

# Community Translanguaging Through Amistades: Holistic Support for Latina Mothers and Their Children's Kindergarten Readiness

Sophia Piral Lee<sup>a,\*</sup>, Jenifer Rueda Varon<sup>b</sup>

Received : 4 April 2025  
Revised : 17 October 2025  
Accepted : 7 March 2026  
DOI : 10.26822/iejee.2026.430

<sup>a\*</sup> **Corresponding Author:** Sophia Piral Lee, Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis, University of Missouri-Columbia, USA.

E-mail: [sophiapiral@gmail.com](mailto:sophiapiral@gmail.com)

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7751-550X>

<sup>b</sup> Jenifer Rueda Varon, Columbia Public Schools, USA.

E-mail: [jruedavaron@cpsk12.org](mailto:jruedavaron@cpsk12.org)

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7704-6187>

## Abstract

This collaborative (auto)ethnographic study documents the use of community translanguaging within a support group called Amistades (pseudonym) created through a community-based partnership between mamás Latinas and a local non-profit organization. The purpose of Amistades was to offer parental and childhood socioemotional and educational support for early childhood and kindergarten readiness in a predominantly white and English-speaking city in the U.S. Amistades was exclusively designed for mamás Latinas and their young children (0-5 years old), creating unique safe spaces where mothers could share and appreciate their *mujerismo*, *Latinidad*, migration experience, translanguaging (English-Spanish), and pedagogies of the home to support their children's identity, multiculturalism, bilingualism, and protection after migrating. Co-facilitating the support group for two years, we—two mamás Latinas—documented our experience with living and interacting in a new community, mainly including community translanguaging and supporting each other in constant *pláticas*, monthly support groups with other mothers, playdates with our children, and the use of social media. Then, we followed a grounded theory approach to reflect on and interpret the data. Finally, we reflected on how community translanguaging helped Amistades: (1) become our only *red de apoyo* and *sentido de comunidad* with other familias Latinas; (2) allow mothers to share their experience, leadership, and diverse resources supporting other families to navigate and thrive as peers; (3) create spaces where young children could meet and interact with their monolingual Spanish-speaking and bilingual friends through free play; and (4) provide mothers with emotional support, knowledge, and resources to enroll their children in kindergarten and navigate elementary schools for the first time. This study has implications for research-practice partnerships by informing how elementary schools and other local organizations and researchers can address critical gaps in supporting familias Latinas, protecting and promoting their multiple identities and languages, *amistades*, and *liderazgo* to navigate elementary schools in the U.S. through community translanguaging.

## Keywords:

Community Translanguaging; Grassroot Work; Early Childhood; Kindergarten Readiness; Socioemotional Support; Latina Mothers



[www.iejee.com](http://www.iejee.com)  
ISSN: 1307-9298

2026 Published by KURA Education & Publishing.  
This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license. (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

## Introduction

Parenting can be difficult on its own but imagine the complications parents face after migrating (Ali, 2008). The intersection of two of the most significant changes in one's life, migration and motherhood, represents a whole new world for mothers and their families. Mothers may have many questions when raising and nurturing children in a new place (Perreira et al., 2006). For instance, how do we nurture our children who are babies or toddlers in a new place? Who is going to help us take care of our children while we find out where to live or work? How can we help them get ready for school? Who are they going to be friends with, and how are they going to interact with them? How do we protect them and their identities from bullying and ensure they are proud of their identities and home countries? After all, drawing on our own personal experiences, children and their well-being are often one of the main reasons families migrate in the first place. Luckily for us, the two mother-authors of this article, after migrating to the U.S., found a non-profit organization that supports parents of young children by offering guidance and resources on pregnancy, the neonatal period, early childhood, and kindergarten readiness. We started participating there with some English and Spanish words here and there, so our familias could benefit from their services after the abrupt changes we had when moving to the U.S. At that time, our children were 4 months old, 18 months old, and 3.5 years old.

Then, one of us started volunteering at this organization and created a monthly support group for families Latinas and led only by familias Latinas. For this study, we used the pseudonym "Amistades" for the support group. Here, we started seeing each other, Author 1 and Author 2, more and more often, until we developed a friendship and decided to co-facilitate this support group with other families. We appreciated the local organization's willingness and excitement to serve more familias Latinas, translate their documents into Spanish, organize events for familias Latinas, ensure bilingual support, and host our monthly support group. This local organization also provided all the resources we needed at no cost: a beautiful and safe space to meet, materials for activities, snacks, bilingual children's books, and diapers and wipes to take home, among others. This support group, Amistades, helped us connect with and develop friendships with other Latina mothers while supporting each other in raising our children and preparing them for school. Basically, Amistades helped us move from the total isolation we felt when we recently arrived in the city to constant interaction with more than 40 Latina mothers and their children.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore how Amistades laid on community translanguaging—the

community linguistic repertoires created through relationships (Kim & Song, 2019; Kim et al., 2021)—provide holistic support for Latina mothers and their children's kindergarten readiness. Essentially, with this study, we wanted to answer the questions: (1) What does linguistic and socioemotional support look like in informal, non-institutional, and grassroots mothering communities, particularly through community translanguaging? (2) How can community translanguaging help families and young children with their well-being, kindergarten readiness, and enrollment in schools after migrating? After a systematic analysis of our experiences as participants and co-leaders in Amistades for two years, we developed a collaborative autoethnography that helped us conclude on: (1) community translanguaging among and led by bi/multilingual communities happens more often than we imagine at grassroots spaces outside formal structures; (2) community translanguaging not only helps develop community linguistic repertoires but significantly impacts the well-being of migrant, bi/multilingual, and bi/multicultural communities; and (3) community translanguaging helps increase the recreation, mental health support, equity, friendships, and neighborhood supports for migrant communities.

## Literature Review

When migrating to the U.S., families experience various migration-related traumas and grief (Kartal et al., 2019; Sangalang et al., 2019; Ventriglio & Bhugra, 2015), such as the separation from family and friends who remain in the country of origin, the different migration journeys and risks, drastic changes in routine and increased uncertainty, cultural and language shock in the new destination, and anti-immigration discourses and policies, among others (Adair, 2014; Catalano, 2017; Leonardo & Zembylas, 2013; Ward & Batalova, 2023). At the same time, migrant parents and caregivers need to overcome these challenges and keep developing their skills and tools to support their children's development, education, and overall well-being. It is well known that a child's close circle of relationships helps protect them socioemotionally during and after abrupt changes, and these protections can help reduce negative impacts related to migration (Crosnoe & Ansari, 2015; Ramírez, 2022), especially for young children. Research with Latin American migrant families have documented how adult caregivers protect their children after migrating by (1) keeping warm and responsive parent-child relationships (Ramírez, 2022); (2) promoting peer interaction with other emergent bilingual children, contributing to their language development (Washington-Nortey et al., 2022); (3) promoting socioemotional competencies and social, cultural and navigational capital (Vesely et al., 2013; Washington-Nortey et al., 2022; Yosso, 2005); and (4) having a strong determination that their children will have a different future with more and

better opportunities than the ones they had (Smith, 2019), among many others.

### *Context of Reception when Raising Children*

When we talk about young children, we recognize that their development is directly related to the relationship they have with their closest caregivers, who are primarily mothers in Latin American culture (Ramírez, 2022; Vesely et al., 2013, 2021). Ramírez (2022) noted that the comprehensive development of young children (0-5 years) depends on the time mothers dedicate to them, the quality and quantity of that time, and the resources and strategies they use during parenting to support their development. Therefore, mothers become essential and key players in the protection, adaptation, and development of their children (Carlson & Harwood, 2003; Ramírez, 2022; Tamis-LeMonda et al., 1998), especially after migrating. Additionally, the literature shows that neighborhoods, understood here as both physical spaces and local communities, and their resources are essential for children's and families' development. Neighborhoods help increase (1) access to a variety of low-cost or free resources, (2) the amount and quality of time that parents spend with their children, (3) social and cultural connections and trust, (4) resilience and adaptability, (5) community engagement through play, and (6) children's socioemotional competencies (McCoy et al., 2022; Melzi et al., 2022; Ramírez, 2022). The literature underscores the significant impact of having welcoming and inclusive neighborhoods that can support migrant families, while they adapt to their new lives, especially when families with young children face multiple challenges.

There is vast literature about the challenges that migrant families face when arriving in a new destination that has systemic and structural forces that impose significant obstacles to survive and obtain essential resources and services (Adair, 2014; Leonardo & Zembylas, 2013). The intersection of racism, sexism, and classism with anti-immigrant discourses and policies shapes families' lives and experiences in the U.S., creating barriers to access support for the development of children (Catalano, 2017; Lee, 2018; Ramírez, 2022). As a result, families, especially those from Latin America, have reduced access to public and recreational resources, spaces, and services that are essential for children's development, such as safe housing and utilities, education, health care, parks, recreational activities, and social services (McCoy et al., 2022; Melzi et al., 2022). Additionally, families from Latin America tend to lack access to home language(s), bilingual, or culturally responsive resources that support their children as emergent bilinguals due to dominant English monolingual approaches (Ramírez, 2022). In the new destination, migrant parents and caregivers are also often ignored

and not considered the main strategists for their children's development (Ramírez, 2022), even though parents and the broader family environment "are unequivocally the most significant drivers of children's well-being and healthy development" (Cabrera et al. 2021, p. 158; see also National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2016).

Unfortunately, caregivers from Latin America, "as a group, experience comparatively high rates of family stress, including poverty, racism and discrimination, and, for many, challenges related to acculturating and rearing children in a different country" (Cabrera et al., 2021, p. 159), and their children may be perceived as "dangerous waters flooding the country" (Catalano, 2017; Hlass, 2020; Ramírez, 2022). Lastly, with many 2025 executive orders targeting immigrants and the practices and organizations that support them (National Archives, 2025), anti-immigrant laws, political discourses, and deterrence practices have drastically impacted the lives of migrant communities and how they are perceived and treated in the U.S. (Altman et al., 2025; Reichlin-Melnick, 2025). The 2025 sociopolitical context, sadly, has resulted in thousands of immigration raids, apprehensions, disappearances, and deportations of immigrants (ICE, n.d.). (Im)Migrant communities across the U.S. are suffering the effects of "record-breaking immigration enforcement" (ICE, 2025, para. 1) financially, physically, socioemotionally, and, of course, academically, culturally, and linguistically.

