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# TWO-WAY IMMERSION, GENTRIFICATION, AND CRITICAL PEDAGOGY: TEACHING AGAINST THE NEOLIBERAL LOGIC

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**by**

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## Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to Martha, Nicolás and Natalia. Gracias por su paciencia, amor y lucha para un mundo (bilingüe) mejor.

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# TWO-WAY IMMERSION, GENTRIFICATION, AND CRITICAL PEDAGOGY: TEACHING AGAINST THE NEOLIBERAL LOGIC

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This nine-month critical ethnography documented a TWI (two-way immersion) school and community in a rapidly gentrifying urban context in the southwest US in 2015-2016. This gentrification process coalesced with the surging interest of its TWI program by mostly English dominant families, most of whom were transfers and did not live in the immediate neighborhood. The growth of TWI at the local and national levels coupled with the urgent warning from critical scholars in bilingual education about the potential neoliberal assault of TWI (Cervantes-Soon, 2014) were the impetus for the study. The documentation of neoliberal processes on the ground revealed dual gentrifications at the community and schoolwide level; increased property values that pushed the traditional Latinx population to the margins *and* the gentrification of a TWI program (Valdez et al., 2016) as it became a highly sought out place for English dominant families. I conducted interviews with multiple stakeholders, participated in myriad school meetings and events, and most importantly documented and collaborated

with a fifth-grade teacher who integrated critical pedagogy as a response to these neoliberal processes. Findings at the classroom level revealed the teacher's deliberate stance to move beyond TWI's laudable traditional pillars of academic and linguistic proficiency in two languages and multicultural competence to include a new fourth pillar of TWI around the development of students' critical consciousness (Cervantes-Soon et al, 2017). A key facet of this response to both macro and micro neoliberal processes was our decision to position gentrification as a "generative theme" (Freire, 1997) and carry out a thematic unit with students. Student dialogues, blogs, and interviews demonstrated a deeper sense of critical consciousness about how gentrification was impacting their communities and schools. The findings offer empirical support for the proposed fourth pillar of TWI, and how a critical pedagogy of "love, imagination, and fury" (De Lissovoy, 2015) impacted the lives of students, parents, and the researcher. Implications for TWI policy, practice, research, and bilingual teacher preparation are discussed.

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## Chapter 1- Introduction

This nine-month critical ethnography documented a TWI (two-way immersion) school and community (Plainview Elementary[1]) in a rapidly gentrifying urban context in the southwest US in 2015-2016. This gentrification process coalesced with the surging interest of its TWI program by mostly English dominant families, most of whom were transfers and did not live in the immediate Plainview neighborhood. Specifically, this study focused on how these processes impacted Plainview, how major stakeholders were talking about these transformations, and what were some responses to the changes that took root in Plainview. In addition, this work documented a critical fifth-grade teacher's pedagogy, curriculum, and engagement with her students and their families; a linguistically, culturally, and socioeconomically diverse group that had been together since Kindergarten. Michelle's fifth-grade classroom was intentionally selected due to the following; (1) her students comprised the first group of the district's "experiment" with four pilot TWI schools in 2010-2011, (2) unlike grades Kindergarten through 3rd grades in Plainview this fifth-grade classroom maintained a relatively equal distribution of native English/Spanish speakers, (3) Michelle promoted and enacted a social justice and equity-driven curriculum and engaged at a deep level with her families and the Plainview community. Michelle also served as my "anthropological confidant" (Foley & Valenzuela, 2005), as her insight about the pulse of the schoolwide processes was invaluable in gaining a deeper understanding about the transformation of Plainview's

[1] All names are pseudonyms to protect the privacy of the particpants.

TWI community and school. These schoolwide and classroom contextual factors presented me a unique vantage point; the opportunity to document how neoliberalism (gentrification) was playing out "on the ground" (Means, 2013) in a TWI community, while also documenting a response to neoliberalism's brutal rule and inverted morality that "destabilize(s) and fracture(s) communities both inside and outside of schools" (De Lissovoy, 2015, p. 12) through Michelle's integration of critical pedagogy. The combination of Plainview's rapid transformation due to gentrification, Michelle's critical orientation as TWI teacher, and my intimate collaboration with her were the impetus for tapping into these gentrification processes as a "generative theme" (Freire, 1997), as we designed and executed a three-week thematic unit around these processes and is an integral facet of this study.

My decision to carry out an ethnographic study at Plainview stemmed from my position as a parent and activist at the school, as I was witnessing firsthand the combination of urban gentrification of the neighborhood coupled with the gentrification (Valdez, Freire, & Delavan, 2013, 2016) of the TWI program. These gentrification(s) are best described as hegemonic processes/trends that push transnational bilinguals and other minoritized groups out of TWI programs (Valdez et al, 2013, 2016), which manifested, in the case of Plainview, with a dominant English speaking group adept at navigating systems of power and gaining access to the TWI program *and* the geographical gentrification of the neighborhood. This current neoliberal moment in TWI was in a sense predicted by Guadalupe Valdés (1997) almost twenty years ago, as she offered a "cautionary note" about equipping an already dominant group with a second language

(Spanish) that could make them even more dominant. Currently, critical scholars in bilingual education are calling for a "reissuing" of the "cautionary note," and are explicit in directly connecting the recent "discovery" (Flores, 2015) of TWI by the dominant group to a neoliberal agenda driven by amassing more human capital through the acquisition of Spanish (Cervantes-Soon, Dorner, Palmer, Heiman, Schwerdtfeger, & Choi., 2017; Cervantes-Soon, 2014; Petrovic, 2005, Valdez et al., 2016; Varghese & Park, 2010).

TWI programs are "a relatively recent phenomenon in American bilingual education in which English-dominant children are intentionally integrated with speakers of another language (usually Spanish) in bilingual classrooms with the goal of bilingualism and biliteracy for all children" (Palmer & Martínez, 2013, p. 283). Lacking a critical perspective, the "rich promise" (Howard & Sugarman, 2007), "astounding effectiveness" (Collier & Thomas, 2004), its laudable goals of high academic proficiency, linguistic proficiency in two languages, and multicultural competence (Howard, Lindholm-Leary, Sugarman, Christian, & Rogers, 2007) presents the field with myriad challenges. Are both groups benefiting from this "promising" program? Is the minoritized language (Spanish) a tool of empowerment or a resource (Ruíz, 1984) at risk of being commodified by the dominant group (Cervantes-Soon, 2014)? Do teachers possess the necessary pedagogical and linguistic abilities, in addition to the practical, theoretical, and ethical grounding to serve students amidst the complexities and inherent diversity of TWI programs (Palmer & Martínez, 2013)? In striving to sustain a "race radical" vision of bilingual education (Flores, 2016) that first and foremost benefits and intentionally

centers those transnational bilinguals for whom these programs were designed, there is an urgent need to extend those laudable goals to include a fourth one around the development of students' critical consciousness (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017).

