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Pláticas on deportation: Bilingual teachers' movidas countering entangled discursive violence through sociocultural critique

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Abstract

We describe and analyze bilingual teacher discursive moves in an out-of-school cultural enrichment program, La Academia, highlighting their discursive moves, or sociocultural movidas de plática, which gave greater discursive space for teachers to engage in sociocultural critique through personal narratives and collective dialogue. La Academia is an out-of-school, Mexican American Studies program in central Texas for 3rd – 5th grade Latinx students using teacher pláticas as discursive spaces to socioculturally critique their working environment. We ethnographically and qualitatively analyze these pláticas as discursive spaces that worked to resist the deficit and violent institutional and societal discourses which dominated the schools. We use an ethnographic sample of a teacher plática in which teachers discuss their diverse approaches to addressing student fears of family deportation. We argue that a key component of these pláticas were the counter discursive movidas that the teachers practiced that helped the teacher group critique these discourses by promoting personal narratives and collective sociocultural critique. We describe these discursive moves as sociocultural movidas de plática, discursive strategies that teachers used to open up the discursive space to critique the affective and epistemic violence they experienced as bilingual teachers and instead promote a more culturally revitalizing discourse.

Keywords: Movidas, sociocultural critique, anti-immigrant discourse, culturally revitalizing pedagogies, critically reflexive praxis

Introduction

From 2016 to 2019, bilingual teachers in the out-of-school-program, La Academia (names of the program and participants have been changed to guard their identities), met in weekly *pláticas* to plan how Mexican American studies-themed lessons could best meet their students' academic and socioemotional needs, especially in terms of addressing students' fears of the increased deportations in their community. In this paper, we describe how teachers' social and cultural contextualizations of their *pláticas*, or sociocultural *movidas*, helped teachers keep their students' strengths and needs at the center of their planning despite discursive pressures to ignore Latinx student concerns.

La Academia is an out-of-school program in central Texas where Latinx, bilingual teachers researched, prepared and taught Mexican American studies curricula to 3rd – 5th grade Latinx students. Teachers developed lessons through teacher *pláticas* (Rubio et al., 2021) which they used as pedagogic spaces to socioculturally critique (J. Freire, 2015) their working environment. In this article, we ethnographically and qualitatively analyze these *pláticas* (Guajardo & Guajardo, 2013; Fierros and Delgado Bernal, 2016) as discursive spaces where teachers worked to resist the deficit and violent discourses which dominated their schools and societal discourses. In response to this environment, teachers planned culturally revitalizing lessons which centered students' cultural strengths (McCarty and Lee, 2014; Harris et al., 2020). We argue that a key component of these *pláticas* was teachers' use of counter discursive *movidas* (Blackwell et al., 2020), or discursive moves, that helped the teacher group critique these discourses through personal and collective dialogue that challenged systemic deficit (Valencia, 1997) assumptions. We describe these as *movidas de pláticas*. Teachers used them to open up discursive space to critique the affective and epistemic violence they experienced as bilingual teachers while promoting a more culturally revitalizing (McCarty and Lee, 2014) discourse.

The social context of La Academia: Bilingual teachers as curriculum developers in an era of anti-immigrant discourse

In 2013, eight bilingual teachers in a bilingual Master of Education program approached the authors to request support in writing a curriculum for their district's dual language program. This conversation led to a collaborative program among Nuestro Grupo, a

community-led Latina advocacy organization of which the authors were members, the local school district and the city's Mexican American cultural center to establish La Academia. From 2013 to 2024, this research collaborative was an out-of-school program in which the authors, local teachers and community members created, discussed and implemented a curriculum created to promote culturally revitalizing pedagogies that promoted the right of students to learn about and celebrate their families' cultural heritage (McCarty and Lee, 2014). While the details of the collaboration have changed over time, we have continuously worked with Academia teachers to conduct this program.