### *Support that Can Help Close Gaps*

As mentioned earlier, neighborhoods and communities play a significant role in closing gaps of support for migrant families, especially when talking about specific needs that come while mothering after migrating, raising children in different cultures and languages, providing socioemotional and recreational support, reducing isolation for parents and children, and connecting families to more resources in the community (McCoy et al., 2022; Melzi et al., 2022). In the U.S., individuals and community-based groups and organizations, especially those who share the identities and values of the migrant families, play a significant role in mediating between the language and culture of the home country and the receiving country. These individuals are usually called cultural or language brokers (Ishimaru et al., 2016; Stephens, 2024). Cultural and language brokers "are motivated by solidarity and reciprocity, [and facilitate] trust with community members" (Campbell-Montalvo & Castañeda, 2019, p. 735), promote inclusive engagement, connect families to resources, promote understanding, help reduce conflict, and provide linguistically and culturally appropriate support (Colvin & Swartz, 2015). Weise (2015) reflected on what he called "constructive marginality," where cultural

and language brokers use their marginalized position in a strategic way, moving and working between groups, translating across cultures and languages, and mediating between conflicts, aiming to facilitate change and build understanding. Additionally, a significant body of literature has explored language brokering through bi/multilingual children and adolescents who help their families and communities (Cline et al., 2011; Dorner & Kim, 2024; Orellana et al., 2001, 2003).

On the other side, many organizations (including schools) rely on this brokering support but at the same time reinforce hierarchies of who is “controlling” the brokering, maintaining organization-centric approaches that fail to transform institutional policies and practices and systemic inequities to better serve families (Cooper et al., 1999). Ishimaru and colleagues (2016) criticized these models, emphasizing the importance of distinguishing between “conditional access” (p. 856)—which reinforces existing power asymmetries between the broker and the families they serve while conditioning the support—and more “equitable approaches” that promote shared leadership and design with and from migrant families for institutional and sustainable transformation. Additionally, the authors reflected on how brokers tend to be seen and treated as people with higher status than the families they are serving, reinforcing unequal power and access for migrant families. Then, Stephens (2024) positioned how brokers can risk also reflecting their own social positions and broader societal ideologies, including deficit-based views of migrant families and racialized communities. On the contrary, effective and equitable collaborations and brokering with migrant families require a shift toward designs and actions that prioritize systemic change. These actions purposefully create more spaces for migrant families to take leadership roles and recognize their knowledge and experience, investing in relationship and capacity building (Ishimaru et al., 2016). Effective and equitable collaborations and brokering help disrupt the notion that migrant parents are the ones in need, but position them as experts, skilled, and knowledgeable to provide support and develop strategies as well.

Most of the research has explored how institutions and more-established migrants serve as brokers. There is limited attention to the horizontal and reciprocal ways in which migrant families help others organically—as cultural and language brokers for themselves, their families, and for other families—when raising their young children and engaging with schools for the first time. As a result, this collaborative autoethnography helps reduce the gap in research by exploring the use of community translanguaging and friendships for organic and reciprocal brokering and support for and with migrant families. In the next section, we

describe the lenses used to analyze and position this community support.

### Conceptual Framework

Translanguaging—a political, flexible, fluent, constant, organic, and simultaneous use of more than one language by bi/multilingual communities—has emerged as a powerful communicative, resistant, and cultural practice, particularly when enacted within communities (Flores, 2019; García & Li, 2013; Li & García, 2022). Many researchers have documented how the approach of translanguaging allows individuals to use their full linguistic repertoire in all learned languages to communicate as a speaker or by listening to messages and meanings and developing relationships (Flores, 2019; García & Leiva, 2014; García & Li, 2013; García & Lin, 2016; Li & García, 2022). Translanguaging allows, then, the creativity and praxis of liberation in communication for bi/multilingual communities to express their identity, sense of belonging, and multilingual, border-crossing experiences (Anzaldúa, 1987; Arredondo et al., 2004; García & Li, 2013). Recent research in sociolinguistics has increasingly supported a shift away from viewing languages as fixed, structured, and unconnected systems between them, recognizing language practices as part of a flexible, constant, and creative repertoire and social act (Charity Hudley & Flores, 2022; Flores, 2019; Li & García, 2022). This social act is dependent on context, social and power dynamics, and culture (García & Sylvan, 2011). Translanguaging articulates the concept of “language as doing” (Pennycook, 2017), emphasizing the transformative power of language to express and construct multifaceted identities in the moment, and positioning the power on the speaker (García & Li, 2013). It challenges raciolinguism—the racialized perceptions of the bi/multilingual that discriminate against their language and race.

García and Li (2013) have for years argued that even though structured organizations, such as schools, mainly do not allow this type of fluent and transformational use of languages, bilingual communities do it all the time. The authors argue that a bi/multilingual person does not and cannot have and use separate languages as if they were different individuals, but has and uses them together, coherently and in response to their needs, decision-making, and communication. Pacheco and Smith (2015) supported this idea by proposing that translanguaging helps create spaces for bi/multilingual communities to reflect, negotiate, and integrate their multiple identities, cultural values, and lived experiences, resulting in identity formation, social participation, and socioemotional support (Wei, 2011). Lastly, Baker and Wright (2021) supported what Flores (2019), Kim and colleagues (2021), and Lang (2019) discussed about how translanguaging is a tool for the reinforcement of bi/multilingualism, identity, and the

creation of safer spaces for immigrant communities. For these authors, when English-dominant structures and systems do not allow translanguaging, they do not allow linguistic creativity and reduce communicative competence in children and adults; ideologies that exacerbate when accompanied by discrimination, exclusion, and marginalization. Therefore, translanguaging can be explored outside of its impacts on language development and the formal structures of schools. As the purpose of this study is to examine how translanguaging within communities provides holistic support to families, in the following sections, we connect and expand on the impact of translanguaging on socioemotional and mental health, how it has been used in therapy for healing, and why it is relevant to consider translanguaging in community for the well-being of families.

### *Translanguaging for Socioemotional Support and Mental Health*

To understand more about the role of bi/multilingualism and translanguaging in socioemotional support and healing, it is important to mention what research says about how memory, language, and traumatic experiences work in humans. Research has documented that memory organization varies across languages for bilingual individuals. Autobiographical memories are often more vivid when recalled in the language of the experience, suggesting that both the home and second languages can serve as reference languages depending on the linguistic context of the event (Kapasi & Melluish, 2015; Kheirzadeh & Hajjibed, 2016). Language acquisition during childhood coincides with emotional regulation development, influencing early experiences and subsequent emotional responses (Oliva, 2019; Singh, 2012). General literature that focuses on language, socioemotional support, and healing within bi/multilingual communities concludes that support (or therapy) conducted in the person's home language may offer more effective outcomes for trauma-related symptoms compared to support in the other learned language, attributing stronger emotional responses and better engagement (Kapasi & Melluish, 2015; Oliva, 2019).

Research suggests that socioemotional support conducted in a bi/multilingual person's home language may be more meaningful and effective, indicating that narratives and expressions related to emotions, cognitive processes, and trauma tend to be richer and more authentic in the home language (Bailey et al., 2020; Szoke et al., 2020). Scholars suggest that providing socioemotional and mental health support in the home language is associated with lower dropout rates and better treatment outcomes, enhancing emotional engagement and therapeutic efficacy (Jansson & Dylman, 2021; Kapasi & Melluish,

2015; Lay et al., 2024; Oliva, 2019; Tannenbaum & Har, 2020). Studies suggest that language plays a significant role in emotional expression, with additional languages often being less emotive when describing events that occurred in the home language (Bailey et al., 2020; Baker & Wright, 2021; Kheirzadeh & Hajjibed, 2016). As a result, other scholars explain that the language used to process traumatic events can modulate the strength of the connection between trauma and emotional reaction, with the language attached to the negative experience often being more strongly associated with distress, encouraging the use of the additional languages to talk about trauma (Kheirzadeh & Hajjibed, 2016; Ortigosa-Beltrán et al., 2023; Singh, 2012). However, other scholars suggest contemplating that the use of the additional languages might also function as a form of avoidance in expressing trauma, potentially allowing them to narrate the events without being overwhelmed by negative emotions (Kheirzadeh & Hajjibed, 2016; Ladegaard, 2018; Oliva, 2019). Despite variations in results and methodological differences, there is a consensus in the literature about how emotion words are represented differently in the home language and additional languages (Jansson & Dylman, 2021). The vividness of information and emotionality of experiences may be influenced when using the learned languages (Bailey et al., 2020; Ortigosa-Beltrán et al., 2023).

### *The Role of Translanguaging in Therapy*

Recent literature in mental health and socioemotional support in bi/multilingual communities suggests that therapists working with patients who speak multiple languages should be adaptable, allowing them to express their experiences through a dynamic use of language(s) to support the healing process (Kapasi & Melluish, 2015; Serrani, 2023). Additionally, researchers have encouraged the use of translanguaging in therapy with an exploratory and liberatory purpose, helping individuals navigate emotional experiences freely and creatively for the most advantageous outcome (e.g., affirmation, acceptance, and growth) (Lê, 2024; Seto & Forth, 2020; Szoke et al., 2020). This research positions translanguaging as strategic to managing emotions, often adapting their language to suit their patient and the emotional content of the conversation to express emotions more effectively or avoid negative associations (Ladegaard, 2018). Translanguaging in therapy for bi/multilinguals can strengthen the therapeutic alliance and facilitate client self-disclosure. However, therapists may affect the alliance negatively if they prioritize their own language skills over understanding their clients' needs (Kapasi & Melluish, 2015; Oliva, 2019). Research suggests that translanguaging can help clients connect with their emotions and discuss difficult topics more comfortably, creating a new transitional space for client and clinician interaction, allowing

for “therapeutic play,” while supporting the patient’s sense of empowerment and human connectedness (Kapasi & Melliush, 2015). Lastly, translanguaging in therapy allows therapists to consider the bi/multicultural aspects of bi/multilingual individuals, aiding in understanding self-identity and self-image, offering a strategy to address the “dual sense of self” (Szoke et al., 2020).

### **Community Translanguaging**

So far, we have explored the role of translanguaging for socioemotional and mental health support from the clinic perspective. Unfortunately, in the U.S., socioemotional and mental health providers who speak the language(s) of migrant communities and English are in high demand and are scarce, worsening existing psychological issues and impeding adjustment and societal inclusion (Kartal et al., 2019; Montemitro et al., 2021). In addition, deficit-based perspectives of the bi/multilingual and raciolinguism consistently correlate with heightened psychiatric symptoms and mental disorders (Montemitro et al., 2021). Then, psychological interventions and socioemotional support that is provided with the help of interpreters also present their own challenges, including concerns about confidentiality, the dynamics of the therapeutic relationship, and trust (Lay et al., 2024; Singh, 2012; Tannenbaum & Har, 2020).

