and created. They also played a crucial role in facilitating discussion and guiding their bilingual students toward praxis and a productive way of channeling frustration into writing (or as an act of resistance). Let us all learn from these brave educators and children and continue to use bilingual texts and writing as a form of resistance while we face extraordinarily difficult times.

References

Abreu, R. L., Rosenkrantz, D. E., Ryser-Oatman, J. T., Rostosky, S. S., & Riggle, E. D. (2019). Parental reactions to transgender and gender diverse children: A literature review. Journal of GLBT Family Studies, *15*(5), 461-485. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1550428X.2019.1656132

Arao, B., & Clemens, K. (2013). From safe spaces to brave spaces: A new way to frame dialogue around diversity and social justice. In L. Landreman (Ed.), *The art of effective facilitation: Reflections from social justice educators* (pp. 135-150). Stylus Publishing.

Anzaldúa, G. (2007). *Borderlands/La Frontera*. Aunt Lute Books.

Anzaldúa, G. (1993). *Friends from the other side/Amigos del otro lado*. Children's Book Press.

Anzaldúa, G. (1995). *Prietita and the Ghost Woman/Prietita y La Llorona*. Children's Book Press.

Annamma, S. A., Connor, C., & Ferri, B. (2013). Dis/ability critical race studies (DisCrit): Theorizing at the intersections of race and dis/ability. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, *16*(1), 1-31. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2012.730511

Avilés, E. (2017). Reading Latinx and LGBTQ+ perspectives: Maya Christina Gonzalez and equity minded models at play. *Bilingual Review/Revista Bilingüe*, *33*(4), 34-44.

Avilés, E. (2018). Chillante pedagogy, "She worlds," and testimonio as text/image: Toward a Chicana feminist pedagogy in the works of Maya Christina González. In L. Alamillo, L. Mercado-Lopez, & C. Herrera (Eds.), *Voices of resistance: Interdisciplinary approaches to Chican@ children's literature* (123-136). Rowman & Littlefield.

Barth, R. S. (2007). Culture in question. In M. Grogran & M. Fullan (Eds.), *The Jossey-Bass Reader on educational leadership (3rd ed.)* (159–167). Jossey-Bass.

Berry, T. R. (2010). Engaged pedagogy and critical race feminism. *Educational Foundations; Ann Arbor*, *24*(3/4), 19-26.

Braden, E. G., Boutte, G., Gibson, V., & Jackson, J. (2022). Using Afrocentric praxis as loving pedagogies to sustain black immigrant racial identities. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *35*(6), 569-587.

Brooks, K. & Leckey, R. (2010). *Queer theory: Law, culture, empire*. Taylor and Francis.

Buchanan, L. B., Tschida, C., Bellows, E., & Shear, S. B. (2020). Positioning children's literature to confront the persistent avoidance of LGBTQ topics among elementary preservice teachers. *The Journal of Social Studies Research*, *44*(1), 169-184. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jssr.2019.01.006

Burton, C. (2020). Gender disrupted during storytime: Critical literacy in early childhood. *Journal of Childhood Studies, 45*(4), 35-48. http://dx.doi.org/10.18357/jcs00018978

Casey, K., Novick, K., & Lourenco, S. F. (2021). Sixty years of gender representation in children's books: Conditions associated with overrepresentation of male versus female protagonists. *PLOS One*, *16*(12), e0260566. http://dx.doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0260566

Chávez-Moreno, L. C. (2024). Examining race in LatCrit: A systematic review of Latinx critical race theory in education. *Review of Educational Research*, *94*(4), 501-538. https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543231192685

Collier, V. P., & Thomas, W. P. (2004). The astounding effectiveness of dual language education for all. *NABE Journal of Research and Practice*, *2*(1), 1-20.

Connell, R. W. (1987). *Gender and power*. Stanford University Press.

Connell, R. W. (1995). *Masculinities*. University of California Press.

Davies, B. (1993). *Shards of glass: Children reading and writing beyond gendered identities*. Hampton Press.