This paper examines the years from 2016-2019 when Academia teachers took increasing control of curriculum planning and development and decided to modify the Academia curriculum to address the impact of an anti-immigrant social context on their Latinx students. In 2016, when all eight teachers of Academia shared with each other that at least one of their students had a family member who had been deported, they decided to write Academia curricula to address this social reality. As part of their research for this unit, they learned that from 2012-2016, the sheriff of this central Texas county adopted a policy of collaboration with US Immigration and Custom Enforcement (ICE) contributing to the county's deportation rates being the highest in the country (Rocha, 2016). At the same time, the 2016 presidential campaign and Trump's victory centered an anti-immigrant discourse which many statewide Texas politicians embraced and amplified (Gomez, 2017). During this time period, teachers noticed that their students discussed these detentions and anti-immigrant rhetoric more often and that these issues had a negative emotional impact on their students (Okhremtchouk & Clark, 2018; Widner, 2017). It was in response to this anti-immigrant climate that Academia teachers created curricular units on immigrant identity, immigrant justice and immigrant rights activism.

During this time, Academia teachers also took greater ownership of the curriculum and the program. In 2013, the original eight teachers had asked us to create the curriculum for them to teach, but by 2016 three teachers wanted to lead curriculum development efforts themselves. The authors shifted their focus from curriculum writing to organizing and facilitating curriculum development. (For more information on the program, please see Rubio et al., 2021). During curriculum development and implementation, the authors would meet with the three-person teacher teams in *pláticas* before, during and after each unit to discuss how

they wanted to teach the curriculum following a model of critical praxis (Riojas-Cortez et al., 2013).

The coordinating team had initially introduced *pláticas* to teachers as a response to the teachers' request for a relational process for working in teams. As both teachers and researchers saw the academic and relational success of these *pláticas*, the *plática* process became both a center of curriculum planning and a research interest (Rubio et al., 2021). Academia *pláticas* were a flexible, culturally relevant, social knowledge construction process (Guajardo & Guajardo, 2013) with the explicit intent of collectively building relationships and knowledge. *Pláticas* would begin with culturally aspirational material that promoted a teacher culture based on the cultural strengths of *plática* participants. Participants would then introduce themselves and how they felt. They then responded to each other's emotional and reflective opening comments before segueing into the curriculum goals of the meeting.

Between 2016 and 2019, teachers noted how within these *pláticas* they became more comfortable critiquing the district's curricular language and instead creating their own language to describe their own curriculum, especially around the topic of immigration. In 2019, they then asked us to examine how this transformation came about. We thus analyzed how Academia teachers in *pláticas* critiqued dominant deficit teacher discourses to center culturally revitalizing discourses. In this article we focus on how *movidas* within these *pláticas* served as agentic strategies that teachers could use to critically reflect on their social and cultural context in order to imagine and plan culturally revitalizing curriculum.

Theoretical perspective: Addressing the discursive violence of dominant teacher discourses

During these *pláticas*, Academia teachers worked to make sense of the dominant curricula they were exposed to and the damage it caused their students. We found that in their critically reflexive process, teachers described their work environment as discursively violent, particularly the exclusion or disrespect of students' home cultures. In this section, we relate how researchers have described the impact of discursive violence on educators. The second section of the theoretical perspective then discusses how *movidas de plática* (Milk Bonilla et al., 2026) challenged this violence.

Academia teachers were embedded in dominant bilingual teacher discourses through their curricula and faculty meetings with little discursive space for them to create their own curriculum for their students. Instead, the schools imposed a deficit curriculum (Valenzuela, 1999) which presented the students' home cultures as problematic or irrelevant to academic life. This reiterates a common theme researchers have noted (Dozono, 2020) - that educational institutional systems often limit the ability of bilingual teachers and others to teach more culturally supportive curricula by dominating teacher discourses with discursively violent ideologies that center White, European knowledge.

This imposed curriculum intentionally disempowers the perspectives of non-White actors through universalizing discourses (Dozono, 2020). Dozono (2020), for instance, documents how universalizing ideologies in the discourse of some high school world history texts center White, European knowledge while decentering non-White knowledge. Thus, when world history books claim that White knowledge like Western science is the universal truth, they regard other bodies of knowledge as insufficient or illegitimate. Discursive violence harms both students and teachers of color as both are violated by the erasure of non-White knowledge. It also severely limits teachers' and students' ability to express challenges to these dominant forces.