These challenges and questions around equity, social justice, and critical pedagogy in TWI were the impetus for this study, as these macro-issues/challenges in the field of bilingual education had great potential to be documented through a critical ethnography of these phenomena at the local level. It is this macro/micro dialectic that makes critical ethnography the obvious choice for this respective study (Means, 2013)- specifically, its focus on; documenting a politicized area of study (bilingual education), engaging in praxis that advocates for the human rights of oppressed groups (transnational bilinguals and their families being pushed out due to gentrification), and agency on behalf of researchers and the researched (Michelle, key informants, and myself) (Barton, 2001). The unique macro/micro dialectic of the recent explosion of TWI programs at the local level in the city where the study took place (Taboda, 2014) and national level (Palmer, Cervantes-Soon, & Heiman, In Press), the gentrification of what were historically urban contexts of color at the national (Cucchiara, 2013; Lipman, 2011; Smith, 1996) and local level (Auyero, 2015), as well as Plainview's status as a TWI pioneer and leader in the district provided a set of ideal circumstances for a critical ethnographic study. Most importantly, I added a hopeful and empowering layer by documenting Michelle's critical pedagogy around issues of power, social justice, community engagement, and the gentrification processes that were affecting some of her students. Her embodiment of a critical TWI teacher succinctly aligned with the aims of critical ethnography; her practice

was political and praxis-oriented, she advocated for her transnational students and families, and along with her students demonstrated instances of agency. Hence, the neoliberal "path" (Peck, Theodore, & Brenner, 2009) targeting Plainview was fueled by the recent explosion of interest in TWI at the macro/micro level, urban gentrification that pushed transnational bilinguals "out" of the neighborhood, and the gentrification of TWI that pushed the dominant group from mostly outside the community "in" to the school. This neoliberal "path" was countered by Michelle's critical counter "path" of critical pedagogy and commitment to extending the pillars of TWI to include students' development of critical consciousness.

Thus, this research looks to fill two gaps in the TWI literature; an ethnographic account of the processes around the gentrification of dual language (Valdez et al., 2013, 2016) at the school and community level (the neoliberal path), and empirical support for the proposed fourth pillar around the development of students' critical consciousness in a TWI classroom (the critical counter path). The study was guided by three overarching research questions; (1) How did recent demographic shifts and processes shape an urban TWI school? (2) How did the same TWI school respond to these demographic shifts and processes? (3) How did a fifth-grade TWI teacher respond to these demographic shifts and processes through her pedagogy, curriculum, and engagement with the community? This introduction will provide; (1) an overarching theoretical framework of neoliberalism, (2) a rationale for the "reissuing" of Valdés' "cautionary note" (3) the sense of urgency, due to this "reissuing" of the "note", to enact a critical pedagogy that fosters students' critical consciousness, and (4) an overview of the rest of the study.

In response to the at times nebulous use of neoliberalism as a theoretical frame, Flores and Bale (2016) exhort researchers in the field of bilingual education to be specific in the application of neoliberalism in one's research agenda. Birch (2015) reminds us that this specificity is essential, as "neoliberalism is increasingly difficult to define clearly, precisely because it is used in so many different ways, empirically and analytically" (p. 571). I outline some of neoliberalism's foundations and then "specify" how I plan to take up neoliberalism in the context of the gentrification of Plainview's TWI community and school.

## Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism traces its roots to the 1950s and the ideas of Milton Friedman and the infamous Chicago School, who promoted a weakening of the state and a move away from Keynesian social welfare programs. These neoconservative ideologues promoted mass privatization, the demonization of unions, and most importantly a free-market ideology that fosters competition and individual initiative. Neoliberalism gained traction in the 1980s in the US and England under Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, as they orchestrated a severe depletion of public safety nets for the working-class and their families. A basic premise behind this doctrine was that one's success and opportunities hinged upon hard work and being strategic to take full advantage of the free-market. As the state began to cede power to corporate interests, it left millions from the ranks of the working-class to fend for themselves due to the stripping of social welfare programs. It was also during Reagan's tenure that the *Nation at Risk* study was published, a scathing

report that highlighted that public schools in the US were failing students and drastic measures were needed. As a result of this report, neoliberal policies targeted public education and have altered its landscape in myriad ways. Examples are for-profit charter schools, voucher programs, increased standardized testing, the closing of neighborhood schools, attempts to dismantle teachers' unions, and other free-market pro-business initiatives that cater to individual choice (Apple, 2006; Ball, 2010; De Lissovoy et al., 2015; De Lissovoy, 2008; Lipman, 2011). Hence, this political-economic landscape of schooling has prompted critical scholars to examine the impact of neoliberalism on urban schools in the US (Ambrosio, 2013; Apple, 2006, 2010; De Lissovoy, 2008, 2010, 2012; De Lissovoy, Means, & Saltman, 2015; Giroux, 2009; Lipman, 2011; Means, 2013). This call also served as an impetus to complicate our conceptualization of neoliberalism in purely economic terms to include how neoliberalism has the powerful potential to impact our subjectivities; specifically, our public lives, relationships, and our identities (Dardot & Laval, 2014; De Lissovoy, 2012, 2015; Foucault, 2008: Giroux, 2009). De Lissovoy (2015) posits "The terrain of neoliberalism should become more complex. Neoliberalism is also a social and cultural formation, though it is not usually analyzed as such" (p. 49). This more complex understanding and application of neoliberalism has powerful connections to the TWI "terrain," as these spaces of "social" and "cultural" entanglement and "formation" can be impacted by neoliberal processes. The call for a "reissuing" of the "cautionary note" by critical scholars, who vouch for a "terrain" centered on equity and social justice (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017; Flores, 2016; Palmer et al., In Press), is an urgent call to prevent the reorientation of subjectivities in TWI spaces around purely

neoliberal aims that pose great potential to commodify bilingualism and become staging grounds for human capital accumulation. Hence, neoliberalism's dangerous potential to reorient the "public lives, relationships, and identities" of TWI stakeholders around purely neoliberal aims, is a threat to the original "race radical" vision of bilingual education that centers the interests and realities of transnational students (Flores, 2016; Grinberg & Saavedra, 2000). The potential gentrification of TWI (Valdez et al., 2013, 2016), due to its explosive growth and interest from English dominant families, is a neoliberal "path" that is described in the next section.

## Gentrification as a Manifestation of Neoliberalism: A Path that Leads to Urban Contexts

In addition to the complexities highlighted above around subjectivities, I look to the field of human geography as I outline how this research makes use of neoliberalism as a theoretical frame. Posey-Maddox, Kimelberg, and Cucchiara (2014) recently proposed a poignant question around gentrification and urban public schooling: "Could the movement of middle-class families into disadvantaged urban public schools itself be characterized as a form of gentrification" (p. 454)? I argue that scholars of human geography would characterize this phenomenon as a "form of gentrification," due to their theorizing of an "actually-existing neoliberalism" that seeks to place emphasis on urban spaces, its contextual nature and the path-dependency of neoliberal restructuring projects (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Peck et al., 2009; Smith, 1996). This conceptualization of neoliberalism as a phenomenon that manifests through processes and interactions is a

stark contrast from a traditional perspective of a neoliberal ideology, which "assumes that market forces operate accordingly to immutable laws no matter where they are unleashed" (Peck et al., 2009, p. 49). The field of human geography has also conceptualized these processes and interactions as instances of neoliberalization. These instances are restructuring processes that take root due to specific forces such as privatization, marketization, and commodification, and due to specific social actors (Birch & Siemiatycki, 2015; Peck & Tickell, 2007; Springer, 2015).