Recognizing how these types of support are limited to migrant communities, grassroots socioemotional support and brokering through communities of translanguaging can help reduce the gap. Kim and Song (2019) positioned the term community translanguaging, highlighting how the creation of spaces where multiple families use translanguaging helps distribute agency and leadership roles, emphasizing the generation of collective meaning-making and knowledge sharing. Here, the authors defined community not only as a physical or institutional space, such as a school, but as a broader social field that includes networks, communication, decision-making, and shared knowledge. For the authors, community translanguaging extends beyond individual language use to one that is collective and multimodal, with meaning-making shaped by the social relationships, identities, and communication of those involved. As these communities interact with each other, each member’s linguistic repertoires intersect, expand, and nurture other members’ repertoires, resulting in community linguistic repertoires. A couple of years later, Kim and colleagues (2021) expanded on community translanguaging, merging the notions of “funds of knowledge.” The authors drew from what Moll and colleagues (1992) and Marshall and Toohey (2010) referred to as the cultural, historical, and experiential wisdom that families bring to their homes and other social spaces. Kim and colleagues (2021) reminded

us that community translanguaging is part of the everyday social relationships, cultural interactions, and mutual support of bi/multilingual families. As research on translanguaging in education still emphasizes classroom pedagogy, community translanguaging, in this scenario, honors the informality, relationality, and culturally grounded practices that naturally emerge between bi/multicultural families and community members. Kim and Song (2019) and Kim and colleagues (2021) reflected on how community translanguaging represents collective practices where members bring their identities, culture, and lived realities to the space to interact with and support each other, creating community.

As community translanguaging is still a recent concept, it has not yet been explored how community translanguaging can close gaps in socioemotional and mental health support for migrants outside schools, promoting their holistic well-being. Therefore, with this study, we take this concept outside of schools and emphasize the accessibility, genuine care, and socioemotional support that migrant families, especially Latina mothers, can receive from their peers, helping each other in more meaningful and horizontal ways through community translanguaging in different spaces. Our reflections in this study help us explore the use of community translanguaging within a grassroots support group for the well-being of migrant families and their children’s access to school.

### **Methods and Data Sources**

#### **Positionality**

Author 1 is a first-generation college student from Guatemala pursuing a doctoral degree in educational leadership and policy analysis. She moved to the U.S. in 2019 when her child was three months old. Even though she was in a privileged position as an international graduate student when migrating, her gender, nationality, economic resources, home language, and phenotypes drastically challenged her access to parental and socioemotional support and resources. Author 2 is a Colombian leader mother who moved to the U.S. in 2022 when her two children were two years and four months old. Even though she has a degree in Psychology in Colombia, she cannot perform her profession in the U.S. and struggled to find a stable job until she got her state educator certificate to become an English Learner teacher in 2025. As with Author 1, her racialized conditions challenged her access to parental support, and she felt isolated when raising her children after moving to the U.S. Before moving to the U.S. (six and four years ago), neither of us, the authors, had heard about translanguaging but were highly familiarized with the term “Spanglish.” Spanglish is a well-known term in non-academic spaces, referring to the behavior of using both English and Spanish

when talking. Where we come from, this term can be used as a joke, subtly critiquing when someone is “forgetting” the home language, their roots. Today, we reflect on translanguaging (or Spanglish, as we used to call it) not as academics but as Latina mothers who translanguage constantly with our communities at home, at work, in the supermarket, at our children’s schools, while driving or studying, in Amistades, etc.

### Context

After a significant loss of an Author 1’s family member during COVID-19 and the lack of services for mental health in her home language, Author 1 decided to create a community support group for Latina mothers, Amistades. Since 2023, Amistades has been a support group specifically created for Latina mothers and their children, providing essential resources such as monthly packages of diapers and wipes, children’s books (in English, Spanish, and bilingual), connection to free services in the community, spaces for free play, and socioemotional support through pláticas and food sharing. This space has been a safe space for families, especially for newcomers in our city, a white and English-dominant city in the Midwest U.S. The support group was possible thanks to the donations, assistance, and space provided by a local organization that supports parents with young children. Since the creation of the group, the two authors met and decided to individually journal on Google Docs and notebooks, send voice or text messages in WhatsApp, or call each other to plan each session of Amistades or to reflect on previous sessions. After many of these collaborative reflections, we wondered about the linguistic and socioemotional support that we lacked prior to Amistades and that now we, the participating moms (40 and adding new mothers every month), were developing through community translanguaging.

With this curiosity, we discussed how we could prepare a study that does not position families as needing to be “rescued,” “developed,” or “trained”; rather, it would recognize that families already hold a wealth of capacities and resources for themselves and for other families. Therefore, our project focused on documenting how community translanguaging manifested in our informal interactions, supporting both children and mothers. Our study emerged not from a plan to study translanguaging (as none of us had heard this term before migrating to the U.S.), but from a deep, lived experience of supporting each other as bilingual mothers learning to navigate a new place. Additionally, our study did not focus on language development through translanguaging but on the holistic support that we provide to each other (and to our children) while translanguaging. Over time, we realized how our bi/multilingualism—and our fluid movement across languages—played a powerful role

in the ways we cared for each other and raised our children. As a result, we considered that community translanguaging was never a goal or an intervention in our daily interactions; it was, and continues to be, a natural practice of care, resilience, and belonging of bi/multilingual communities.

For this study, we referred to Author 1’s and Author 2’s journaling on Google Docs (14 pages), notebooks (10 pages), WhatsApp messages (chat logs), planning of activities for Amistades (8 pages), annual reports (5 pages), and written reflections from our monthly pláticas (n=16) and playdates (n=6) after meeting with the whole group. All these reflections were in Spanish and English as we felt sharing them without worrying about structure, grammar, spelling, or other regulations, representing what in Latin America we call pláticas y comidas (Fierros & Delgado Bernal, 2016; Flores Carmona et al., 2021; Ortega, 2024). After collecting all our journaling and reflections after meeting in Amistades, we followed a grounded theory analysis (Charmaz, 2014, 2017), examining the narratives we were jotting down, and what and how we were sharing them. First, we put all our written work into a single shared Google folder and read through it, open coding with comments on the margins as we were making sense of our reflections. Then, we revised our codes and comments, wrote research memos summarizing our interpretations, and identified the most predominant categories. Finally, we read the data again and organized it into clear themes that we share in the next section as results. Simultaneously, we added more notes from our embodied experiences with the context and culture we live in, building this study as a collaborative autoethnography (Adams et al., 2017; Boylorn & Orbe, 2021; Ellis & Bochner, 2006).

### Results

#### *(English Translations Are Found in the Appendix)*

In this section, we describe what we noted were results of natural community translanguaging in our support group designed only for Latina mothers and their families. To start, it is worth mentioning that bi/multilingual communities constantly create spaces of community translanguaging at grassroots levels, but they are not broadly recognized, documented, or shared as relevant practices for their education, well-being, and community development. Rather than identifying translanguaging as one domain (or aspect) of their experiences, in this case, we see it more as a lens through which these experiences become meaningful. The fluidity of the languages used helped create the forms of care and sharing of knowledge that supported the group. Therefore, in this section, we invested in positioning that community translanguaging not only helps develop community linguistic repertoires but also significantly impacts

the well-being of migrant, bi/multilingual, and bi/multicultural communities through recreation, mental health support, equity, friendships, and neighborhood support.

### *Community Translanguaging at the Grassroots*

By January 2023, there was not a single space where families who spoke Spanish could get parental or socioemotional support in our Midwestern city. *Amistades* was, then, the only space where Latina mothers could meet, receive socioemotional support for themselves and their children, receive help to support their children's early education and readiness for kindergarten, and be able to support other mothers using their home language. *Amistades* was created to help reduce the gap in mental health services in Spanish, while truly understanding and valuing Latin American culture, bi/multilingualism, migratory experience, and grief.

This space supported every single mother and family who freely participated once, twice, or as many times as they wanted or needed. Even though we had more than 40 mothers participating in *Amistades* in total, for the monthly meetings, we would have only up to mothers ten who rotated based on their availability. Many mothers participated frequently for several months and then, for many reasons, stepped out for moments and then returned or never returned; then, we will have new mothers. In this space, we never required any document, commitment, or proof of residence, avoiding the creation of barriers to be part of *Amistades*. Every month, we sat in a circle, transmitting the idea that we were all experts in being mothers, raising our own children, and supporting their education. Even though *Amistades* was co-facilitated initially by two Latina mothers (the authors), this facilitation was more about organization, logistics, or promotion of activities, remembering that effective and equitable collaborations and brokering disrupt the notion that "other parents" are the ones in need of our help. After greeting everyone, we would do a check-in where every mother could share with the rest how she was, how her family was doing, and if she needed any type of help. Based on the responses, every mother would jump in and share advice, resources, encouragement, compliments, or even celebrations! If the time allowed and with no pressure of following an agenda or disrupting the environment, the co-facilitators would suggest a topic and an art activity to talk and share advice while doing something with our hands. Every mother was free to speak out loud or not, and to use one or more languages to express themselves.

For example, one month, we talked about how we can nurture our calmness as mothers. After the check-in, we used a sheet of paper with a drawing of a pressure cooker to reflect about what affects our calmness

(e.g., children being sick, not sleeping well, or children's meltdowns), and what things help us recover (e.g., reflect on if what happened was my fault or not, take a nap, take deep breaths). After moments of silence, we started sharing out loud what we wrote, and how we could connect things that help us recover calmness with things that disrupt our calmness (e.g., when my children have meltdowns, I can remind myself that it was not my fault, take deep breaths, and assist my children). While some mothers were sharing out loud, others were listening to them, making connections with their experiences, writing their advice down, or asking questions. We kept doing this until all mothers had the chance to share or ask—if desired. Meanwhile, and next to our "meeting space" (a rug), our children would be freely playing in an indoor playground, interacting with other Latin American children who spoke only Spanish, only English, or both languages. While we had these moments of *pláticas*, we also ate some snacks. At the end of the session, we asked how everyone felt and gave space for more discussions if needed. Then, we asked for ideas of what to talk about next month based on special dates or things that concerned them, and who would like to help co-facilitate the next activity. Finally, we shared a take-home kit with books and art supplies for children's activities, diapers, wipes, and food boxes if needed. The meeting lasted 90 minutes, although at times, we would stay talking even longer, losing track of time due to our engagement in conversations with each other.

Every month, our meetings would look like this, creating unique safe spaces where mothers could share and appreciate their *mujerismo*, *Latinidad*, migration experience, translanguaging (English-Spanish), and pedagogies of the home to support their own and their children's identity, multiculturalism, bilingualism, and protection after migrating. After meeting constantly, we could develop friendships, and plan playdates and birthday celebrations for our children, inviting other Latin American families. We did not have all these opportunities before *Amistades*.