In the case of Academia teachers, both the official school system and dominant societal discourses promoted discursively violent deficit ideologies that promoted the erasure of Latinx epistemic agency. During the time period of this study, the presidential race of the first Trump presidency was dominated by anti-immigrant societal rhetoric. This rhetoric devalued Latinx social knowledge production by stereotyping and vilifying the Latinx community (Gomez, 2017). At the same time, teachers and students had to address changes by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) that further challenged teachers' ability to promote asset-based ideologies in their schools. In 2018, TEA introduced an A-F grading system for individual school campuses based on standardized testing scores. This grading system discursively promoted a universalizing discourse that students who failed the test were failures. Furthermore, this testing system obfuscated the fact that these tests were based on White academic and epistemic systems that systemically disadvantaged any population, like the low-income, Latinx population Academia teachers taught, that had less systemic access to White, academic knowledge production

(Noguerón Liu, 2020). Both discourses further entrenched deficit discourses that Latinx students were lacking the academic abilities to succeed in schools (Valenzuela, 1999).

Zembylas (2024) argues that the entangled nature of the affective and epistemic violence that educators face in educational systems is what makes this violence so difficult to analyze and therefore challenge. He describes epistemic violence as “epistemic practices that are harmful to the capacity of these individuals or social groups to engage in knowledge production and legitimation (p. 5).” Since knowledge producers like teachers are affectively engaged in their roles as knowledge producers, they experience epistemic and affective violence as entangled within social systems that produce both. For instance, Academia teachers described moments of emotional pain when teaching about immigrant deportations in US history and then not being allowed by administrators to discuss family deportations. It was difficult for teachers to separate the harm they experienced from the epistemic erasure of their students’ knowledge, like their knowledge of deportations, from the affective harm caused by the denial of the opportunity to produce cultural forms of knowledge, for example how to make sense of these deportations. Academia teachers were subject to epistemically and affectively entangled violent discourses both within their school system and through dominant societal discourse.

Movidas within a frame of critical reflexive praxis

We argue that *movidas de plática* were discursive tools teachers used to address this discursive violence by centering sociocultural critique within the critical reflexive praxis they regularly practiced in la Academia. Critique can be seen as instruments of action, like discursive moves, that seek to regulate an area where the actors have little power (Foucault, 1997). Critical sociocultural theories (Freire, 2015) pay attention to and apply issues of power to cultural issues, like intrapersonal relationships and the sociocultural context of learning. Sociocultural critique links microlevel systems, like teacher-teacher discursive interactions, with macrolevel structures, like societal anti-immigrant discourses. In this section, we describe how critical reflexive praxis provided a pedagogic structure for teachers to regularly engage in sociocultural critique in teacher discourses through *movidas de plática*.

Critical reflexive praxis (Serrano et. al, 2019) integrates critique into a pedagogical process of praxis which intentionally integrates regular critical reflection into a process of collective teacher planning. Critical reflexive praxis creates pedagogical space to make reflexive

and collective connections between teachers' individual teaching contexts and the societal and institutional forces that impact these contexts. From this critical reflexive perspective, teachers' agency allows them to critique deficit discourses, create student-centered discourse and transform pedagogical practice based on reflection and self-knowledge (Murillo, 2017). Similarly, we found that *movidas de plática* (Milk Bonilla et al., 2026) were important strategies within their critical reflexive praxis to provide greater discursive space for teachers to critique the entangled epistemic and affective violence of the institutional and societal discourses they experienced.

Movidas are descriptive and analytical acts that are part of larger acts of critical resistance. *Movidas* include building counter discursive relationships to creating social and cultural institutions that advocate for Chicana/Latinx women and Chicana feminist issues (Espinoza et al., 2018). *Movidas* are both the descriptive practices which create epistemic space in local struggles and a theoretical tool which helps to analyze how these shifts help actors advocate from intersectional, subjective positions (Blackwell et al., 2020). For example, Academia teachers practiced a series of discursive *movidas* that gave them greater epistemic and affective space to produce resistant knowledge.