Cucchiara (2013) defines this "specific force" as a process "through which middle- and upper-class people move into a largely low-income and working-class neighborhood and renovate and restore existing homes in such a way that the neighborhood becomes more desirable to other members of the middle class and to the businesses that cater to them" (p. 204). Current scholarship on this "specific force" of gentrification, specifically the impact of middle-class families in urban public schools suggests that these neighborhood demographic shifts also influence demographic shifts in schools (Butler, Hamnett, & Ramsden, 2013; Petrilli, 2012; Stillman, 2012). As urban economic policies open up working-class neighborhoods to development and the prospects of new cultural frontiers, the process of "accumulation by dispossession" (Harvey, 2005) displaces communities of color, who are not offered the "choice" to remain in their community and neighborhood school (Lipman, 2011). As schools in these gentrified neighborhoods acquire additional resources, schools in other areas of the city are pushed into further states of decay (Cucchiara, 2013; Posey-Maddox, Kimelberg, & Cucchiara, 2014). As part of this process an overarching "common sense" settles in

which leads societies to believe that these urban transformations are destined to take place and should not be questioned (Apple, 2006; De Lissovoy et al., 2015). As this common sense colonizes the spatial and the social imaginary, the collective good is replaced by a focus on one's individual trajectory, and one is interpellated (Althusser, 1971) into the seduction of human capital accumulation (De Lissovoy, 2015). The author conceptualizes this interpellation as, "We succeed in our personal and public lives to the extent that we become entrepreneurs of ourselves, peddlers of our human capital" (p. 17). For example, the "collective good" of a TWI program that should be driven by equity, social justice, and community could potentially be sidetracked by the "allure" of becoming bilingual as a form of self-entrepreneurship. The impact and relationship between the "specific force" of gentrification and TWI are of most interest in this research at Plainview. It was this "force" from the neoliberal "path" that impacted the relationships, public lives, and identities of "specific social actors" on the ground at this TWI school. In summary , I conceptualize neoliberalism as a process that; (1) stretches beyond neoliberal ideology to include its impact at the levels of ontology and epistemology (De Lissovoy & Cedillo, 2016; Foucault, 2008), (2) is a "path" that targets urban contexts through "specific forces" such as gentrification that impact and are impacted by "specific social actors" and their identities, public lives, and relationships, (3) due to these processes and interactions calls for a "reissuing" of Valdés' (1997) "cautionary note," which leads into the rationale for this critical ethnographic study, (4) and a phenomenon that should be challenged and resisted through a "counter-path" or

"counter-force" that is enacted in TWI spaces through the integration of critical pedagogy.

## The Current Neoliberal Moment in TWI: Rationale for the Study

TWI programs, which are also known as dual language programs, are additive bilingual programs that promote bilingualism and biliteracy, high academic achievement, and multicultural competence for all students (Howard et al., 2007). For the purpose of this study I refer to these aims as the "traditional" or "original" goals/pillars of TWI programs. TWI programs have proved to be much more effective (Lindholm-Leary, 2001; Thomas & Collier, 2002) in comparison to transitional bilingual education programs that utilize the minority language as a support and foundation for English acquisition, as opposed to a focus on bilingualism and biliteracy. The "astounding effectiveness" and "promise" of TWI and its three "traditional" pillars are indeed an upgrade over transitional bilingual programs; nonetheless the "reissuing" of the "cautionary note" due to the potential neoliberal assault on these programs demands that the field remain vigilant.

Guadalupe Valdés' "cautionary note" (1997) did not specifically forefront the potential impact of neoliberalism on TWI programs. Nonetheless, her framing of the dominant English speaking population (the elite) as being positioned to amass even more power (human capital) when acquiring Spanish due to their enrollment in TWI programs has succinct connections to how critical scholars are currently talking about the impact of neoliberalism on TWI. The 20th anniversary of Valdés' prescient words, the upsurge in

TWI programs on a national scale (de Jong, 2016; Milton, 2008; Wilson, 2011), and the potential impact of neoliberal processes on these programs call for a "reissuing" of the "cautionary note." This "reissuing" of the "cautionary note" is explicit in naming neoliberalism as a hegemonic "path/specific force" that poses a dangerous threat to the original "race radical" vision of bilingual education that centers the interests and realities of transnational bilinguals and their families (Flores, 2016; Grinberg & Saavedra, 2000). Specifically, this "reissuing" has been sent to the field of bilingual education by critical scholars who "named" this potential neoliberal impact on TWI programs (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017; Cervantes-Soon, 2014; Palmer et al., In Press; Petrovic, 2005; Valdez et al., 2016; Varghese & Park, 2010). Prior to this "reissuing" of the "cautionary note," critical scholars revealed inequalities around issues of power, access to TWI programs, and classroom dynamics (Dorner, 2010, 2011; Fitts, 2006, 2009; López, 2013; Muro, 2016; Palmer, 2008, 2009, 2010), as these ethnographic studies were intent on taking up Valdés' original "cautionary note." The interactions and processes documented in these respective sites pointed to instances of "interest convergence" (Bell, 1980). Minoritized populations participation in TWI sites "converged" with interests of the dominant group, which positioned the latter to accrue more benefits than the minoritized group in a program that was designed to mitigate asymmetrical power imbalances. Hence, critical work has addressed the original "cautionary note" in creative and insightful ways, which laid a strong foundation for current scholars and their "reissuing" of Valdés' important claim from twenty years ago.

This gentrification of TWI (Valdez et al., 2013, 2016) has not been documented "on the ground" ethnographically, and this potential was the impetus for researching this process at Plainview. Gentrification, a phenomenon that is often discussed as a manifestation of neoliberal processes (De Lissovoy, 2015; Lipman, 2011; Means, 2013; Smith, 1996), has been discussed at the level of educational policy in cities such as Chicago (Lipman, 2011) and Philadelphia (Cucchiara, 2013). Lipman shed light on revitalization efforts in formerly blighted areas of Chicago, which led to gentrification and a rebranding of struggling neighborhood schools into what Lipman described as "boutique public schools" due to this influx of new constituents. As these areas became frontiers for urban culture and renewal, minoritized populations were not able to remain in the neighborhood and take advantage of these rebranded schools that were now looked upon in positive ways. Cucchiara looked into a city government's preoccupation with attracting middle and upper class constituents who lived in the urban core to inner-city schools. These postures on behalf of city employees positioned these constituents to play agentive roles in one school's identity transformation into a highly sought out place for privileged populations who often opted for private schools. Cucchiara formed intimate relationships and attended myriad school functions with privileged parents who lived in the gentrified catchment area and minoritized parents brought in as transfers from struggling schools in the city. She uncovered the city's determination to entice wealthier families to send their children to inner-city schools, while not placing the same importance on the needs of the minoritized groups. The author highlighted "middle-class families were constructed as civilizing agents and low-income children and parents as the

symbolic Other who embody and are responsible for the chaos and dysfunction that characterize so many "inner-city" schools" (p. 110). At the state level, Valdez et al. (2016) carried out a critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2010) of Utah's policy documents in bilingual education, specifically around the discursive framing of the state's dual language programs. The authors revealed that Utah's dual language policy was hegemonic in its makeup, as it centered the interests and the benefits of the white English dominant constituency, while silencing the interests and benefits of minoritized groups. This was noted as contributing to a growing trend of dual language gentrification (Flores, 2015; Morales & Rao, 2015; Valdez et al., 2013, 2016) that pushes transnational bilinguals out of these programs originally designed for minoritized populations.

This critical work in Chicago, Philadelphia, and Utah in educational policy has revealed the potential havoc created by the gentrification of space (neighborhoods) and a radical educational reform (De Lissovoy, 2008) such as TWI to the detriment of marginalized students and families. This study looks to add to this conversation by documenting how *both* of these gentrification processes converged at Plainview, and how it played out in interactions, discourses, and relationships on the ground at the school. In addition, while the documentation of this gentrification of TWI is essential as a critique of the neoliberal regime, this also should be accompanied by concrete political and pedagogical projects to counter this brutal rule of neoliberalism (Ambrosio, 2013; Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017; De Lissovoy, 2015). In the following section I outline the urgency of these kinds of projects, which addresses the call to add a critical fourth TWI pillar around the development of students' critical consciousness (Cervantes-Soon et al.,

2017). Beyond a critique of the neoliberal impact on TWI, there is a need for courageous pedagogical work driven by "imagination, love, and fury" (De Lissovoy, 2015). A key contribution of this study seeks to respond to the "reissuing" of Valdés' "cautionary note" by documenting Michelle's critical orientation around pedagogy, curriculum, and engagement with the community. This "reissuing" demands that TWI spaces go beyond TWI's foundational pillars of academic rigor, linguistic proficiency, and multicultural competence to include a Freirian pillar that foments critical consciousness. The gentrification of TWI poses serious challenges to the "rich promise" of these programs, which demands urgent responses to maintain a race radical vision of bilingual education centered on equity and social justice.