### *Community Translanguaging for Mental Health and Recreation*

When many of us needed any type of socioemotional support in our city and looked for it, we could not find it in Spanish, with culturally relevant approaches, or with people who could understand what we were going through as Latina mothers who moved to the U.S. with young children. Having a space of four, six, or sometimes ten mothers openly sharing about their experiences was impactful for our well-being. One of the authors stated in her journal before co-facilitating *Amistades* in 2023,

*Hoy fue nuestra primera reunión de familias latinas, con mamás que solo hablan español, yo estaba muy emocionada porque era la primera vez que yo me reunía solo con latinos. Cuando recibí el correo [de invitación] pensé de una vez que no podía faltar a este evento... Como a mí siempre me gusta hablar mucho, saludé a cada una de [las mamás] y les pregunté su nombre y lugar de origen. Me alegré tanto escuchar a más personas hablar español.*

*Rápidamente me sentí que estaba rodeada de amigas de toda la vida, personalmente por estos días me he sentido muy deprimida, el invierno me ha parecido tan difícil, no estoy acostumbrada a estas temperaturas tan bajas, mi ánimo por hacer las cosas ha disminuido mucho... Ver a esas otras mamás, luchando por sus hijos igual que yo luchando por mis hijas, escucharlas hablar y conocer sus historias, saber que también en algún momento se han sentido igual que yo (deprimidas, con baja autoestima, etc.)... me dio ánimos.*

*Salí muy feliz del grupo Amistades, porque hice nuevas amigas, me regalaron pañales, toallitas y una caja de comida, mis niñas jugaron y se divirtieron. Me sentí muy agradecida por tener la oportunidad de participar en este grupo y conocer más mamás y sentir que no estoy sola en mi papel como madre. (See page 241 for the English translation.)*

A year after having started to meet once a month inside the local non-profit organization, we started to meet every two weeks. We decided that this additional time would be in a different place, so we could get to know more places, feel more comfortable visiting public spaces (instead of visiting the places by ourselves), and support each other with translations when needed (e.g., at the public library). Depending on the weather, we would choose to meet inside the public library, at a park, or at a public-school playground once classes were over. This second monthly meeting helped us feel part of the community where we live and recognize that we also have the right to access public spaces and use them. Community translanguaging, in this scenario, helped us have more connections with public services and reshaped how we think of ourselves as “migrants using the services.” We kept meeting, and two years later, one of the authors wrote in her journal,

*El grupo Amistades se ha convertido en una red de apoyo donde las madres pueden preguntar cualquier cosa con confianza, desde recomendaciones sobre estilistas que hablen español hasta promocionar y vender sus productos de comida casera. Este ambiente de solidaridad ha creado una comunidad donde cada miembro encuentra ayuda y apoyo en las experiencias compartidas. (See page 241.)*

This space assisted families by providing play and community-building opportunities that were culturally and linguistically responsive to their needs. These gatherings had a recreational focus but were also affirming from a linguistic standpoint. Attendees were able to speak in Spanish, English, or both with no judgment. For many participants, this was the first opportunity to use their full linguistic repertoire outside the home. Through storytelling, crafts, and pláticas,

families employed spontaneous translanguaging, which enabled them to meaningfully negotiate, relate, and resourcefully share without linguistic constraints. The sociolinguistic freedom to use their language(s) was crucial in filling the gaps that existing monolingual programs had failed to address.

### **Community Translanguaging for Equity**

In March 2023, we invited a representative from one of these public spaces that we wanted to start visiting as a group to come to Amistades and share about their services. While the public representative was sharing about the different resources, she said, “All of these services are free for you.” One of the mothers immediately reacted saying, “no son gratis, ya hemos pagado por esos servicios con nuestros taxes.” Even though the representative did not speak Spanish, she understood what this person meant. Then, the representative said in a very friendly way, “Yes, you are right. You already paid for those services with your taxes. In fact, that makes all of you, our bosses!” Then, the same mother translated this into Spanish for the other mothers, and they all laughed together. This short sentence, “no son gratis, ya hemos pagado por esos servicios con nuestros taxes” changed the environment of the meeting completely. Suddenly, we all felt like we were in a more equal space with the public representative. With community translanguaging, the mothers’ empowerment made visible that migrant and bi/multilingual communities contribute taxes and pay for public services like any other member living in the district. The flexibility of being able to use the full linguistic repertoire in the space allowed mothers to speak out for themselves and reclaim their rights to be considered responsible community members who contribute to the district’s economic development, and that they are not only recipients of help.

### **Community Translanguaging to Position the Use of Spanish and Translanguaging as Important Practices**

By creating spaces where Latina mothers and children interact and play with other Latin American families, the group has actively promoted Spanish as a relevant language. Through community translanguaging, we created a safe and respected space within a predominantly English-speaking context, challenging linguistic, racial, and cultural dominance. As one of us reflected,

*Observé que, al llegar las madres con sus hijos [al grupo Amistades], los niños inicialmente hablaban en inglés, pero al entrar y escuchar a las demás personas, comenzaban a utilizar el español. Parecía que necesitaban unos minutos para sentirse cómodos al usar el español.*

*Me di cuenta de que algunas madres eran conscientes de que sus hijos estaban perdiendo el dominio del español, por lo que durante las actividades en*

grupo, [ellas] animaban a sus hijos a usar más este idioma... En cuanto a la interacción entre los niños, observé que hablaban entre ellos en el idioma con el que se sentían más cómodos. Algunos niños se comunicaban principalmente en inglés, mientras que otros lo hacían en español durante todo el tiempo. Varias madres reconocieron que necesitaban hablar más español en casa, ya que les preocupaba que sus hijos pudieran perderlo...

El grupo de [Amistades] ha jugado un papel importante en ayudar a los niños a mantener su conexión con el español y fortalecer sus habilidades en el idioma... [En Amistades se han] compartido recursos en español y bilingües que las familias pueden utilizar con sus hijos para hacerlo más divertido. También [Amistades ha] creado espacios donde los niños pueden interactuar con otros [niños que hablan español], practicando el idioma de manera natural y sin presión. Este enfoque no solo refuerza el español como [lengua materna], sino que también ayuda a los niños a sentirse orgullosos de sus raíces culturales, fomentando su identidad bilingüe en un entorno que celebra la diversidad lingüística. (See page 242.)

Community translanguaging in this space helped us and our children realize how necessary and beautiful it is to be free to communicate without caring for what others expect or demand from us, using the language(s) that we want and need, and how we want and need them. Here, we appreciated what we used to joke about in our home countries with “Spanglish,” and used it as a tool to connect, play, and problem-solve with others. We ended valuing our and our children’s dynamism to communicate as something natural, necessary, and powerful to build community. Amistades served as a space where Spanish, along with the development of translanguaging, was not simply accepted but actively celebrated as an important form of emotional and communicative practice. Unlike other institutional spaces that either impose English or expect a separation of languages, Amistades gave families the freedom to draw from their entire linguistic repertoire to relate, articulate, and lead, resulting in a legitimate and empowering form of communication.

### **Community Translanguaging for More Amistades**

Another beauty of community translanguaging was that it helped all of us develop more friendships! For one of the authors, it was the support she needed when facing what she calls *her darkest moment* and isolation after having recently moved to the U.S. and having a family member pass away during the COVID-19 pandemic. For the other author, Amistades “fue el único recurso social y sentido de comunidad” that she found after moving to the U.S. as well. Other mothers expressed their needs and desires to find more friendships, as they lacked Latina friends before Amistades. Other mothers shared about their depression and isolation while raising children as single mothers or being stay-at-home mothers without opportunities to interact with others in Spanish. One of the authors expressed in her journal,

[Luego en Amistades nos preguntaron cómo nos] sentíamos cómo mujeres latinas aquí en la ciudad y cada una expresó sus sentimientos con tranquilidad y calma. Creo que eso es lo que más me gusta en este grupo, que nos sentimos cómodas en compartir lo que pensamos y [nos] sentimos sin miedo a ser juzgadas o rechazadas. Entre todas las respuestas que escuché es que no es fácil para ninguna de estas mujeres estar aquí en este país y que de alguna manera están haciendo grandes sacrificios por sus familias. Cada una expresó lo mucho que extraña su hogar y las celebraciones... en sus países. Cada una expresó lo difícil que es ser mujer en una época en donde se nos exige ser perfectas, vernos lindas, tener la casa arreglada, estudiar, trabajar, cuidar de los hijos y no desatender al marido. Tenemos tanta carga como mujeres que considero que somos como superhéroínas llevando todo este peso todos los días. Me encantó este día, pude ser yo, decir lo que pienso y siento. Mis hijas pasaron un buen rato y yo también salí muy feliz del grupo de Amistades. (See page 242.)

Experiences like this are what moved us to create a WhatsApp group for Amistades where we could continue talking with each other at any moment and not only once or twice a month. This support to develop more friendships was not only significant for the mothers but also for the children. For example, one day, a mother asked the group what we were going to do the following week, as our children’s schools were not going to be in session for three consecutive days. One of the authors shared how her child had never gone to the movies before, and another mother shared how her family had never gone to the movies all together. Three other mothers heard them talking about it and joined the conversation with excitement, with one of them saying, “sí vamos juntas, así nos ayudamos a cuidar a nuestros hijos cuando se porten mal,” and they all laughed. Finally, we planned to go to the movies with our whole families, all together! We definitely had a community here! For the next school breaks, the same happened; one or two mothers started the conversation in the group about what we were going to do with our children, so we could plan something together.

This benefitted us, mothers, as we had more opportunities to see our caring friends but also to our children as they developed more friendships and enjoyed spending time together. For one of the authors, Amistades’ children were the only Spanish-speaking and Latin American friends that her child had. She reflected on how these friends helped her child value his identity as Latino and bilingual, and helped him see it as “another normality.” After several playdates, the author’s child was constantly noticing when other children and adults were bi/multilinguals, and conversations about home languages, countries, flags, and nationalities started to flourish at an early age.

### **Community Translanguaging to Position Latina Mothers as the Experts**

The local non-profit organization that hosted Amistades is an organization that has served families

with young children for more than 14 years, providing parenting support and resources, and helping families help their young children get ready for kindergarten. When we were having conversations with the organization's staff about having this support group for Latina mothers on a regular basis inside their building, they did not hesitate to offer as many resources as possible. Due to the organization's strong orientation toward social and racial justice, the staff was never uncomfortable with the idea of creating a space totally dedicated to Latina mothers and their children, as they recognized this was a real need in the city. Due to their experience serving families, they constantly reminded us that "parents are the experts," "parents know what is best for their children," "parents are the ones making decisions," "we don't suggest what to do," "we listen to families." All these messages were part of the foundation of Amistades: "migrant families are the experts!"