Methods: Participant research in La Academia

Research Positionality

This research emerged from our twelve years of participant ethnographic research with La Academia in which we served as program coordinators with Academia teachers while researching how these teachers taught critical bicultural issues in the program. During the three year-period of this study, the authors' main roles were to organize the program while the overall program was coordinated by Nuestro Grupo, a community group which included Latino educational activists and families from Academia who were program elders. Their main role was to oversee the program. Nuestro Grupo members, who included community activists, university volunteers, families of Academia students and former Academia students, described their participation as building a model of Latinx-centered education in the city.

Most teachers taught at la Academia as a form of professional development and professional community building. They often used the curricula in their home campuses and then applied the culturally revitalizing concepts to different aspects of their classroom – from

building classroom culture to culturally responsive instructional practices. Teachers pointed to La Academia as important components of their development as teachers both in terms of pedagogy and leadership.

As part of the Academia coordinator team, we were part of six university and community volunteers. Brenda's main role was coordinator of district relationships and co-coordinator of fundraising and Chris' main role was as co-coordinator of teacher instruction, which included curriculum, planning and program assessment.

We shared our research data, codes and analyses with Academia teachers, members of the research team and community elders using a combination of relational and critical methods, including critical reflexive journaling (Riojas-Cortez, Alanis, & Bustos Flores, 2013), member checking (Creswell, 2014) and research *pláticas* (Fierros and Delgado Bernal, 2016).

Chris Milk Bonilla – Chris is a professor of pre-service teachers with a background in elementary bilingual teaching. He says: “My praxis in critical bilingual education research and instruction is based on my background as a bilingual/bicultural learner. My mother was a bilingual teacher for over thirty years and my father taught Mexican American History for thirty years. Much of my work focuses on teacher-community relationships and I continue to find promise in teacher-community partnerships that take schooling and community realities into account. My background in relational community organizing and teaching in Texas public schools has helped me negotiate with sensitivity this topic, especially as teachers started to name what they experienced as violence. My reflexive journal and member feedback from both elders and teachers has helped me make sense of how my privilege and positionality at the university colors both my relationships with these teachers and how I relate to our collective knowledge production.”

Brenda Rubio – Brenda is an assistant professor in educational leadership with a background in program evaluation and development. She states: My perspective as a critical educational researcher grew from my personal experiences as a Mexican, immigrant woman raised along the U.S.-Mexico border. I was a co-founder of La Academia, and I set up the initial program structures and procedures. My goal was to create a space where critically conscious educational leadership could be developed and nourished.

Data Collection and Analysis

In Fall 2019, a research *plática* with teachers led us to collectively decide to research the question: ‘How did Academia teachers in *pláticas* critique dominant deficit teacher discourses to center culturally revitalizing discourses?’ We researched this question by first ethnographically analyzing field notes, documents and perspectives of these three years of *pláticas* through feminist and critical pedagogical lenses to uncover tentative findings. We then conducted interviews and *pláticas* to get member feedback on the initial results. Ethnographic analyses served to illuminate the prominent codes of participant discourse while follow-up interviews allowed us to probe the topics that emerged from these codes.

Participant ethnography – As part of ethnographic data collection, we took field notes of *pláticas*, meetings and classes from 2016-2019, gathered emails, documents and kept reflective notes to analyze emerging data (Carspecken, 1996). During this period, we conducted over 120 interviews and 35 focus groups and gathered over 200 documents. For ethnographic analysis, we coded data based on emerging themes as viewed through Chicana and critically reflexive lenses and then used these codes to analyze ethnographic field notes. As part of reflective member-checking, we reported the merging themes back to the community every semester and gathered member feedback on these results as part of both the data collection and analysis process (Foley & Valenzuela, 2005).

Qualitative interviews – In Springs 2016 through 2019, we conducted focus interviews with Academia teachers using the emerging themes of culture, identity, education, relationships and agency (Torres & Reyes, 2011). These interviews were then coded based on research questions and then analyzed within each group (Creswell, 2014). Finally, we member checked findings with research team collaborators and elders.

Data analysis – Our initial findings pointed to the importance of *pláticas* in critical reflexive praxis. We presented our findings to the summer curriculum writing team as part of our member checking and they asked what it was about the *pláticas* that allowed them to pivot to diverse forms of immigration units. During that summer, we held several *pláticas* with them on this question and they pointed to the importance of culturally revitalizing perspectives in their discourse. This led us to delve into a critical discursive analysis of their work during the fall of 2019, in which the importance of *movidas de plática* emerged.