## The Urgency of the 4th Pillar in TWI Spaces: A Critical Response to Neoliberalism

Critical pedagogy encompasses much more than mastering a diverse toolkit of pedagogical techniques and that which is spelled out in the assigned curriculum, state/national standards, and the textbook. Critical educators must not only have a deft handle on the subject matter but also have a deep understanding of the political structure of the school (Kincheloe, 2004). Its supporters look to important scholars (Bartolomé, 2004; Darder, 2015; Freire, 1997; Giroux, 1988; Kincheloe, 2004; McLaren, 2000; Shor, 1992) in vouching for an education that takes the perspective of subaltern population's lived experiences. Critical pedagogy is driven by a critique of structural, economic, and racial inequities, and steadfastly emphasizes dialogical classrooms as opposed to "banking" techniques (Freire, 1997) that position the teacher as the sole depositor of

knowledge. Critical pedagogy promotes a problem-posing education focused on a creative imagination that foments reflection and action upon reality, and fosters student engagement in inquiry and transformation through this praxis (Freire, 1997). However, Duncan-Andrade and Morrell (2008) emphasize that critical pedagogy's three goals of academic achievement, empowered identity development, and action for social change have been overtheorized, as the field is lacking empirical studies focused on "the possible translation of principles of critical pedagogy into practices" (p.101). This study looks to address the urgent call to document critical pedagogy in practice while at the same time providing empirical support for TWI's proposed pillar around the development of students' critical consciousness. Freire (2007) frames this urgency as a teacher's inherent ethical responsibility to stand with oppressed populations and integrate a social justice pedagogy as a form of resistance to "social forces" such as gentrification.

**Critical Consciousness in TWI Spaces**

A foundational pillar of critical pedagogy is the development of critical consciousness, which is centered around overcoming dominant narratives by gaining a deeper understanding of role of power in the formation of oppressive situations (Freire, 2007). Leistyna (2007) emphasizes that the development of critical consciousness should not be positioned as a process that strives to get students to think and act in a specific manner; rather it should be to foment deeper thought about the issues and relations of power that impact them. De Lissovoy (2015) emphasizes that there is no formula, best practice, or teacher-proof curriculum that instructs teachers in teaching to foment critical

consciousness, as he urges teachers to integrate a pedagogy of love, imagination, and fury to teach against systems of power. For example, Freire's (1997) conceptualization of "generative themes" offers teachers a "generative" starting point through which students can be exposed to themes of injustice, which offer hopeful possibilities for curricular explorations, dialogue, and the awakening of students' critical consciousness (Freire, 1998). Freire (1997) describes these "generative themes" as key historical processes, important ideas, and hopes around which teaching, learning, and struggle can be brought together and used as platforms for inquiry and dialogue. It is through processes of dialogue, struggle, and praxis that students begin to see themselves and their everyday social realities as part of generative themes such as globalization, colonization, and gentrification. Hence, the teaching of these themes coupled with students forging direct links between their lives and the themes, issues, and historical points of study have powerful potential to develop students' critical consciousness. TWI classrooms, as crossroads of diverging racial, cultural, and linguistic realities, are ideal spaces to explore a critical pedagogy that integrates generative themes. This study documents Michelle's and her students' "exploration" of problematizing histories and societal configurations as a vehicle to develop critical consciousness in the TWI classroom (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017).

**Critical Ethnography as Advocacy: Gentrification as the Generative Theme**

Critical ethnography is an activist approach to research that positions research as inherently political, a process in which the researcher and researched enact agency,

advocates for the oppressed (Barton, 2001; Madison, 2012), and maps wider social relationships and human experiences from the local to the global (Means, 2013). As a researcher committed to these methodological tenants, I took up a position of advocacy with my focal participant, Michelle. Specifically, we carried out a critical pedagogical intervention based on a situation of violence and injustice (Freire, 1998) in the form of the same gentrification processes that were impacting the city and its school district, Plainview community, and school. Through this intervention, we mapped the local to the global, as both the gentrification of urban communities and TWI were taking root in our local context (Auyero, 2015) and on a national scale. It was this "generative theme" (Freire, 1997) that fueled the curricular openings, dialogue, and awakening of consciousness from two groups (Freire, 1998), which addressed the call to promote the development of students' critical consciousness in TWI spaces (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017). The potential gentrification of TWI's "rich promise" coupled with the "reissuing" of Valdés' "cautionary note" demands humanizing research methodologies (Paris & Winn, 2014) that bring researchers, students, teachers, and parents together to dismantle inequalities in TWI spaces (Cervantes et al., 2017). This critical ethnographic approach offered a powerful opportunity to document processes of injustice and inequality on the ground at Plainview, while most importantly provided a unique vantage point from which to document and participate in a critical pedagogy of hope, resistance, and love in Michelle's classroom. In the next section I outline the structure of the dissertation.

## Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter two describes the critical ethnographic methods employed at both the schoolwide and classroom levels, while also centering my complex positionality at Plainview. Chapter three provides context about gentrification in Austin and how these processes were affecting the city's school district and its dual language program. The bulk of the chapter provides an historical perspective of Plainview and the surrounding community through the eyes of administrators, teachers, and parents. Chapter four offers a perspective of Plainview's TWI program, specifically highlighting neoliberal discourses (*TWI as product*) and discourses of resistance (*TWI as a political vehicle*). Chapter five provides background information about Michelle, and then focuses on her TWI pillars of "Spanish, love, content, not in that order," and her language-as-empowerment framework. Chapter six documents our positioning of gentrification as a "generative theme" and critical counter "path" to engage students in a thematic unit around this "specific force." Chapter seven discusses the implications of this study in the areas of policy, practice, research, and bilingual teacher preparation.

## Chapter 2- Methodology

This chapter outlines the methodology for the study at Plainview, as the decision to engage in a critical ethnography at Plainview stemmed from personal, political, and theoretical commitments to equity, social justice, and critical pedagogy in the field of bilingual education. These three commitments finally converged due to a transformational educational ethnography course that spurred me to reconsider my doctoral trajectory, which meant a complete change of heart as to what really interested me in the field of bilingual education. I had taken my qualifying exams in preparation for a qualitative study focused on the identity formation of bilingual pre-service teachers. My lack of excitement and passion around this topic, decision to audit the ethnography course, and newfound interest in TWI due to a "personal" connection as a parent at my son's TWI school were the impetus for my new journey as a researcher. As a parent at a highly sought out and highly regarded TWI school (Plainview), I had separated the "personal" from my "theoretical" and "political" commitments by maintaining a neutral stance during my first year and half at the school. My knowledge and interest of TWI was limited at that point in time. I was just happy that my son could participate in an additive bilingual program, due to my family's "commitment" to bilingualism and a family language policy of speaking Spanish in the home.