For more than three months, one of the authors and the staff (the founders of Amistades) were talking about how to create the group. In order to get more outreach, the founders partnered with local Organization B, which offered to help co-facilitate the group. A couple of months passed, and Organization B suggested having white co-facilitators leading the group and using a U.S.-based curriculum. This was a big surprise for the founders as they aimed for these groups to be culturally responsible and totally led by the Latina mothers in the community. The founders needed to clarify the purpose of the group several times in several meetings until Organization B agreed not to incorporate its suggestions. More months passed and the co-facilitator from Organization B started to talk about goals in the group and what success meant for them. It surprised the founders again as Amistades' purpose was to only reach out to Latin American families and serve them. Organization B started making comparisons with other support groups' success because they had *more people* attending the meetings every month, and these families had more consistent participation. These conversations were so intense that one of the founders had to explicitly explain that it is impossible to compare Amistades with support groups that serve English-dominant families, non-Latin American, and non-marginalized families. She explained the differences between the families we were serving and the reasons why we were serving them through Amistades, but Organization B kept questioning the success of the group because we had "few" mothers meeting every month. These conversations were very uncomfortable for the Latina founder, especially because she was the only non-white and non-native English-speaking person in those meetings. Finally, eight months later, the Latina founder decided to stop partnering with this organization, saying this,

*I plan to have a different mom co-lead Amistades from now on because I want this to be sustainable and Latina mom-based. Also, I recognize that all Latina moms have so incredible knowledge and leadership that is ready to be shared with others. As much as we can, I don't want moms to feel there's an authority in the group—although I have had a different role the first months [as a co-facilitator]. But now that the group is getting stronger, I want this to be a community group. Up to [Organization B] if they still want to join us but understanding that this is a Latina mom-led group. [Organization B] is always welcome to participate!*

This was just the beginning of an adventure of constantly positioning Latina mothers as the experts with partner organizations and with the participating mothers themselves, as Latina mothers are not considered leaders in many places. As one mother expressed, "Al iniciar este día me encontraba un poco nerviosa, ya que [la co-facilitadora] me había invitado a que dirigiera el grupo de Amistades. Era la primera vez que me sentía profesional otra vez desde que llegué a los Estados Unidos." (See page 243.) The recognition of Latina mothers as the most influential person in their children's lives was key in the design of every monthly meeting, in deciding what handicrafts to do, and in deciding how to seat and share every month through pláticas. Against what most of the research says about what migrant families and children lack, our children were always happy, safe, and well-nourished (well-nourished both emotionally and physically). For all the participating mothers, their children's nourishment was essential for their mental health, early development, and readiness for kindergarten. We were all, no doubt, the experts of our own children! And to answer Organization B's question of what success meant for Amistades, this is what a mother shared in March 2024 as a co-facilitator,

*En este día yo planeé [la reunión de Amistades para] hablar sobre las estrategias de crianza que les funcionan a las mamás. Sin embargo, [ese día] llegó solo una mami con sus hijos. Así que compartí con ella lo que me ha funcionado con mis hijas y ella compartió conmigo lo que le ha funcionado con sus niños. Después de eso hablamos de cosas más personales y de algunos desafíos que hemos tenido en nuestros hogares. Me sentí feliz saber que pude escuchar a otra mamá desahogarse un poco con sus problemas y me di cuenta que ese es uno de los propósitos del grupo Amistades; apoyar a las mamás no importando de qué forma, así solo sea escuchándolas. A pesar de que solo habíamos dos mamás en este día, se cumplió el propósito por el que hemos formado este grupo. (See page 243.)*

### Community Translanguaging Online

A couple of months after starting with Amistades, we created a WhatsApp group—the app that all mothers used to communicate—and since then, we invited mothers to join and stay in the group without requiring them to participate in person in the monthly groups. By the end of 2024, we had 30 mothers in

the WhatsApp group, interacting constantly, asking questions, asking for recommendations, or providing support to others on a regular basis. By the summer of 2025, we had 40 members in the group. Every mother is welcome to participate in the WhatsApp group in English, Spanish, or using both languages, as any other mother can jump in and help. This online platform helps facilitate a more horizontal support as any mother is leading conversations, topics, or questions. This chat group is more of a 24/7 community support that mothers can use when needed. In this space, we have all helped with very relevant topics, including: (1) finding housing, (2) information about food pantries and free school supplies, (3) processes to renew passports in Consulates, (4) school enrollment and translation services, (5) promotion of home-based food businesses, among others.

For example, as migrant mothers with young children, usually newcomers to our city, navigating U.S. schools or schools in this precise district was challenging. For many of us, it was our first time ever approaching U.S. schools when enrolling our children in preschool or kindergarten. Amistades provided immediate support and guidance when mothers needed it, through the online community translanguaging, as evidenced in one of our reflections:

*Uno de los temas principales que hemos abordado [en este grupo] es el proceso de inscripción de los niños en las escuelas públicas. En el grupo, compartimos información detallada sobre los documentos necesarios, como el certificado de vacunas y el acta de nacimiento. También explicamos cómo determinar la escuela que corresponde según la dirección de residencia. Además, [el grupo ha] ayudado a las madres a familiarizarse con la página web del distrito escolar, donde pueden acceder a recursos como la aplicación para almuerzos y desayunos gratuitos y los horarios escolares, que varían dependiendo de la institución.*

*Para las madres que no hablan inglés, [el grupo ha] proporcionado guía sobre cómo utilizar el servicio de intérpretes del distrito escolar, disponible en más de 50 idiomas. Esto ha sido especialmente útil para ayudarles a completar los procesos de inscripción y comunicarse con las escuelas y maestros de sus hijos.*

*En "Amistades," hemos trabajado para ayudar a las madres a entender las fechas clave de inscripción y los significados de los colores y símbolos en el calendario académico... Al compartir información sobre el servicio de intérpretes del distrito escolar, hemos logrado que muchas madres se sientan más cómodas y motivadas para participar activamente en las reuniones escolares. Este paso ha sido fundamental para que puedan conocer el progreso y los desafíos de sus hijos, fortaleciendo su papel en el proceso educativo. (See page 243.)*

In this reflection, we can see how multiple mothers responded to help others in the way they could and with the resources they had. Here, mothers were sharing posts, images, and websites in English, and leading the conversations mainly in Spanish to guide the newcomer mothers on how to use the resources

for their children's first enrollment. This dynamic happens almost weekly in the WhatsApp group chat. Instead of requesting institutional translators at school (support that usually takes time and is complicated for newcomers), the mothers in Amistades help each other by explaining school routines, processes, and regulations, adapting to each mother's questions and needs and responding almost immediately via WhatsApp. Thus, community translanguaging allows the bridging of institutional policies and practices with families' real experiences, which helps mothers feel more confident and adequately prepared to advocate for their children's education. This is a powerful practice that goes beyond linguistic support as it promotes social navigation and fosters collective agency.

#### **Local Partners and Resources that Significantly Helped**

Lastly, Amistades was possible thanks to the local organization and its caring staff who developed a whole system to support Latina mothers by: (1) inviting mothers to meet inside their building and let mothers lead their group by themselves, (2) letting their children use their indoor playground, (3) contacting bilingual volunteers to take care of the children while mothers could have some time for themselves, (4) collecting food boxes donated from the local pantry and sharing them with the mothers, (5) sharing packages of diapers and wipes for every child, (6) and buying snacks for the families to eat while spending time together. This local organization did this every single month at no cost! Even though the organization provided all these resources, the staff recognized that this space was for and led by Latina mothers only. The staff protected the space for Latin American families and did not impose any U.S.-based curriculum. The organization understood the need not to promote the space publicly as for "Spanish-speaking families" but for "Latin American families," to avoid gentrification by dominant families seeking exposure to Latin American culture, people, and language. The staff knew this space was the only one in the whole city and helped us keep it sacred for Latina mothers and their children.

#### **Community Translanguaging for Holistic Support**

We want to close the results reflecting on the broad supports that come with community translanguaging—far beyond language development, especially in an anti-immigrant and risky context for bi/multilingual families, as in 2025 and 2026. Through community translanguaging, Amistades provided Latina mothers and their children with a space where their socioemotional health and well-being were the most important! This community translanguaging enabled all participating Latina mothers to serve as cultural and language brokers for other mothers through equitable, horizontal, and peer collaboration/learning/support while developing community linguistic repertoires

(Kim & Song, 2019; Kim et al., 2021). Each mother's experience and advice were essential to uplifting other mothers, disrupting their isolation, and sharing essential resources through M(other)work (Caballero et al., 2019) while living in a challenging sociopolitical environment. This community translanguaging and cultural and language brokering were impactful not only for the mothers but also for their children. Through spaces of free and unstructured play with diverse children with Latin American backgrounds (e.g., some speaking Spanish, some English, and others both languages; some recently arrived, and others U.S.-born), children strengthened their linguistic repertoire, multiple identities, friendships, and kindergarten readiness! Through several playdates, participating children had more linguistic resources for expression, problem-solving, and socioemotional skills, and mothers felt more comfortable allowing and promoting their children's translanguaging at home (Baker & Wright, 2021).

This grassroots support and community translanguaging did not emerge within formal educational settings and with specific curricula in mind (Kim & Song, 2019; Kim et al., 2021). It emerged from genuine community care, resistance, and survival of each family, prioritizing migrant families' well-being and their dynamic use of languages. In this study, we recognized that community translanguaging mainly contributed to (1) a collective spirit and movement in action, (2) a partnership to help go through and overcome our challenges, and (3) the strengthening of our critical and collective consciousness, embracing our bi/multilingualism, bi/multiculturalism, expertise, and leadership as mothers. Additionally, this translanguaging in the community helped families increase access to public services and mental health support, and navigate the educational and social systems in the U.S. It helped preserve our Latinidad, home language, culture, and sacred backgrounds. Amistades, through community translanguaging, had a transformative power in the lives of the participating families by recognizing each mother not only as a caregiver but also as an advocate, educator, protector, and expert for their family and community. Importantly, this work on community translanguaging focused on family, friendship, and well-being rather than on structured supports, reflecting on how we, bi/multilingual and bi/multicultural families, live, communicate, and support each other without pressure, limitations, or external top-down guidance.

Among the limitations of this study, we note that the restricted anti-immigrant context did not allow us to recognize mothers' individual contributions by name or the supportive organization's name due to potential risks. Additionally, Amistades and this study took place between 2023 and 2025, when many immigration laws, policies, and practices shifted toward targeting

and persecuting migrant communities and the organizations that support them. This context influenced the interpretation and dissemination of the results. We also believe that this study could have benefited from a M(other)work lens (Caballero et al., 2019) when analyzing how mothers, specifically, led the organization of community support efforts and translanguaging while navigating a complex and restrictive anti-immigrant context. Future studies could examine how the current anti-immigrant context shapes community translanguaging and its use at the grassroots level. As stated above, there is limited research on community translanguaging outside formal, structured spaces (e.g., schools), so more research is needed on how migrant communities use it, how they benefit from it, and how schools can learn from it.