Davies, B. (1997). Constructing and deconstructing masculinities through critical literacy. *Gender and Education*, *9*(1), 9-30. https://doi.org/10.1080/09540259721420
Degollado, E. D. (2023). "I try to read to them in both languages": Bilingual maestras' enactment and embodiment of critical biliteracies through bilanguaging love. *Journal of Literacy Research*, *55*(3), 302-324. https://doi.org/10.1177/1086296X231200815
Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (1993). *Critical race theory: An annotated bibliography. Virginia Law Review, 79*(2)*,* 461-516. https://doi.org/10.2307/1073418
Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (2012). *Critical race theory: an introduction (2nd ed.)*. New York University Press.
DeNicolo, C. P., & Fránquiz, M. E. (2006). "Do I have to say it?": Critical encounters with multicultural children's literature. *Language Arts*, *84*(2), 157-170.
Desai, S. R. & Abeita, A. (2017). Institutional microaggressions at a Hispanic serving institution: A Diné (Navajo) woman utilizing tribal critical race theory through student activism. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, *50*(3), 275-289. https://doi.org/10.1080/10665684.2017.1336498
Enciso, P. (2021). "Where are you?": Reading, repositioning, and imagining for antiracist futures. In D. Sumara & D. Alverman (Eds.), *Ideas that changed literacy practices: First person accounts from leading voices* (pp. 93-102). Myers Education Press.
Erickson, F. (2004). *Talk and social theory: Ecologies of speaking and listening in everyday life*. Polity Press.
Esquivel, J. (2020). Embodying critical literacy in a dual language classroom: Critical discourse analysis in a case study. *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies*, *17*(3), 206-227. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15427587.2019.1662306
Fránquiz, M. E., Salazar, M. D. C., & DeNicolo, C. P. (2011). Challenging majoritarian tales: Portraits of bilingual teachers deconstructing deficit views of bilingual learners. *Bilingual Research Journal*, *34*(3), 279-300. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15235882.2011.625884
Freire, P., & Macedo, D. P. (1995). A dialogue: Culture, language, and race. *Harvard Educational Review*, *65*(3), 377-403. https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.65.3.12g1923330p1xhj8
Filipović, K. (2018). Gender representation in children's books: Case of an early childhood setting. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, *32*(3), 310-325. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02568543.2018.1464086
García, O. (2009). *Bilingual education in the 21st century: A global perspective*. Wiley/Blackwell.
Gretzinger, E., Hicks, M., Dutton, C., & Smith, J. (2024, November 8). Tracking higher ed's dismantling of DEI. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. https://www.chronicle.com/article/tracking-higher-eds-dismantling-of-dei
Gonzalez, M. C. (2014). *Call me tree/Llámame árbol*. Children's Book Press / Lee & Low.
Harpalani, V. (2013). DesiCrit: Theorizing the racial ambiguity of South Asian Americans. *New York University Annual Survey of American Law*, *69*(1), 77-183.
Hermann-Wilmarth, J. M., Lannen, R., & Ryan, C. L. (2017). Critical literacy and transgender topics in an upper elementary classroom: A portrait of possibility. *Journal of Language and Literacy Education*, *13*(1), 15-27.
Hermann-Wilmarth, J. M., & Ryan, C. L. (2014). Queering chapter books with LGBT characters for young readers: Recognizing and complicating representations of homonormativity. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, *37*(6), 1-23. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2014.940234
Hermann-Wilmarth, J. M., & Ryan, C. L. (2019). Navigating parental resistance: Learning from