We had planned to present this information to teachers in the spring of 2020, but when the COVID pandemic hit, we devoted all our energies to moving Academia on-line. We returned to this data analysis in the summer of 2024 as Academia teachers reported an increase in anti-immigrant discourse once again. When we presented this data to the summer curriculum writing team during a teacher *plática*, they pointed to the importance of critique and relationality in their *movidas*. Furthermore, they highlighted how pláticas were healing spaces in response to the violence they experienced on their home campuses. We analyzed this feedback as well as the critical and relational practices of *movidas de plática*. This article is the result of the analysis of the data focusing on the sociocultural critical practices of *movidas de plática*.

For the critical analysis, we took the field notes and interviews from this time period and highlighted the moments of critical analysis, or times when unequal power relationships were mentioned or discussed in *pláticas*. We looked for moments when teachers initiated discursive moves that provoked a discursive transformation, or a change in how teachers discussed learning and Academia students. We used these moments as generative themes and found that with respect to content, they mirrored the same generative themes identified in the interviews, i.e. (culture, identity, immigration, and agency). This time, we examined these moments as discursive practice and highlighted what teachers did to change the discourse. From this analysis, we found that personal narratives and collective recentering of the discourse emerged as the two most prevalent methods used to transform teacher *pláticas*.

Findings: Teachers used *movidas de plática* to socioculturally critique dominant discourses

Academia teachers were active participants in moving Academia *pláticas* from dominant discourses that centered deficit learning objectives to a clear focus on building upon contextualized epistemic and affective strengths of bilingual teachers and Latinx students in order to set and reach more holistic classroom goals. Teachers accomplished this by collaborating to reframe *pláticas* as safe cultural spaces and by actively interrupting dominant universalized and decontextualized discourses that invariably arose in *pláticas* with discursive *movidas de plática*, like personal narratives and questioning assumptions, to collectively re-center their conversation on the cultural strengths of their students.

Specifically, we will describe sociocultural *movidas* that occurred throughout our three-year study. We will then provide an ethnographic sample using the *plática* teachers hosted on the night after Trump's election to describe, contextualize and theoretically explore how teachers' use of these *movidas* interrupted dominant narratives about Mexican immigrant epistemologies and reframed discursive narratives around Mexican immigrant cultural pride and epistemic strength.

Combating a poisonous atmosphere: Universalized, deficit discourses in schools

Academia teachers described how Academia *pláticas* provided them the discursive space to pay attention to and analyze issues of power from a cultural perspective. They valued an opportunity to participate in critiques of their home schools because their school's discursive structures, including the school's communicative systems, were embedded within universalist, deficit perspectives that ignored or devalued the cultural backgrounds of their Latinx students (Valencia, 1997). Structures like curriculum guides and faculty meetings devoted more time to English language skills that were outside the students' cultural control than on students' current cultural and familial strengths that could bridge and supports their academic learning (Aleman, 2023). As Ms. Tenorio said:

Nunca hablamos de la cultura... nomás es exámenes, exámenes... las familias tienen tanto que ofrecer pero [el currículo] nunca habla de eso, nomás de cosas que no han experimentado, es difícil... (We never talk about culture... only tests, tests... the families have so much to offer but (the curriculum) never talks about that, only things that students haven't experienced, it's tough...")

Academia teachers described these dominant, deficit discourses as creating a 'poisonous' atmosphere in their schools, or an atmosphere of affective violence. Within these discourses, the only affectively valued knowledge was the invisible Whiteness of test-based knowledge; cultural knowledge that centered students' epistemic strengths was ignored or devalued as not contributing to the central task of scholastic knowledge production.