### **Significance and Implications**

This study helps position community translanguaging as a natural and powerful asset that migrant communities have and benefit from, and that, researchers and educators can learn from these practices for more equitable collaborations when supporting migrant families. Moreover, this study reinforces the importance of intentionally creating caring and recreational spaces that protect families and help them build connections as peers. Finally, this study reminds us of the beauty of working together, as equals, from different sectors, identities, and spaces. As implications for practice, this study encourages the design of support for migrant families, co-led by them, ensuring that their voices, needs, and expertise are engaged from the very beginning. This work may inform schools and other educational organizations about the need to create more horizontal, grassroots spaces for community translanguaging, promoting different channels of support, mutual benefit, and respect. As implications for research, we recognize that academia, schools, families, and other local organizations need more research-practice partnerships and community-based work that is intentional in listening to families—not only as “participants of research” but as co-designers, co-facilitators, and co-researchers. Ultimately, an implication for local policy is the importance of supporting local non-profit, public, and private organizations to document their best practices and policies working with migrant families, publicly share their experiences, and promote peer mentoring with other organizations that aim to do similar work.

### **References**

- 100 days of record-breaking immigration enforcement in the US interior.* (2025, April 29). U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. <https://www.ice.gov/news/releases/100-days-record-breaking-immigration-enforcement-us-interior>

- 2025 Donald J. Trump Executive Orders. (n.d.). Federal Register-National Archives. Retrieved March 6, 2025, from <https://www.federalregister.gov/presidential-documents/executive-orders/donald-trump/2025>
- Adair, J. K. (2014). Examining whiteness as an obstacle to positively approaching immigrant families in US early childhood educational settings. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 17*(5), 643–666. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2012.759925>
- Adams, T. E., Ellis, C., & Jones, S. H. (2017). Autoethnography. *The International Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods*, 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118901731.iecrm0011>
- Ali, M. A. (2008). Loss of parenting self-efficacy among immigrant parents. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood, 9*(2), 148–160. <https://doi.org/10.2304/ciec.2008.9.2.148>
- Altman, H., Broder, T., & Avanzo, B. D. (2025, August 20). *The anti-immigrant policies in Trump's final "Big Beautiful Bill," explained*. <https://www.nilc.org/resources/the-anti-immigrant-policies-in-trumps-final-big-beautiful-bill-explained/>
- Anzaldúa, G. (1987). *Borderlands: La Frontera*. Aunt Lute Books.
- Arredondo, G. F., Hurtado, A., Klahn, N., Nájera-Ramírez, O., & Zavella, P. (2003). *Chicana feminisms: A critical reader*. Duke University Press.
- Ayala, J., Cammarota, J., Berta-Ávila, M. I., Rivera, M., Rodríguez, L. F., & Torre, M. E. (2018). *PAR Entremundos: A pedagogy of the Américas*. Peter Lang Publishing, Inc.
- Bailey, C., McIntyre, E., Arreola, A., & Venta, A. (2020). What are we missing? How language impacts trauma narratives. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Trauma, 13*(2), 153–161. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40653-019-00263-3>
- Baker, C., & Wright, W. E. (2021). *Foundations of bilingual education and bilingualism*. Multilingual Matters.
- Boylorn, R. M., & Orbe, M. P. (2021). *Critical autoethnography: Intersecting cultural identities in everyday life* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- Caballero, C., Martínez-Vu, Y., Pérez-Torres, J., Téllez, M., & Vega, C. (Eds.). (2019). *The Chicana M(other) work Anthology*. The University of Arizona Press.
- Cabrera, N. J., Alonso, A., & Yu, C. (2021). Parenting contributions to Latinx children's development in the early years. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 696*(1), 158–176.
- Call-Cummings, M., Dazzo, G. P., & Hauber-Ozer, M. (2023). *Critical participatory inquiry*. Sage.
- Campbell-Montalvo, R., & Castañeda, H. (2019). School employees as health care brokers for multiply-marginalized migrant families. *Medical Anthropology: Cross Cultural Studies in Health and Illness, 38*(8), 733–746. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01459740.2019.1570190>
- Carlson, V. J., & Harwood, R. L. (2003). Attachment, culture, and the caregiving system: The cultural patterning of everyday experiences among Anglo and Puerto Rican mother–infant pairs. *Infant Mental Health Journal, 24*(1), 53–73. <https://doi.org/10.1002/imhj.10043>
- Catalano, T. (2017). When children are water: Representation of Central American migrant children in public discourse and implications for educators. *Journal of Latinos and Education, 16*(2), 124–142. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15348431.2016.1205988>
- Charity Hudley, A. H., & Flores, N. (2022). Social justice in applied linguistics: Not a conclusion, but a way forward. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 42*, 144–154. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190522000083>
- Charmaz, K. (2017). Constructivist grounded theory. *The Journal of Positive Psychology, 12*(3), 299–300. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2016.1262612>
- Charmaz, K. C. (2014). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis (Introducing qualitative methods series)*. Sage.
- Cline, T., Crafter, S., O'Dell, L., & de Abreu, G. (2011). Young people's representations of language brokering. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 32*(3), 207–220. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2011.558901>
- Colvin, C. J., & Swartz, A. (2015). Extension agents or agents of change? *Annals of Anthropological Practice, 39*(1), 29–41. <https://doi.org/10.1111/napa.12062>
- Cooper, C. R., Denner, J., & Lopez, E. M. (1999). Cultural brokers: Helping Latino children on pathways toward success. *The Future of Children, 9*(2), 51–57. <https://about.jstor.org/terms>

- Crosnoe, R., & Ansari, A. (2015). Latin American immigrant parents and their children's teachers in U.S. early childhood education programmes. *International Journal of Psychology, 50*(6), 431–439. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ijop.12173>
- De Fina, A. (2021). Doing narrative analysis from a narratives-as-practices perspective. *Narrative Inquiry, 31*(1), 49–71.
- De Fina, A., & Georgakopoulou, A. (2015). *The handbook of narrative analysis* (1st ed.). John Wiley & Sons, Inc. [www.blackwellreference.com](http://www.blackwellreference.com)
- Derr, A. S. (2016). Mental health service use among immigrants in the United States: A systematic review. *Psychiatric Services, 66*(3), 265–274. American Psychiatric Association. <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.ps.201500004>
- Dorner, L. M., & Kim, S. (2024). Language brokering over time: A study of citizenship becoming through a transliteracies framework. *Journal of Language, Identity and Education, 23*(3), 409–423. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15348458.2024.2324270>
- Ellis, C. S., & Bochner, A. P. (2006). Analyzing analytic autoethnography: An autopsy. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, 35*(4), 429–449. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241606286979>
- Fierros, C. O., & Delgado Bernal, D. (2016). Vamos a platicar: The contours of pláticas as Chicana/Latina feminist methodology. *Chicana/Latina Studies, 15*(2), 98–121.
- Flores Carmona, J., Hamzeh, M., Delgado Bernal, D., & Hassan Zareer, I. (2021). Theorizing knowledge with pláticas: Moving toward transformative qualitative inquiries. *Qualitative Inquiry, 27*(10), 1213–1220. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10778004211021813>
- Flores, N. L. (2019). Translanguaging into raciolinguistic ideologies: A personal reflection on the legacy of Ofelia García. *Journal of Multilingual Education Research, 9*, 45–60. <https://fordham.bepress.com/jmerAvailableat:https://fordham.bepress.com/jmer/vol9/iss1/5>
- Forcinito, A. (2016). Testimonio: The witness, the truth, and the inaudible. In Y. Martínez-San Miguel, B. Sifuentes-Jáuregui, & M. Belausteguigoitia (Eds.), *Critical terms in Caribbean and Latin American thought: New directions in Latino American cultures* (pp. 239–251). Palgrave Macmillan.
- García, O., & Leiva, C. (2014). Theorizing and enacting translanguaging for social justice. *Educational Linguistics, 20*, 199–216. Springer.
- García, O., Lin, A.M. (2016). Translanguaging in Bilingual Education. In: García, O., Lin, A., May, S. (eds) *Bilingual and Multilingual Education*. Encyclopedia of Language and Education. Springer, Cham. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-02324-3\\_9-1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-02324-3_9-1)
- García, O., & Sylvan, C. E. (2011). Pedagogies and practices in multilingual classrooms: Singularities in pluralities. *The Modern Language Journal, 95*(3), 385–400. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2011.01208.x>
- García, O., & Li, W. (2013). *Translanguaging: Language, bilingualism and education*. Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137385765>
- Ginwright, S., Noguera, P., & Cammarota, J. (2006). *Beyond resistance! Youth activism and community change*. Routledge.
- Helmick, L. (2023). Expressing trauma through therapeutic art-based trauma-informed practice with/in a collective happening. *Studies in Art Education, 64*(3), 324–343. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00393541.2023.2220100>
- Hlass, L. (2020). The adultification of immigrant children. *Georgetown Immigration Law Journal, 34*(2), 199–262. <https://www.law.georgetown.edu/immigration-law-journal/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2020/05/GT-GILJ200001.pdf>
- ICE enforcement and removal operations statistics. (2025). <https://www.ice.gov/statistics>
- Ishimaru, A. M., Torres, K. E., Salvador, J. E., Lott, J., Cameron Williams, D. M., & Tran, C. (2016). Reinforcing deficit, journeying toward equity: Cultural brokering in family engagement initiatives. *American Educational Research Journal, 53*(4), 850–882. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831216657178>
- Jansson, B., & Dylman, A. S. (2021). Reduced vividness of emotional memories following reactivation in a second language. *Cognition and Emotion, 35*(6), 1222–1230. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02699931.2021.1937948>
- Kapasi, Z., & Melluish, S. (2015). Language switching by bilingual therapists and its impact on the therapeutic alliance within psychological therapy with bilingual clients: A systematic review. *International Journal of Culture and Mental Health, 8*(4), 458–477. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17542863.2015.1041994>