My knowledge and interest about TWI piqued as I decided to become involved at Plainview as an interpreter at meetings and a translator for school related documents, meeting minutes, and the school newspaper. As I began observing Plainview's

gentrification processes and began immersing myself in the literature around inequalities in TWI, I also started taking note of more white English speaking families at meetings and in general at the school. My theoretical and political commitments to TWI gained more clarity during the ethnography course, and it was through course readings, engaging classroom dialogue, and generative written exercises that I was beginning to conceptualize the need for a critical ethnographic study at Plainview. This conceptualization gained even more clarity after reading Dr. Cervantes-Soon's (2014) *A Critical Look at Dual Language Immersion in the New Latin@ Diaspora* and Alexander Means' (2013) *Schooling in the Age of Austerity: Urban Education and the Struggle for Democratic Life.* Cervantes-Soon's work warned the field of bilingual education about the potential neoliberal assault on TWI programs, while Means' study sounded an urgent call to document how neoliberalism was playing out "on the ground" in urban schools. The combination of newfound personal, theoretical, and political commitments made me realize there was activist work to be done at Plainview around equity and social justice due to gentrification. I found allies and we collectively began to challenge neoliberal processes that had great potential to commodify and colonize a program originally designed to serve transnational bilingual families (Flores, 2016; Grinberg & Saavedra, 2000). It was this activist bent to the work that positioned me to carry out a critical ethnographic study about how neoliberal processes were shaping a TWI community and school, and provide a hopeful response to these processes by documenting and working with a fifth-grade teacher who intentionally integrated critical pedagogical perspectives to foment the development of students' critical consciousness (Cervantes-Soon, 2017).

Critical ethnography positions research as an activist endeavor with inherent ethical responsibilities to investigate inequitable conditions within a specific lived domain (Madison, 2012); a domain where the "researcher feels an ethical obligation to make a contribution toward changing those conditions toward greater freedom and equity" (p. 5). As a response to engaging in empirical research in an unjust world marked by distinct power asymmetries, critical ethnography emerged in the 1980's through the suturing of ethnography and critical theory (Noblit, 1999). Thus, the "doing" of critical theory found its "method" in the tenants of critical ethnography (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000). I positioned the "domain" of Plainview's TWI program as "unjust" and marked by "distinct power asymmetries," which revealed the urgency of a critical ethnographic study with potential to map the macro/micro relationships (Means, 2013) of TWI in its current neoliberal moment. Michelle and I believed it was our "ethical obligation" to resist this neoliberal encroachment on TWI by advocating for the oppressed (Barton, 2001; Madison, 2012) due to gentrification processes that were impacting the Plainview community. It was this agency on behalf of the researcher (me) and the researched (Michelle) that offered a hopeful response to the macro/micro neoliberal processes impacting the national and local (Plainview) TWI landscape.

My privileged positionality as a white male, researcher, parent, and activist at Plainview offered a unique and challenging vantage point that provided multiple points of access, emotions, and learning. Madison (2012) exhorts critical ethnographers to acknowledge their positionality, as "it forces us to acknowledge our own power, privilege, and biases as we denounce the power structures that surround our subjects. A

concern for positionality is a reflexive ethnography; it is a turning back on ourselves" (p. 8). In the next section I provide a description of this positionality, and then describe the data collection process at both the schoolwide and Michelle's classroom levels.

## My Positionality at Plainview

My position at Plainview was unique, as it was my direct involvement in the context *before* the study as a parent that was my impetus to investigate how gentrification was shaping the school and community (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Villenas (1996) calls on us as researchers to consider our distinct behaviors and characteristics that are important when positioning ourselves as insiders to those in the community who will participate in the research. Villenas posits "the sharing of collective experiences and collective space with the participants" (p.722) paves the way for our acceptance into that community. As the participants included teachers, parents, students, and administrators, I did share "collective experiences and spaces" with them at Plainview. Prior to committing to a research career I was a fourth-grade bilingual teacher in El Paso, Texas and over the last 17 years have been actively involved with and a strong advocate for bilingual education. These practical experiences coupled with my philosophical commitment to equity, social justice, and critical pedagogy in bilingual education spaces were catalysts in my interest in documenting the impact of neoliberal processes at Plainview and how a critical pedagogue like Michelle taught against this neoliberal logic. I shared "collective experiences" in common with her; as a classroom teacher, I worked closely with parents, was deliberate in my integration of critical curricular interventions,

and shared with her a deep concern about the recent demographic shifts taking place at Plainview. As a teacher and researcher, Michelle and I "shared" similar epistemological and practical frameworks, which would contribute to our decision to carry out a thematic unit around gentrification.

I was also a parent at Plainview during the study, as my son was in second-grade and had been at the school since Pre-Kindergarten. We did not live in the Plainview catchment area, as we chose the school because our home school did not offer a dual language program. Our decision to transfer to Plainview stemmed from its stellar reputation in dual language, recommendations from colleagues at the local university, a robust Latino presence, and most importantly our commitment to speaking Spanish at home. We believed that Plainview was the best option in reinforcing our commitment to the minority language. During my first two years as a parent I took a hands-off approach to becoming politically and ontologically involved at the school, as I focused on forming good relationships with his teachers and administrators, meeting some of the other parents, and coaching basketball. My involvement changed when my son started first-grade, as I began to observe how the English-dominant parents were the main participants at PTA meetings and other school events, which also coincided with there being more English spoken at these events. This differed from my interactions during the first two years, as I was immersed in myriad contexts in which I interacted in Spanish. I also started meeting other parents who were expressing concern about changing demographics and gentrification, the reduced presence of Spanish in informal spaces, and uncertainty

about the goals of the TWI program at Plainview- specifically in the areas of equity and social justice.

As I was noticing these changes, a relevant article about power asymmetries at a TWI school in San Francisco, California appeared in Rethinking Schools (Cornell Gonzáles, 2014) and I decided to share it with some parents, teachers, and the principal. At the next PTA meeting, at which I participated as an interpreter, the facilitators passed out the article and put us in groups with people we did not know so that we could discuss our perspectives of Plainview's TWI program. It was in this small group where I met Michelle, whose critical perspectives and intentionality around social justice grabbed my attention and who would end up being my focal participant for this respective study due to her "race radical" vision of bilingual education (Flores, 2016). Powerful discussions took place; mainly focused on the importance of Spanish instruction and assuring that bilingualism/biculturalism remained a key pillar of the school. As this discussion took up the bulk of the meeting time, the PTA proposed the idea of creating a dual language committee. I was nominated to be the lead facilitator, and since that time have "shared collective space" with other Plainview parents.

**My Power and Privilege at Plainview**

Even though I shared "collective space" with key stakeholders at Plainview, I must acknowledge my own power, privilege, and biases in and around my participants. If I refused to take ownership of the accrued benefits of this status, there would have been great potential to gloss over the complex inequities and layered injustices of those

populations whose status can be unfairly subordinated (Madison, 2012). It is imperative to disclose the following: I am a white man, middle-class, English dominant, heterosexual, bilingual, and highly educated, which provides me a wealth of cultural capital. I am a doctoral candidate at a flagship university in the southwest, and form part of a Curriculum and Instruction Department which foments critical research that vouches for the voices of the oppressed, seeks to expose inequalities, and is intentional in promoting issues of social justice. I decided to attend this university for this critical bent, and this research is undoubtedly the result of engaging with faculty and students around these critical perspectives. I am married to a Mexican woman and we are raising two bicultural children who are white-skinned, self-identify as *Mexicana/o,* and often receive strange glances when speaking in Spanish. By *appearing* to be English dominant bilinguals, their bilingualism is often celebrated, while working-class brown communities' bilingualism is expected (Muro, 2016). I am also frequently celebrated for being bilingual. As an activist, researcher, and teacher educator I position this bilingualism as a form of alliance with the Latinx community (Flores, 2016). As a family we align our values, interests, and life style around the Mexican culture much more than to my white cultural background.