responses of LGBTQ-inclusive elementary school teachers. *Theory Into Practice*, *58*(1), 89-98. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2018.1536914
Hoffman, M., & Binch, C. (1996). *La asombrosa Graciela*. Dial Books for Young Readers.
Hupe, P., & Hill, M. (2007). Street-level bureaucracy and public accountability. *Public Administration*, *85*(2), 270-299. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2022.2065517
Hytten, K., & Bettez, S. C. (2011). Understanding education for social justice. *Educational Foundations*, *25*(1/2), 7-24.
Jaeger, P. T., Jennings-Roche, A., & Hodge, O. J. (2023). Criminalizing librarianship: State legislatures creating legal jeopardies for librarians. *Journal of Intellectual Freedom & Privacy*, *8*(1), 17. http://dx.doi.org/10.5860/jifp.v8i1.7869
Jetton, T. L., & Savage-Davis, E. M. (2005). Preservice teachers develop an understanding of diversity issues through multicultural literature. Multicultural Perspectives, *7*(1), 30-38. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327892mcp0701_6
Jiménez, L. M. (2021). Mirrors and windows with texts and readers: Intersectional social justice at work in the classroom. *Language Arts*, *98*(3), 156-161. http://dx.doi.org/10.58680/la202131031
Jones, S., Enríquez, G., Gardner, R. P., & Flis, S. (2024). Going public with contested books: Statewide read-aloud events as a critical, feminist, posthumanist approach to advocacy and activism in politically turbulent times. *Journal of Children's Literature*, *50*(2), 9-24.
Judes, M. (2001). *Max, the stubborn little wolf*. Harper Collins Publishers.
Keddie, A. (2021). Engaging boys in gender activism: issues of discomfort and emotion. *Gender and Education*, *33*(2), 171-185. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2020.1716956
Kellner, D. (2020) Cultural studies, multiculturalism, and media culture. In B. Yousman, L. Bindig Yousman, G. Dines, & J. McMahon Humez (Eds). *Gender, race, and class in media (6th ed.)*(pp. 26-42). SAGE Publications, Inc.
Koss, M. D., & Paciga, K. A. (2023). "We have to be wary of unicorns and rainbows": Curricular freedom in a contemporary sociopolitical context. *Literacy Research and Instruction*, *64*(2), 154-178. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/19388071.2023.2293689
Kostas, M. (2021). Discursive construction of hegemonic masculinity and emphasized femininity in the textbooks of primary education: Children's discursive agency and polysemy of the narratives. *Gender and Education*, *33*(1), 50-67.
Lammert, C., & Godfrey, V. C. (2023). Teachers' self-censorship of children's literature in Texas—What's legislation got to do with it? *AERA Open*, *9*(1), 1-16. https://doi.org/10.1177/23328584231201814
Lara, G. P. & Fránquiz M. E. (2015) Latino bilingual teachers: Negotiating the figured world of masculinity. *Bilingual Research Journal*, *38*(2), 207-227. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15235882.2015.1066720
Lara, G. P. (2022) Testimonios of Latino male preservice teachers as models for caring, bilingualism, and biculturalism. *The Association of Mexican American Educators (AMAE) Journal*, *16*(1), 1-21. http://dx.doi.org/10.24974/amae.16.1.455
Lara, G. P., Henderson, K. M., Lindahl, K. I., (In Review). Understanding and addressing language ideologies in bilingual teacher education programs. In D. Palmer, B. Caldas, L. Herrera, & C. Faltis (Eds.), *Handbook of Bilingual Teacher Education.* De Gruyter Mouton.
Lau, S. M. C. (2013). A study of critical literacy work with beginning English language learners: An integrated approach. *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies*, *10*(1), 1-30. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15427587.2013.753841

Lewis, A. E. (2001). There is no “race” in the schoolyard: Color-blind ideology in an (almost) all-white school. *American Educational Research Journal*, *38*(4), 781-811. http://dx.doi.org/10.3102/00028312038004781
Leija, M. G. (2020). Día de los Muertos: Opportunities to foster writing and reflect students' cultural practices. *The Reading Teacher*, *73*(4), 543-548. http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/trtr.1871
Leija, M. G., & Fránquiz, M. E. (2021). Building bridges between school and home: Teacher, parents, and students examining Latinx immigrant experiences. In G. Onchwari & J. Keengwe (Eds.), *Bridging family-teacher relationships for ELL and immigrant students* (pp. 100–121). IGI Global.
Leija, M. G., Martinez, M., & DeJulio, S. (2023). Beyond leveled readers: Finding engaging books to support beginning readers. *Texas Journal of Literacy Education*, *10*(1), 8-24.
Lorde, A. (1983). The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house. In C. Moraga & G. Anzaldúa (Eds.), *This bridge called my back: Writings by radical women of* color (pp. 98-101). Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press.
Magill, K. R., & Salinas, C. (2019). The primacy of relation: Social studies teachers and the praxis of critical pedagogy. *Theory & Research in Social Education*, *47*(1), 1-28. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00933104.2018.1519476
Marshall, E. (2016) Counter-storytelling through graphic life writing. *Language Arts*, *94*(2), 79-93. https://doi.org/10.58680/la201628800
Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2006). *Designing qualitative research*. Sage.
Martin, S. N., Milne, C. & Scantlebury, K. (2006). Eye-rollers, risk-takers, and turn sharks: Target students in a professional science education program. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, *43*(8), 819-851.
Martínez-Roldán, C. M. (2005). Examining bilingual children's gender ideologies through critical discourse analysis. *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies: An International Journal*, *2*(3), 157-178. http://dx.doi.org/10.1207/s15427595cils0203_2
Mathison, S. (1988). Why triangulate? *Educational Researcher*, *17*(2), 13-17. https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X017002013
Matsuda, M., Lawrence III, C., Delgado, R., & Crenshaw, K. W. (1993). *Words that wound: Critical race theory, assaultive speech, and the First Amendment*. Routledge.
Medina, C. L., & Wohlwend, K. E. (2014). *Literacy, play, and globalization: Converging imaginaries in children's critical and cultural performances*. Routledge.
Medina, C. L., Perry, M., & Wohlwend, K. (2022). *Playful methods: Engaging the unexpected in literacy research*. Taylor & Francis.
Melville, B. (1980). *Twice a Minority, Mexican American Women*. C.W. Mosby Company.
Messerschmidt J. W., & Messner M. A. (2018). Hegemonic, nonhegemonic, and “new” masculinities. In J. W., Messerschmidt, P. Y. Martin, M. A. Messner, R. W. Connell (Eds.), *Gender reckonings* (pp. 35-56). New York University Press.
Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2013). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook*. SAGE Publications, Incorporated.
Mitchell, K., Homza, A., & Ngo, S. (2012). Reading aloud with bilingual learners: A fieldwork project and its impact on mainstream teacher candidates. *Action in Teacher Education*, *34*(3), 276-294. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01626620.2012.694020
Möller, K. J. (2020). Reading and responding to LGBTQ-inclusive children's literature in school settings: Considering the state of research on inclusion. *Language Arts*, *97*(4), 235-251.
Möller, K. J., & Allen, J. (2000). Connecting, resisting, and searching for safer places: Students