This affective violence was also entangled with epistemic discursive violence that conflated deficit discourses of teacher accountability with teacher ineffectiveness i.e. that teachers were to blame for institutional and societal systemic inequities over which they had little control. After one particularly difficult meeting, Ms. Sanchez shared,

Nuestras reuniones son venenosas, desastrosas... nos fuerzan a sentar por horas en reuniones en que discuten nuestros resultados... como si nosotros somos los únicos responsables por las malas decisiones que la administración tomo... (Our [faculty] meetings are poisonous, disastrous... they force us to sit through hours of meetings about our results... as if we were the only ones responsible for the bad decisions that the administration made).

Teachers described many data meetings that publicly shared their students' assessment scores with an emphasis on the teachers whose students were failing the test. This discursive violence of publicly shaming teachers was based on the dominant universalizing discourse that all students should be able to pass these tests with an embedded deficit ideology that the sole people responsible for these failing grades were the teachers and the students. What these institutional discourses rarely mentioned were social and institutional contexts that had struggled to provide academic support to these students for the five years before they took these tests (Valencia, 1999). For Academia teachers, these discourses create a poisonous institutional atmosphere in which an affective discursive violence focused on students' deficits combined with an epistemic violence that solely blamed teachers for not achieving a universalized notion of academic success.

Sociocultural movidas and their role in shifting discourse

Although teachers stated that they wanted to use more culturally revitalizing perspectives within Academia pláticas, their dominant discourse was universalist and deficit based. Teachers explained that a major factor that contributed to this situation was that they heard deficit discourses every day and therefore experienced difficulty thinking or speaking outside these discourses.

In this discursive context, sociocultural *movidas* became discursive mechanisms to shift the discourse towards more culturally revitalizing and sociocultural perspectives. *Movidas* integrated relationality, pedagogical praxis, discussions of the sociocultural context, and the sharing of personal experiences to center teacher and student knowledge. They included verbal communications like stories and discursive interruptions and non-verbal communication like facial expressions and other visual signals.

Movidas de plática were specific to *pláticas* because they took advantage of the relational and knowledge producing aspects of *pláticas* to promote a collective affective and epistemic

discourse. We describe sociocultural *movidas de plática* as discursive *movidas* that promoted sociocultural critique by centering or highlighting the social or cultural context of the topic under discussion. We want to highlight teachers' uses of collective dialogue and personal narratives as discursive mechanisms that most consistently challenged the epistemic and affective violence entangled in dominant discourses while opening up discursive space to critically reflect on ways to more consistently include the sociocultural approaches teachers desired.

Sociocultural critique most often emerged from collective dialogue, or conversations within a *plática* in which teachers affirmed each other's ability to make change in their educational or social setting. Teachers brought up a topic they were struggling with in their schools, like classroom discussions about immigration with their students, and then teachers as a collective group would support each other in agentic ways that addressed this topic. In the case of anti-immigrant rhetoric, each teacher shared read alouds, social studies lessons or highlights of classroom meetings they held in efforts to teach and engage with their students around the very issues that many administrators deemed problematic. We term this collective dialogue because these conversations fulfilled what Paulo Freire (1970) describes as dialogically describing one's social reality. During collective dialogue, multiple teachers shared their own sociocultural narratives to make connections between their personal narratives and larger sociocultural forces. For instance, *pláticas* about societal anti-immigrant rhetoric included teachers' personal and familial immigration stories and their students' reactions to anti-immigrant rhetoric they heard in the news. These collective dialogues made connections between societal anti-immigrant discourses and what their students were telling them.

Yet it is also important to note how difficult and rare it was for teachers to discuss sociopolitical power, institutional sociocultural systems or explicitly discuss unjust social relationships at a societal or political level. Discussions about these topics like immigration, assessment systems or class inequities, quickly became decontextualized and teachers responded with simple acknowledgements of these injustices, like, "Deportations are really hitting close to home," ending that conversation. On the other hand, when teachers personally connected to a shared injustice, the conversation would continue. In other words, they continued to open up discursive spaces by contextualizing their discussion of sociocultural injustice.

Thus, personal narratives were important discursive tools, or *movidas*, to shift the discourse from universalistic, district-mandated goals to student-centered, contextually-embedded goals. For teachers, *movidas de plática* opened up discursive spaces to resist dominant, deficit universalizing discourses.