- Kartal, D., Alkemade, N., & Kiropoulos, L. (2019). Trauma and mental health in resettled refugees: Mediating effect of host language acquisition on posttraumatic stress disorder, depressive and anxiety symptoms. *Transcultural Psychiatry*, *56*(1), 3–23. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1363461518789538>
- Keifer-Boyd, K. (2011). Arts-based research as social justice activism. *International Review of Qualitative Research*, *4*(1), 3–19. <https://doi.org/10.1525/irqr.2011.4.1.3>
- Kheirzadeh, S., & Hajiabed, M. (2016). Differential language functioning of monolinguals and bilinguals on positive–negative emotional expression. *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research*, *45*(1), 55–69. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10936-014-9326-2>
- Kim, J.-H. (2016). *Understanding narrative inquiry: The crafting and analysis of stories as research*. SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Kim, S., Dorner, L. M., & Song, K. H. (2021). Conceptualizing community translanguaging through a family literacy project. *International Multilingual Research Journal*, *15*(4), 293–316. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19313152.2021.1889112>
- Kim, S., & Song, K. H. (2019). Designing a community translanguaging space within a family literacy project. *The Reading Teacher*, *73*(3), 267–279. <https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.1820>
- Ladegaard, H. J. (2018). Codeswitching and emotional alignment: Talking about abuse in domestic migrant-worker returnee narratives. *Language in Society*, *47*(5), 693–714. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404518000933>
- Lay, C. S., Lyons, H. Z., Cuppari, V., Kennedy-Dunn, C., Wadia, L., Johnson, A. J., & Kirkhart, M. (2024). Perceptions and experiences of psychotherapy among forced migrants with limited English proficiency. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 1–33. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00110000241240165>
- Lê, K. (2024). Bilingual love: Implications for teaching Vietnamese American Youth with Love and Care. *English Journal*, *114*(1), 74–81.
- Leavy, P. (2020). *Method meets art: Arts-based research practice* (3rd ed.). The Guilford Press.
- Lee, R. (2018). Immigrant entry visa categories and their effects on the children of immigrants' education. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *44*(9), 1560–1583. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2017.1362976>
- Leonardo, Z., & Zembylas, M. (2013). Whiteness as technology of affect: Implications for educational praxis. *Equity and Excellence in Education*, *46*(1), 150–165. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10665684.2013.750539>
- Marshall, E., & Toohy, K. (2010). Representing family: Community funds of knowledge, bilingualism, and multimodality. *Harvard Educational Review*, *80*(2), 221–242. <https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.80.2.h3446j54n608q442>
- McCoy, D. C., Sabol, T. J., Wei, W., Busby, A., & Hanno, E. C. (2022). Pushing the boundaries of education research: A multidimensional approach to characterizing preschool neighborhoods and their relations with child outcomes. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1037/edu0000728>
- Melzi, G., McWayne, C., & Ochoa, W. (2022). Family engagement and Latine children's early narrative skills. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, *50*(1), 83–95. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-020-01132-7>
- Moll, L. C., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & Gonzalez, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. *Theory Into Practice*, *31*(2), 132–141. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00405849209543534>
- Montemitro, C., D'Andrea, G., Cesa, F., Martinotti, G., Pettorruso, M., Di Giannantonio, M., Muratori, R., & Tarricone, I. (2021). Language proficiency and mental disorders among migrants: A systematic review. *European Psychiatry*, *64*(1), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1192/j.eurpsy.2021.2224>
- National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2016. Parenting matters: Supporting parents of children ages 0-8. National Academies Press. Washington, DC. [www.nap.edu](http://www.nap.edu).
- Oliva, M. E. (2019). A healing journey of the bilingual self: In search of the language of the heart. *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, *28*(3), 334–347. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15313204.2017.1384946>
- Orellana, M. F., Dorner, L., & Pulido, L. (2003). Accessing assets: Immigrant youth's work as family translators or "para-phrasers." *Social Problems*, *50*(4), 505–524. <https://doi.org/10.1525/sp.2003.50.4.505>

- Orellana, M. F., Thorne, B., Chee, A., & Eva Lam, W. S. (2001). Transnational childhoods: The participation of children in processes of family migration. *Social Problems, 48*(4), 572–591. <https://academic.oup.com/socpro/article/48/4/572/1660773>
- Ortega, Y. (2024). Charlas y Comidas: Humanising focus groups and interviews. *Qualitative Research, 24*(4), 773–792. DOI: 10.1177/14687941231176947
- Ortigosa-Beltrán, I., Jaén, I., & García-Palacios, A. (2023). Processing negative autobiographical memories in a foreign language. *Frontiers in Psychology, 14*, 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1133915>
- Pacheco, M. B., & Smith, B. E. (2015). Across languages, modes, and identities: Bilingual adolescents' multimodal codemeshing in the literacy classroom. *Bilingual Research Journal, 38*(3), 292–312. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15235882.2015.1091051>
- Pennycook, A. (2017). Translanguaging and semiotic assemblages. *International Journal of Multilingualism, 14*(3), 269–282. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14790718.2017.1315810>
- Pérez Huber, L. (2009). Disrupting apartheid of knowledge: Testimonio as methodology in Latina/o critical race research in education. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 22*(6), 639–654. <https://doi.org/10.1080/095>
- Perreira, K. M., Chapman, M. V., & Stein, G. L. (2006). Becoming an American parent: Overcoming challenges and finding strength in a new immigrant Latino community. *Journal of Family Issues, 27*(10), 1383–1414. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X06290041>
- Ramírez, R. (2022). Latino mothers' responsiveness and bilingual language development in young children from 24 to 36 months. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 50*(3), 459–467. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-021-01167-4>
- Reichlin-Melnick, A. (2025, August 27). *Trump's immigration actions are taking a toll on local economies-Here's what the data says so far.* <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/blog/immigration-toll-on-local-economies-what-the-data-says/>
- Sangalang, C. C., Becerra, D., Mitchell, F. M., Lechuga-Peña, S., Lopez, K., & Kim, I. (2019). Trauma, post-migration stress, and mental health: A comparative analysis of refugees and immigrants in the United States. *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health, 21*(5), 909–919. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10903-018-0826-2>
- Serrani, L. (2023). A journey through languages: A systematic literature review on the multilingual experience in counselling and psychotherapy with children and adolescents. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research, 23*(1), 6–19. <https://doi.org/10.1002/capr.12593>
- Seto, A., & Forth, N. L. A. (2020). What is known about bilingual counseling? A systematic review of the literature. *The Professional Counselor, 10*(3), 393–405. <https://doi.org/10.15241/as.10.3.393>
- Singh, S. (2012). Language and cognitive behavioural therapy practice paper-literature review and case example. *Satwant Singh/Bilişsel Davranışçı Psikoterapi ve Araştırmalar Dergisi, 1*, 139–144.
- Smith, J. (2019). Voices from the harvest: The role of language, identity, and life experience in the education of young children of migrant farmworkers. *Journal of Latinos and Education, 18*(3), 277–292. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15348431.2017.1390463>
- Stephens, C. (2024). Invisible policy brokers: The political roles of interpreters in educational policy negotiations with language minoritized mothers. *American Educational Research Journal.* <https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312241228837>
- Szoke, D., Cummings, C., & Benuto, L. T. (2020). Exposure in an increasingly bilingual world: Native language exposure therapy with a non-language matched therapist. *Clinical Case Studies, 19*(1), 51–61. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1534650119886349>
- Tamis-Lemonda, C. S., Bornstein, M. H., Kahana-Kalman, R., Baumwell, L., & Cyphers, L. (1998). Predicting variation in the timing of language milestones in the second year: an events history approach. *Journal of Child Language, 25*(3), 675–700. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305000998003572>
- Tannenbaum, M., & Har, E. (2020). Beyond basic communication: The role of the mother tongue in cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT). *International Journal of Bilingualism, 24*(4), 881–892. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1367006920902522>

- Ventriglio, A., & Bhugra, D. (2015). Migration, trauma and resilience. In M. Schouler-Ocak (Ed.), *Trauma and Migration* (pp. 69–79). Springer International Publishing. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-17335-1\\_6](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-17335-1_6)
- Vesely, C. K., DeMulder, E. K., Sansbury, A. B., Davis, E. F., Letiecq, B. L., Willard, I., Goodman, R. D., & Comunidad, A. de la. (2021). 'A place where my children could learn to read, write, and play': The search for early care and education among undocumented Central American immigrant mothers. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, *56*, 306–319. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2021.03.016>
- Vesely, C. K., Ewaida, M., & Kearney, K. B. (2013). Capitalizing on early childhood education: Low-income immigrant mothers' use of early childhood education to build human, social, and navigational capital. *Early Education and Development*, *24*(5), 744–765. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10409289.2012.725382>
- Ward, N., & Batalova, J. (2023). Frequently requested statistics on immigrants and immigration in the United States. *Migration Policy Institute*. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/frequently-requested-statistics-immigrants-and-immigration-united-states>
- Washington-Nortey, P. M., Zhang, F., Xu, Y., Ruiz, A. B., Chen, C. C., & Spence, C. (2022). The impact of peer interactions on language development among preschool English Language Learners: A systematic review. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, *50*(1), 49–59. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-020-01126-5>
- Wei, L. (2011). Moment analysis and translanguaging space: Discursive construction of identities by multilingual Chinese youth in Britain. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *43*(5), 1222–1235. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2010.07.035>
- Wei, L., & García, O. (2022). Not a first language but one repertoire: Translanguaging as a decolonizing project. *RELC Journal*, *53*(2), 313–324. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00336882221092841>
- Weise, J. D. (2015). *Corazón de Dixie*. The University of North Carolina press. [https://doi.org/10.5149/9781469624976\\_Weise](https://doi.org/10.5149/9781469624976_Weise)
- Yosso, T. J. (2005). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, *8*(1), 69–91. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1361332052000341006>