respond to Mildred Taylor's *The Friendship*. *Journal of Literacy Research*, *32*(2), 145-186.
Osorio, S. L. (2018). Toward a humanizing pedagogy: Using Latinx children's literature with early childhood students. *Bilingual Research Journal*, *41*(1), 5-22. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15235882.2018.1425165
Parker, L., & Lynn, M. (2002). What's race got to do with it? Critical race theory's conflicts with and connections to qualitative research methodology and epistemology. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *8*(1), 7-22. https://doi.org/10.1177/107780040200800102
Powell, M. (2021, December 10). In Texas, a battle over what can be taught, and what books can be read. *The New York Times*, 10.
Pyne, J. (2014). Gender independent kids: A paradigm shift in approaches to gender non-conforming children. *Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality*, *23*(1), 1-8.
Robinson, K. H. (2002). Making the invisible visible: Gay and lesbian issues in early childhood education. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, *3*(3), 415-432. http://dx.doi.org/10.2304/ciec.2002.3.3.8
Robinson, K. H., & Ferfolja, T. (2001). "What are we doing this for?" Dealing with lesbian and gay issues in teacher education. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, *22*(1), 121-133. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01425690020030828
Ryan, C. L., & Hermann-Wilmarth, J. M. (2019). Putting read-alouds to work for LGBTQ-inclusive, critically literate classrooms. *Language Arts*, *96*(5), 312-317. http://dx.doi.org/10.58680/la201930095
Rycroft-Smith, L., & Andre, G. (2019). *The equal classroom: Life-changing thinking about gender*. Routledge.
Saldaña, J. (2021). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Sage.
Sipe, L. R. (2008). *Storytime: Young children's literacy understanding in the classroom*. Teachers College Press.
Smith-Maddox, R., & Solorzano, D. G. (2002). Using critical race theory, Paulo Freire's problem-posing method, and case study research to confront race and racism in education. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *8*(1), 66-84. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/107780040200800105
Solórzano, D. G., & Delgado Bernal, D. (2001). Examining transformational resistance through a critical race and LatCrit theory framework: Chicana and Chicano students in an urban context. *Urban Education*, *36*(3), 308-342. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0042085901363002
Solórzano, D. G., & Yosso, T. J. (2001). Critical race and LatCrit theory and method: Counter-storytelling. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *14*(4), 471-495. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09518390110063365
Solórzano, D. G., & Yosso, T. J. (2002). Critical race methodology: Counter-storytelling as an analytical framework for education research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *8*(1), 23-44. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/107780040200801003
Sweet, P. L. (2019). The sociology of gaslighting. *American Sociological Review*, *84*(5), 851-875. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0003122419874843
Takaki, R. T. (2008). *A different mirror: A history of multicultural America*. Back Bay.
Turin, A. (2012). *Arturo y Clementina*. Kalandraka.
Vlach, S. K. (2022). Elementary literacy teachers change the underlying story through transformative read-aloud curricula. *Journal of Children's Literature*, *48*(1), 33-44.
Wargo, J. M. (2022). Gendered genius hour: Tracing young children's uptake of expert across the nexus of personal digital inquiry. *Research in the Teaching of English*, *56*(3), 275-300. http://dx.doi.org/10.58680/rte202231638

Wessel-Powell, C., & Bentley, H. (2022). Newcomers, novices, censors, and seasoned advocates navigate risky texts with critical literacy. *The New Educator*, *18*(1/2), 61-86. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1547688X.2021.2008567

Worthy, J., Chamberlain, K., Peterson, K., Sharp, C., & Shih, P. Y. (2012). The importance of read-aloud and dialogue in an era of narrowed curriculum: An examination of literature discussions in a second-grade classroom. *Literacy Research and Instruction*, *51*(4), 308-322. https://doi.org/10.1080/19388071.2012.685387

Yosso, T. J. (2006). *Critical race counterstories along the Chicana/Chicano educational pipeline*. Routledge.