Nonetheless, I am a white activist scholar working in a complex field around complex issues that directly affect the lives and realities of minoritized students and families, whose experiences have oftentimes been disseminated from the perspective of white scholars with deficit lenses of language, culture, and identity. My social location and this historical reality of research in bilingual education positioned me in ways that

benefited and hindered my connection and understanding at Plainview. This social location facilitated communication with both groups who came together in Plainview's TWI program. My experience on the borderlands as a bilingual teacher and overall comfort in Spanish speaking environments and schools positioned me as being culturally competent and having the skills to cross linguistic, cultural, and social class divides. Thus, I could access academic, social, and local language varieties at Plainview, which provided valuable tools to connect with stakeholders and insight into the processes taking shape in the community and school. At the same time the fact that I come from the dominant group that has become adept at "discovering" (Flores, 2015) and "colonizing the imagination" (De Lissovoy, 2015) of TWI realities cannot be overlooked. Prior to this "discovery" and thirst for additive bilingual programs like TWI, this same dominant group was a catalyst in disparaging and dismantling bilingual education in states like California, Arizona, and Massachusetts because they viewed these programs as a threat to American values and identity (Faltis, 2014; Fitts & Weisman, 2010; Ricento, 2005). As interest convergence (Bell, 1980), the commodification of minoritized languages (Cervantes-Soon, 2014; Petrovic, 2005; Varghese & Park, 2010), and the recent explosion of TWI programs takes on newfound significance due to the influence of the dominant group, white scholars like myself need to acknowledge this attempt to sequester bilingual education for personal gain, prestige, and power (Palmer et al., In Press). Most importantly, as white scholars in bilingual education it is our duty to access our power and privilege to resist this takeover and work towards advancing social justice and equity in our TWI research agendas.

As previously mentioned, we did not live in the Plainview neighborhood. This was problematic for me, as I firmly believe that the surrounding community should play an integral part in the school. As previously mentioned, our local neighborhood school did not have a dual language program, which motivated us to choose Plainview. Nonetheless, I felt deeply invested at Plainview and for an extended period was involved in activist efforts around equity, social justice, and community building. At the same time gentrification made it difficult for native-Spanish speaking students to live in the catchment area, which revealed the necessity of seeking out this population from outside the neighborhood. My power, privilege, and knowledge of the system allowed me to access this additive bilingual space for my son, as opposed to placing him in our neighborhood school that only provided ESL services. My whiteness and knowledge of the system facilitated a process that many marginalized and minoritized populations did not have access to, which needs to be divulged. Hence, even though I felt it was problematic that we did not live in the Plainview community, it was also a strategic form of activism in seeking out a TWI program that was designed to serve students like my son who speak a language other than English in the home.

**My Activist Work at Plainview**

By the time data collection was initiated, I was already a visible stakeholder at Plainview. My leadership role in the dual language committee was a strategic one, as it was in this capacity and space where we could promote dialogue about urgent issues such as gentrification, equity, and social justice, and specifically how these issues were being

addressed at the school. The year before data collection we had our monthly meetings as a separate committee apart from the PTA, which may have contributed to not feeling recognized by administration as an "official" school entity. We invited the administration on numerous occasions, but they never participated in our meetings. The following year, which was the year I collected data, we strategically created an alliance with PTA and no longer held our own dual language committee meetings, and only provided a brief update about pertinent issues in dual language at the campus and district levels. A glaring limitation of our dual language committee was how the English dominant parents' voices were the majority, even though we attempted to bring more working-class Latino voices into the conversation. Finally, during the data collection phase I was serving the first of a two-year commitment on the CAC (Campus Advisory Council). The CAC is a committee made up of parents, teachers, and administrators that dialogue about pertinent issues such as staffing, curriculum, the TWI program, and district updates.

I was also involved with a local social justice organization that focused on issues of equity and social justice at the city and community levels. Plainview had been an "Faith Alliance" school both before and after the "dual gentrifications" of TWI and geography began to impact the school. Faith Alliance's overarching goal is to improve the lives of the most vulnerable communities through the leveraging of community knowledges, dialogue across race/class/gender, and most importantly engaging with politicians and holding them accountable to their commitments. Their work around affordable housing had been a catalyst in preventing the "gentrification" of a TWI program just south of downtown. Faith Alliance's synergistic relationship with the school

and the public housing commission was a key factor in Latino families being able to stay in the area and continue attending a well-respected TWI school. Faith Alliance's focus on the most vulnerable families had succinct connections to the Plainview context as well, as their activist work fronted these "vulnerable" knowledges as essential in maintaining a robust, equitable, and social justice-driven TWI program. There had been periods both before and after TWI when there was an active/inactive relationship between Faith Alliance and Plainview. Faith Alliance was an active presence at Plainview during the initial pilot year (2010-2011), as there was a concerted focus to promote dialogue across race, culture, language, and social class, as this was a new phenomenon because pre-TWI Plainview was 90% Latinx. During my first year and a half when I was an "active" parent but not an activist parent, there was no relationship between the two entities. This was due to the thriving and much desired TWI program that was attracting transfers from all over the city, even though gentrification was beginning to make its mark by displacing Latinos at a considerable pace. The relationship with Faith Alliance reignited due to our activist work in the dual language committee, as gentrification was altering the landscape of the surrounding community and TWI program at rapid and alarming rates, specifically- through the "dual gentrifications" of property and the TWI "product" that was coveted by the dominant culture. We were concerned that the essence and "race radical" vision of bilingual education that should center the interests and realities of the minority group (Flores, 2016; Palmer et al., 2017) was under attack and being violated by neoliberal processes with great potential to enrich economic elites (De Lissovoy, 2015; Foucault, 2008; Harvey, 2005; Giroux, 2009). This urgency around issues of equity and

social justice in Plainview's TWI program was the driving impetus to reach out to Faith Alliance, with the principle efforts being centered on affordable housing concerns and training and organizing around house meetings at the school and classroom levels. House meetings were structured dialogues that designated leaders were trained to take back to classrooms and other school spaces, with the foci being around dialogue and taking action about issues affecting the most vulnerable populations. Our efforts to engage with Faith Alliance was not an urgent matter for administration and other stakeholders, and this undoubtedly contributed to the inconsistent relationship and engagement between Faith Alliance and Plainview.

Based on these disclosures of power, privilege, and activism it was very clear that I had inherent biases about Plainview participants and power structures. Hence, carrying out a critical ethnography encouraged me to tap into the resources, skills, and privileges I had access to, "to penetrate the borders and break through the confines in defense of the voices and experiences of subjects whose stories are otherwise restrained and out of reach" (Madison, 2012, p.6). Fine (1994) sees the role of the ethnographer as one who takes a clear stance in taking action on hegemonic practices and assumes an advocacy role in shedding light on the material effects of oppressed locations, while at the same time coming up with alternatives. Finally, the potential to map the local "dual gentrifications" to similar neoliberal processes at the macro-level through the documentation of "neoliberalism on the ground" (Means, 2013) and one teacher's work in fomenting the development of critical consciousness in her fifth-grade TWI classroom (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017) made critical ethnography the ideal methodological frame.

Specifically, critical ethnographic approaches position research as inherently political, advocates for the histories and realities of oppressed groups, and foment agency from the researcher and the researched (Barton, 2001). This research adhered to those tenants, as (1) bilingual education was positioned as both *political* and complex social, practical and historical terrain, (2) the study advocated for Latino families being impacted by gentrification, and (3) my focal participant and I were agentic as part of the research process.