## Appendix

### Translations of Quotes from the Results Section

#### Community Translanguaging for Mental Health and Recreation

Spanish	English
<p>Hoy fue nuestra primera reunión de familias latinas, con mamás que solo hablan español, yo estaba muy emocionada porque era la primera vez que yo me reunía solo con latinos. Cuando recibí el correo [de invitación] pensé de una vez que no podía faltar a este evento... Como a mí siempre me gusta hablar mucho, saludé a cada una de [las mamás] y les pregunté su nombre y lugar de origen. Me alegró tanto escuchar a más personas hablar español.</p> <p>Rápidamente me sentí que estaba rodeada de amigas de toda la vida, personalmente por estos días me he sentido muy deprimida, el invierno me ha parecido tan difícil, no estoy acostumbrada a estas temperaturas tan bajas, mi ánimo por hacer las cosas ha disminuido mucho... Ver a esas otras mamás, luchando por sus hijos igual que yo luchando por mis hijas, escucharlas hablar y conocer sus historias, saber que también en algún momento se han sentido igual que yo (deprimidas, con baja autoestima, etc.)... me dio ánimos.</p> <p>Salí muy feliz del grupo Amistades, porque hice nuevas amigas, me regalaron pañales, toallitas y una caja de comida, mis niñas jugaron y se divirtieron. Me sentí muy agradecida por tener la oportunidad de participar en este grupo y conocer más mamás y sentir que no estoy sola en mi papel como madre.</p>	<p>Today was our first gathering for Latina families, with moms who only speak Spanish. I was very excited because it was the first time I had met only with Latinos. When I received the [invitation] email, I immediately thought I couldn't miss this event... Since I always like to talk a lot, I greeted each one of the moms and asked their names and places of origin. I was so happy to hear more people speaking Spanish.</p> <p>I quickly felt like I was surrounded by lifelong friends. Personally, I've been feeling very depressed these past few days. Winter has seemed so difficult. I'm not used to these low temperatures, and my motivation to do things has diminished a lot. Seeing these other moms, fighting for their children just as I fight for my daughters, listening to them speak and hearing their stories, knowing that at some point they've also felt the same way I do (depressed, with low self-esteem, etc.)... encouraged me.</p> <p>I left the Amistades group very happy because I made new friends. In Amistades, they gave me diapers, wipes, and a box of food, and my girls played and had fun. I felt very grateful for the opportunity to participate in this group and meet other moms and felt like I'm not alone in my role as a mother.</p>
<p>El grupo Amistades se ha convertido en una red de apoyo donde las madres pueden preguntar cualquier cosa con confianza, desde recomendaciones sobre estilistas que hablen español hasta promocionar y vender sus productos de comida casera. Este ambiente de solidaridad ha creado una comunidad donde cada miembro encuentra ayuda y apoyo en las experiencias compartidas.</p>	<p>The Amistades group has become a support network where mothers can confidently ask anything, from recommendations for Spanish-speaking hairstylists to the promoting and selling of their homemade food products. This atmosphere of solidarity has created a community where each member finds help and support in shared experiences.</p>

#### Community Translanguaging for Equity

Spanish	English
<p>no son gratis, ya hemos pagado por esos servicios con nuestros taxes</p>	<p>They are not free; we have already paid for those services with our taxes.</p>

*Community Translanguaging to Position the Use of Spanish and Translanguaging as Important Practices*

Spanish	English
<p>Observé que, al llegar las madres con sus hijos [al grupo Amistades], los niños inicialmente hablaban en inglés, pero al entrar y escuchar a las demás personas, comenzaban a utilizar el español. Parecía que necesitaban unos minutos para sentirse cómodos al usar el español. Me di cuenta de que algunas madres eran conscientes de que sus hijos estaban perdiendo el dominio del español, por lo que durante las actividades en grupo, [ellas] animaban a sus hijos a usar más este idioma... En cuanto a la interacción entre los niños, observé que hablaban entre ellos en el idioma con el que se sentían más cómodos. Algunos niños se comunicaban principalmente en inglés, mientras que otros lo hacían en español durante todo el tiempo. Varias madres reconocieron que necesitaban hablar más español en casa, ya que les preocupaba que sus hijos pudieran perderlo... El grupo de [Amistades] ha jugado un papel importante en ayudar a los niños a mantener su conexión con el español y fortalecer sus habilidades en el idioma... [En Amistades se han] compartido recursos en español y bilingües que las familias pueden utilizar con sus hijos para hacerlo más divertido. También [Amistades ha] creado espacios donde los niños pueden interactuar con otros [niños que hablan español], practicando el idioma de manera natural y sin presión. Este enfoque no solo refuerza el español como [lengua materna], sino que también ayuda a los niños a sentirse orgullosos de sus raíces culturales, fomentando su identidad bilingüe en un entorno que celebra la diversidad lingüística.</p>	<p>I observed that when mothers and their children arrived [to the Amistades group], the children initially spoke in English, but as they entered and listened to other people, they began to use Spanish. It seemed like they needed a few minutes to feel comfortable using Spanish. I noticed that some mothers were aware that their children were losing their Spanish, so during group activities, they encouraged their children to use it more... Regarding the children's interaction, I observed that they spoke to each other in the language they felt most comfortable with. Some children communicated primarily in English, while others communicated in Spanish all the time. Several mothers acknowledged that they needed to speak more Spanish at home, as they worried their children might lose it... The [Amistades] group has played an important role in helping children maintain their connection to Spanish and strengthen their language skills... [Amistades] has shared Spanish and bilingual resources that families can use with their children to make it more fun. [Amistades] has also created spaces where children can interact with other [Spanish-speaking children], practicing the language naturally and without pressure. This approach not only reinforces Spanish as a [mother tongue] but also helps children feel proud of their cultural roots, fostering their bilingual identity in an environment that celebrates linguistic diversity.</p>

*Community Translanguaging for More Amistades*

Spanish	English
<p>fue el único recurso social y sentido de comunidad</p>	<p>It was the only social resource and sense of community</p>
<p>[Luego en Amistades nos preguntaron cómo nos] sentíamos cómo mujeres latinas aquí en la ciudad y cada una expresó sus sentimientos con tranquilidad y calma. Creo que eso es lo que más me gusta en este grupo, que nos sentimos cómodas en compartir lo que pensamos y [nos] sentimos sin miedo a ser juzgadas o rechazadas. Entre todas las respuestas que escuché es que no es fácil para ninguna de estas mujeres estar aquí en este país y que de alguna manera están haciendo grandes sacrificios por sus familias. Cada una expresó lo mucho que extraña su hogar y las celebraciones... en sus países. Cada una expresó lo difícil que es ser mujer en una época en donde se nos exige ser perfectas, vernos lindas, tener la casa arreglada, estudiar, trabajar, cuidar de los hijos y no desatender al marido. Tenemos tanta carga como mujeres que considero que somos como superheroinas llevando todo este peso todos los días. Me encantó este día, pude ser yo, decir lo que pienso y siento. Mis hijas pasaron un buen rato y yo también salí muy feliz del grupo de Amistades.</p>	<p>[Then in Amistades, they asked us how we] felt as Latinas here in the city, and each one expressed her feelings with tranquility and calm. I think that's what I like most about this group: that we feel comfortable sharing what we think, and [we] are not afraid of being judged or rejected. From all the responses, I heard that it's not easy for any of these women to be here in this country and that in some ways they are making great sacrifices for their families. Each one expressed how much they miss their home and the celebrations... in their countries. Each one expressed how difficult it is to be a woman in a time where we are required to be perfect, look pretty, keep the house tidy, study, work, take care of the children, and not neglect our husbands. We carry so much weight as women that I consider ourselves like superheroes carrying all this weight every day. I loved this day; I was able to be myself, say what I think and feel. My daughters had a good time, and I also left the Amistades group very happy.</p>
<p>sí vamos juntas, así nos ayudamos a cuidar a nuestro hijos cuando se porten mal</p>	<p>Yes, let's go together, so we can help each other take care of our children when they misbehave.</p>

*Community Translanguaging to Position Latina Mothers as the Experts*

Spanish	English
Al iniciar este día me encontraba un poco nerviosa, ya que [la co-facilitadora] me había invitado a que dirigiera el grupo de Amistades. Era la primera vez que me sentía profesional otra vez desde que llegué a los Estados Unidos.	Going into this day, I was a little nervous because [the co-facilitator] had invited me to lead the Amistades group. It was the first time I felt professional again since I arrived at the United States.
En este día yo planeé [la reunión de Amistades para] hablar sobre las estrategias de crianza que les funcionan a las mamás. Sin embargo, [ese día] llegó solo una mami con sus hijos. Así que compartí con ella lo que me ha funcionado con mis hijas y ella compartió conmigo lo que le ha funcionado con sus niños. Después de eso hablamos de cosas más personales y de algunos desafíos que hemos tenido en nuestros hogares. Me sentí feliz saber que pude escuchar a otra mamá desahogarse un poco con sus problemas y me di cuenta que ese es uno de los propósitos del grupo Amistades; apoyar a las mamás no importando de qué forma, así solo sea escuchándolas. A pesar de que solo habíamos dos mamás en este día, se cumplió el propósito por el que hemos formado este grupo.	On this day, I planned [the Amistades meeting to] talk about parenting strategies that work for moms. However, [that day] only one mom arrived with her children. So, I shared with her what has worked for me with my daughters, and she shared with me what has worked for her with her children. After that, we talked about more personal things and some challenges we've had in our homes. I felt happy knowing that I was able to listen to another mom vent about her problems, and I realized that this is one of the purposes of the Amistades group: to support moms no matter how, even if it's just by listening to them. Even though there were only two moms there that day, the purpose for which we formed this group was fulfilled.

*Community Translanguaging Online*

Spanish	English
<p>Uno de los temas principales que hemos abordado [en este grupo] es el proceso de inscripción de los niños en las escuelas públicas. En el grupo, compartimos información detallada sobre los documentos necesarios, como el certificado de vacunas y el acta de nacimiento. También explicamos cómo determinar la escuela que corresponde según la dirección de residencia. Además, [el grupo ha] ayudado a las madres a familiarizarse con la página web del distrito escolar, donde pueden acceder a recursos como la aplicación para almuerzos y desayunos gratuitos y los horarios escolares, que varían dependiendo de la institución.</p> <p>Para las madres que no hablan inglés, [el grupo ha] proporcionado guía sobre cómo utilizar el servicio de intérpretes del distrito escolar, disponible en más de 50 idiomas. Esto ha sido especialmente útil para ayudarles a completar los procesos de inscripción y comunicarse con las escuelas y maestros de sus hijos. En Amistades, hemos trabajado para ayudar a las madres a entender las fechas clave de inscripción y los significados de los colores y símbolos en el calendario académico... Al compartir información sobre el servicio de intérpretes del distrito escolar, hemos logrado que muchas madres se sientan más cómodas y motivadas para participar activamente en las reuniones escolares. Este paso ha sido fundamental para que puedan conocer el progreso y los desafíos de sus hijos, fortaleciendo su papel en el proceso educativo.</p>	<p>One of the main topics we've addressed [in this group] is the process of registering children for public schools. In the group, we share detailed information about the necessary documents, such as immunization records and birth certificates. We also explain how to determine the appropriate school based on their address. Additionally, [the group has] helped mothers familiarize themselves with the school district's website, where they can access resources such as the application for free lunches and breakfasts and school schedules, which vary depending on the building.</p> <p>For mothers who don't speak English, [the group has] provided guidance on how to use the school district's interpreter service, available in more than 50 languages. This has been especially helpful in helping them complete the registration process and communicate with their children's schools and teachers.</p> <p>At Amistades, we've worked to help mothers understand key enrollment dates and the meanings of the colors and symbols on the academic calendar. By sharing information about the school district's interpreter services, we've helped many mothers feel more comfortable and motivated to actively participate in school meetings. This step has been crucial for them to learn about their children's progress and challenges, strengthening their role in the educational process.</p>