For example, teachers described most of their professional history in terms of their being forced to participate in discussions of decontextualized pedagogic skills, like the instructional objective of how to teach expressive grammatical skills. When Academia teachers introduced their own personal narratives about immigration, they were able to contextualize how and why Academic immigrant curricula impacted their specific group of students and not just teach expressive grammar.

Cognizant that Academia *pláticas* continued to be dominated by deficit narratives that elided sociopolitical critique, critical sociocultural *movidas* often provided moments where teachers could discuss inequitable sociocultural relationships by providing the discursive space for them to contextualize and make sense of the cultural inequities they had experienced and wanted to discuss.

Will they deport my dad too? Sociocultural movidas de plática within critical reflexive praxis

An ethnographic sample serves to contextualize these *movidas* within the critical reflexive praxis of the teachers. On the day after Trump's election, Academia teachers came together to discuss the learning objectives for their next unit on identity. During this discussion, which was initially dominated by discussions of decontextualized learning objectives, teachers would introduce personal narratives as *movidas de plática* that contextualized their discussion of student learning and which provided greater discursive space for a more robust collective dialogue and sociocultural critique of how to respond to student concern about Trump's election and what it meant for student fears about familial deportations.

While discussing the importance of the immigrant identity objectives of the lesson they were planning, Ms. Sarmiento, a fifth-grade teacher, noted, "With the election this week, these discussions [of immigration] are even more important." Ms. Tenorio, a Kindergarten teacher, then brought up an interaction she had with her students that week. "When we were discussing the election, one of my students raised his hand and asked, 'If Trump wins, will I get deported? Will they deport my dad too?'" Ms. Tenorio continued, "I didn't know what to say...

I wanted to quickly reassure him that everything was going to be okay, but what could I say? I am not a counselor... They were all talking about it... but we're not allowed to mention it in school... they tell us is to teach to the [standards], but my kids need so much more..."

Teachers responded with nods of support and a few, "They asked me that, too." Ms. Sarmiento responded, "Well, if you look at it from the kids' perspective, what are they supposed to think? They hear it on the news, their parents talk about it... it's all around them... But how many people talk about it to them ... the schools tell us to not talk about it, but if we don't talk about it, who will?"

At this, teachers asked, "What did you do?" Ms. Tenorio said, "Well, I told him that he was safe here in my classroom. That ICE could not come into the schools and that he always had someone who would take care of him. Other kids shared that in the deportation situations they knew of, someone always cared for the children, and that seemed to calm them a little..."

Ms. Sarmiento began another collective response by commenting, "But you know this, they know this, we have had this discussion...remember the River of Life lesson?" Here, she recalled a lesson they had taught together two years prior in which they had used a 'River of Life' life story art activity to discuss their own and the students' family's migrant journeys of obstacles and possibilities. "The kids, they talked about what they were afraid of... we got them to talk about what they wanted to... what was it? Their dreams...?"

Multiple teachers agreed that they had safely discussed immigration with their students, then they pushed Ms. Tenorio to share what she had done. This was a collective *movida* that both validated Ms. Tenorio's knowledge and helped create discursive space where their pedagogical knowledge as educators was central in addressing the epistemic violence which they had all witnessed.

Ms. Tenorio reflected on her praxis at the time:

Les leí Pancho Rabbit (a story about a father and son rabbit making the immigration journey from Mexico to the United States and the obstacles they had to overcome) ... un niño preguntó si necesitaba papeles, entonces yo hablé de mi proceso de conseguir mi tarjeta verde (Green Card) y que no todos tienen papeles, pero aun todos tenemos derechos... todos habían escuchado de esta cosa de 'papeles', pero no lo entendían... Me sentí mejor después de esa discusión porque los niños entendían, y les calmó... pero ahora, ahora es más difícil, no sé si funcione leer uno de nuestros libros [de Academia] y

hablar con ellos... [I read Pancho Rabbit... and a child asked if we needed 'papers' for a trip, so I talked with them about the process of getting my Green Card and that not everyone had papers but we all had rights... they had all heard of that thing 'papers', but they didn't understand what it meant... I felt better after that discussion because the kids understood and it calmed them down... but now, it's more difficult now, I don't know, I don't know if it will work to read one of our [Academia] books and talk with them...]