**Negotiation of Selves**

There were multiple categories of participants and numerous contexts where the research took place, which required that I construct a variety of "selves" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). The self that I embodied with teachers, administrators, parents, Michelle, and students presented me with distinct situations, discussions, and positions that provided myriad layers in this study. It is recommended that, when engaging in a critical ethnography, the researcher be explicit with participants about the purpose of the study and the methodology (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). This explicitness was enacted in nuanced ways, as there were varying levels of discourse choices depending on which participants I was interacting with in that moment. For example, I opted to use less descriptive language when talking about urban gentrification's effect on Plainview's TWI community with parents. Specifically, I framed the study as researching the changing demographics that were taking place at Plainview, without explicitly naming gentrification as the main social force of interest. This negotiation of terms (Hammersley

& Atkinson, 2007) was essential in effectively positioning me to collect data from parents, as the topic of gentrification was a complex and emotional issue at Plainview. I was deliberately more explicit and straightforward with teachers and administrators, as they were invested in the students, concerned with the transformation of Plainview, and most importantly aware that the program could only thrive with a sizeable Latino presence. The administrators and many of the teachers had been involved in previous studies carried out by professors and graduate students from the local university, as Plainview's decision to take on the initial pilot program and reputation as a high-quality TWI program offered learning opportunities that were beneficial for both the university and the school. Thus, I entered Plainview as a researcher when the partnership with the university was strong, which contributed to access and a certain comfort level from teachers and administrators with having a researcher on site. Prior to data collection, I met individually with Mr. González, the principal, and then with the teachers at a faculty meeting to describe the investigation and answer their questions. During data collection, there were also two other university researchers collecting data for their respective dissertations. Collectively we wrote a letter to the Plainview community about our purpose at the school, which was framed in broad terms; cross-cultural interactions, integrating drama into the language arts classroom, and simultaneous bilingualism. Finally, and most importantly a key pillar of critical ethnographic research, I committed to sharing my findings with the Plainview community, which I did after the data analysis.

## Focal Participant

Michelle was my "anthropological confidant" (Foley & Valenzuela, 2005) about what was taking place in her classroom and at the community level at Plainview. After my interaction with her in my small group in the PTA meeting where we discussed the Rethinking Schools article about inequities in a TWI program in San Francisco, I thought that her fifth-grade classroom would be ideal to research because of her critical perspectives on TWI. In April of 2015, I provided her a "lay summary" (Madison, 2012) that included: (1) my motivations for the research around the impact of gentrification at Plainview; (2) a description of the methodology, (3) and how I planned to give back the findings upon leaving the field (Madison, 2012). After she read the "lay summary" we sat down and she let me know she was excited to participate in the study. Most importantly this conversation revealed that Michelle was intentional about her: (1) use of critical pedagogy; (2) deep engagement with the community; and (3) "race radical" vision of bilingual education that centered the interests of transnational bilinguals (Flores, 2016). By presenting Michelle this lay summary, it positioned her to take up an agentic role in knowledge construction and the research became a shared intellectual endeavor (De Lissovoy, Campos, & Alarcón, 2013). Initially, I had contemplated researching another classroom, nonetheless due to Michelle's focus on critical perspectives, social justice, and equity I felt a "thick description" (Geertz, 1973) of her classroom was essential, especially in consideration of the gentrification processes that were impacting Plainview at the school level. I was not aware of it the time, but her classroom would prove to be the ideal space to document TWI's proposed fourth pillar around the students'

development of critical consciousness (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017). Michelle was my "anthropological confidant" due to our collaborative relationship inside and outside of her classroom and her insight about the data that was collected (Foley & Valenzuela, 2005). This provided a powerful and deeper understanding of local events and relationships in her classroom and in the Plainview community, while also offering Michelle agentic opportunities to collaborate in the research process. This collaboration positioned her as a producer of knowledge, and by centering her voice in conferences and other community spaces during data collection and analysis, this process did not purely rely on my perspective. Thus, it was through this synergetic collaboration where I compensated for my power and privilege by taking a risk that was not strictly about benefiting my academic career. We were co-resisting, co-presenting, and co-producing knowledge in alliance with a displaced community, which was a unique facet of this methodological focus. I go into more depth about Michelle in chapter three.

## Disciplined Subjectivity and *Cariño*

Erickson (1984), in discussing "disciplined subjectivity," reveals that an ethnographer must be able to contain one's rage in the site, while at the same time tapping into this rage to gauge "high salience." He emphasizes "The method is not that of being objective, but of disciplined subjectivity. I am required to make it intelligible as seen from within, and to portray the actors in the situation as human, maybe not nice or good or wise people but human people" (p. 9). He also calls for a systematic documentation of evidence that is supported by an inquiry process guided by a point of

view that is instrumental in the development of patterns from the said evidence. It was through this "disciplined subjectivity" where, as a critical ethnographer, I collected the "evidence" that led to future points of inquiry and vantage points that I needed to take into consideration. My "rage" (Erickson, 1984) around how gentrification was impacting Plainview contributed to a "point of view" that vouched for resistance, dialogue, and working in collaboration with Michelle, as the "high salience" of instances of inequality were the generative themes from where we "tapped into this rage" in the elaboration of a thematic unit about gentrification. It was through this "humanizing research" that positioned Michelle and I as collaborators (Paris & Winn, 2014) in using her classroom as a platform for critical pedagogical and curricular responses to the current neoliberal assault on TWI programs. This "disciplined subjectivity" was also imbued with *cariño,* a deep moral and ethical commitment to forming authentic caring relationships and centering social justice aims in pedagogical spaces and in our research agendas (Duncan-Andrade, 2006). The author also posits "sweeping policy amendments will not be sufficient to bring about the local attention to change that is necessary in institutions like schools. What is necessary are a combination of progressive policy and more attention to localized research that allows for broad policies to be locally efficacious and relevant" (p. 455). Through this study, I positioned TWI as a "progressive policy" that was investigated at the local school and (one) classroom levels; with the purpose of shedding light on the impact of neoliberal processes on Plainview, how stakeholders were responding to these processes, and how Michelle responded to these processes in her classroom. I envisioned that through the ethnographic documentation of these processes

there would be potential to contribute to the critical conversation in the field of bilingual education, specifically- the need for a "reissuing" of Valdés' (1997) "cautionary note" due to the potential "gentrification" of TWI programs (Valdez et al., 2013, 2016). In conclusion, this critical ethnography was guided by a "rage" in the field, disciplined subjectivity, social justice, and *cariño*.

## Background about Data Collection

The nine-month data collection process for this critical ethnography was carried out at two levels; schoolwide and in Michelle's classroom. In the following sections I discuss the data sources and participants at these two distinct levels. The majority of the participants were found at only one of these levels, while a few of them were found at both of these levels. It is important to highlight that I collaborated with a doctoral candidate in sociology, Michelle Mott, in the data collection at the school level. Her focus on gentrification and school choice through parent and teacher interviews and participant observation, which were integral data sources for my study. We met the summer before data collection, read each other's dissertation proposals, and in turn decided to collaborate on the interview protocols, the semi-structured interviews, and their transcriptions. In addition, we had informal conversations at Plainview and on campus about what we were taking note of in the field, and who would be strategic stakeholders to interview. One particular event that I discuss in this study, the *Tamalada* incident, made use of Michelle's field notes. This incident was the only time that I looked at and used her field notes for data analysis purposes. Finally, we do expect to collaborate

in the future through the preparation of a manuscript, as we conceptualize the current neoliberal assault on public schools as demanding an interdisciplinary response that brings together scholars from sociology and bilingual education.