Teachers quickly interrupted her. Some stressed that there were similar issues that they all discussed with their students. Others shared books they had used to discuss immigration issues with students in Kindergarten and first grade and the discussions these read alouds elicited. Through collective dialogue, teachers were able to link the macro forces of anti-immigrant rhetoric to their students' personal fears and respond with a critical reflexive praxis of read alouds that built upon the strength of student immigrant experiences.

Discussion: Opening up more discursive space for critical sociocultural discourse

Ms. Tenorio and the Academia teachers used sociocultural *movidas* as individuals and as a collective to critically analyze pedagogic moments within hostile school discourses. Ms. Tenorio's personal narrative broke the discourse of learning objectives, and just as importantly, provided a sociocultural context for the unit on immigrant identities. Teachers responded through affective concern and epistemic solidarity through an expression of acknowledging similar situations and emotional experiences. This created the affective space of a shared discursive community, unlike schools where these conversations or shared emotional reactions were uncommon. Simultaneously, it provided the epistemic and affective space for Ms. Tenorio to acknowledge her uncertain and uncomfortable reflections on whether she responded to the best of her ability and whether and how this reaction impacted her students.

Sociocultural *movidas* were collective discursive moves of critique in dominant discursive spaces where pedagogical praxis often became a cultural practice of cultural deficit practice. The challenge in Academia discourses was that teachers were discussing differing social realities due to differing macro social factors in different parts of the city, different institutional systems in their schools and different personal social histories. Therefore, the same narrative of

reflective praxis had differing relational discursive impacts for teachers, students and the teacher-student relationship.

By combining the contextualization of personal narratives with the affective support and critique of collective dialogue, teachers were able to apply these discussions to the specificity of their sociocultural context. Instead of centering abstract, decontextualized discourses of universalized objectives, personal narratives served as a *movida de plática* that moved the discourse towards teachers' concrete knowledge of their own students. Collective dialogue also served to validate this knowledge as important knowledge, especially in the context of their poisonous school discourses in which this knowledge was erased. Sociocultural *movidas de plática* served as a critical tool and discursive response to the entangled discursive violence teachers faced on a daily basis in their school campuses.

Conclusion: Sociocultural critique supports culturally revitalizing discourse

Sociocultural *movidas de plática* were a common discursive strategy for Academia teachers to create discursive space to discuss culture in the classroom that was able to shift discourse depending on the specific entanglements of epistemic and affective violence teachers were discussing. Yet the issues that teachers face on a daily basis are complex, from punitive behavioral, racialized regimes to deficit literacy, instructional and curricular approaches (Noguerón Liu, 2020). Working-class Latinx students and teachers face a myriad of oppressive, intersected systems and narratives that obfuscate these forces and limit teachers' discursive agency in the classroom and in their profession. This study not only documents the impact of these entangled, oppressive forces on bilingual teachers, but also provides evidence that teachers actively use strategies to make sense of and analyze these forces.

We join scholars who call for educators to center critical approaches within the practicing lives of bilingual educators (Palmer et al., 2019) to provide teachers tools to critique these competing narratives during the complexity of their teaching lives. Sociocultural *movidas* provided discursive space to discuss culture, socioculturally contextualize narrative and validate collective critical knowledge construction. Academia teachers were often able to socioculturally critically dialogue and analyze pedagogy to the extent that they felt empowered to teach in ways that built upon students' strengths rather than the provided deficit curricula. Research on

sociocultural critique is promising and points to factors (Packer, 2001) and strategies (J. A. Freire and Valdez, 2017) that can promote greater cultural equity in the classroom.

Yet in the current climate, cultural discourse can be poisonous and dangerous for classroom teachers. *Movidas de plática* provided an important discursive mechanism for teachers to be continuously involved in discursive processes of cultural analysis and critique. Research on *movidas* has provided both analytical and discursive (Espinoza, 2018) tools on how to provide the breathing space to advance critique and resistance within oppressive spaces. Ultimately, with these reminders, we recognize sociocultural *movidas de plática* as part of larger research discourses which continue to document and analyze the multiple strategies of critical resistance which teachers continue to use as they work to reflect on, discuss and advocate for their Latinx students.

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