## Data Sources and Participants at the School Level

In this section I discuss the data sources and participants at the schoolwide level at Plainview. Emerson, Fritz, and Shaw (2011) define ethnographic work as a process that "combines firsthand participation in some initially unfamiliar social world and the production of written accounts of that world that draw upon such participation" (p. 1). Even though this Plainview world was not completely "unfamiliar" due to my previous "participation" in the site as a parent and activist, it was through my immersion and participation in school events (Emerson et al., 2011) that provided insight into stakeholders' perspectives about Plainview's TWI program. Hence, gaining access to these school events was not difficult, and was instrumental in my immediate participation and writing field notes. Doing and writing should not be viewed as separate endeavors, as they were dialectically intertwined activities that were mutually constitutive. The authors describe this as a "process of writing field notes [that] helps the researcher to understand what he has been observing in the first place and thus enables him to participate in new ways, to hear with greater acuteness, and to observe with a new lens" (p. 19). This "participation in new ways," in alignment with the aims of critical ethnographic research, was an ethical responsibility to document and act on inequalities and injustice in a particular lived (TWI) context (Madison, 2012). Specifically, at the school level I made

use of participant observation, conducted interviews, composed field notes, and collected relevant artifacts. The interviews were audio recorded, and all other schoolwide events were documented through jottings (Emerson et al., 2011) and later converted into detailed electronic field notes.

**Schoolwide Meetings, Tours, and Events**

The year before I began data collection, I was elected to serve a two-year position on the CAC (Campus Advisory Council). This committee was comprised of five parents, three teachers, a community member, and both administrators and specifically focused on the following: (1) recognitions of the school, teachers, and students; (2) citizens' communication; (3) the principal's update; (4) and TWI program update. Due to the surging interest in Plainview's TWI program, the rapid transformation of the program due to gentrification, and the school's decision to transition to a different TWI model during data collection, the bulk of the conversation was centered on TWI processes. It is important to highlight that my focal participant, Michelle, was on the CAC along with two activist parents who had been at the school since the TWI program began in 2010. Viviana self-identified as a middle-class Latina from Uruguay, and Tanya described herself as a white middle-class, who, due to their years at the school and activism, were trusted informants who were key in shedding light on processes at Plainview. The four of us were consistently bringing attention to the need to maintain an equitable, social justice-driven, and "race radical" vision of bilingual education (Flores, 2016) at Plainview, which added and at times contentious tone to these meetings. It is important to

emphasize that there was no participating voice from the working-class Latinx population, which was problematic based on Plainview's demographics. Finally, I attended and participated in six CAC meetings during the data collection process, and was a key arena for learning about the current and projected contexts and processes at Plainview.

As previously mentioned, our dual language committee merged our meetings with the general PTA meetings during my data collection. Our integration at these monthly meetings resulted in my participation and documentation of four PTA meetings. They were carried out exclusively in English, as there was no need to translate into Spanish because everybody in attendance was a monolingual English speaker or bilingual. This was relevant to highlight, as in previous years there was a deliberate attempt and necessity to conduct meetings bilingually based on those in attendance. As mentioned above, this was not an accurate representation of Plainview's demographics. Mr. González was not present at any of these meetings, but the vice-principal, Ms. Schneider, attended and actively participated in all of them. In addition, very few teachers attended PTA meetings, as they were carried out and dominated by English speaking parents. The focus of the meetings was fund raising, updates from myriad committees, and other apolitical matters at the school. When providing information about dual language at the district and campus levels, I never felt like there was any urgency or interest around issues of equity and social justice and how they related to the TWI program. In hindsight it was shortsighted to combine our dual language committee meetings with PTA, as our critical dialogues from the previous year did not continue during the data collection

phase. Our intentions of coming together with PTA as a way to engage more parents in issues affecting the TWI program at the school and district levels could not be accomplished through a committee update of five to ten minutes.

As Plainview became an attractive choice for English dominant families who were eager for their children to be bilingual, it became necessary to utilize a lottery system due to a high volume of applications. A byproduct of this attractiveness and interest was the use of dual language tours, which offered parents an opportunity to see how the program played out in the classroom and a space to ask questions and express concerns. I was aware of the tours and went on one when we were interested in enrolling our son. I discovered in my interview with Mr. González that they began in early October and ran until the end of January, and took place every other Friday. Extra tours were added when I was collecting data, as there had been even more interest in the program that year. During the said interview with Mr. González he discussed the tours and suggested that I should attend one of them. I attended and participated in two tours, as Mr. González introduced me as a parent and researcher from the local university and let them know that if they had any questions they should ask me. The tours I attended were carried out exclusively in English, and based on my conversations with teachers this was the norm.

Finally, I attended two other relevant events at the schoolwide level. The school board member who represented Plainview's region revealed at a school board meeting that constituents at some of her schools were unhappy with dual language and were asking for a faster transition into all English instruction. Unlike Plainview, the other

schools that she represented were one-way dual language programs with very few native English speakers. This stance from the school board member became a source of ire for many Plainview parents, as many did not appreciate a comment that many viewed as a threat to the TWI program at their school. As a PTA we extended an invitation to her to attend a dialogue in November of 2015 about the successful TWI program at Plainview and learn more about her views on these programs. The dialogue was facilitated by one of the leaders from the Faith Alliance organization that we were collaborating with, and unlike the PTA, CAC, and dual language tours, was attended by monolingual Spanish speaking families. The leader from the Faith Alliance organization also provided interpretation services, as the school board member was not bilingual. The other event I attended was Plainview's first annual *Tamalada*, which took place in December. It was organized by the multicultural committee, one of a few teacher-driven committees at Plainview. The purpose of the *Tamalada* was to bring the community together, center the knowledges of traditional Spanish-speaking families, and make tamales together to take home. I attended the event with my family, and unlike other meetings and events did not participate in any way.

**Google Groups: Plainview Communication in the Cyber world**

The final element of schoolwide data that I accessed for this study was a Google Groups on-line communication forum that took root due to the low turnout at PTA meetings. This was a unique data source, as it was only accessed by those who were given privileges by the Google Group administrator. Ms. Schneider, the vice-principal,

was the administrator of the on-line forum. I was added to this forum, but was only granted viewing privileges and was not able to respond to posts or initiate a post. The posts were focused on myriad topics, such as important school announcements, after school opportunities for students, upcoming district events, citywide political news, and even general parent concerns such as trying to find an afterschool math tutor for students. There were very few posts translated into Spanish, which would not have been necessary based on the forum's exclusivity and the English dominant voices who were offered access to this forum. Many of us were vocal about this being an inequitable communication channel because not all stakeholders were being informed about pertinent matters and events at the school and district levels.

**Semi-structured Interviews**

Michelle and I worked together to create the teacher, administration, and staff interview protocol (Appendix A) and parent interview protocol (Appendix B). We interviewed fourteen teachers, with the majority being those teachers who had been at Plainview for at least four years. This was intentional, as their experience provided valuable insight about the changes the school had experimented because of gentrification. Only three of the interviews were carried out individually by Michelle, as the rest of them were done collaboratively. We also interviewed Mr. González, Ms. Schneider, the librarian, a special education inclusion teacher who also coached afterschool sports, and the school counselor. It is necessary to emphasize that Michelle was interviewed using this protocol, and was also interviewed around processes more specific to her classroom,

which is described below. We interviewed twelve parents, and they were strategically chosen based on my intimate knowledge of the community and parents we had taken notice of at school events. Michelle was not bilingual, which prompted us to divide the interviews up depending on the native language of the respective parents. I interviewed four parents in a group interview, as they always waited together after school while their children were on the playground. Michelle interviewed the other seven parents, as they were monolingual English speakers.

### Data Sources and Participants in Michelle's Classroom

In this section I discuss the data sources and participants in Michelle's classroom, where I spent most my time for the study. From day one I was welcomed with the same love and warmth I would soon discover was the normal environment that permeated the classroom during most of my many visits. I already knew some of the students, as the previous year I had coached basketball at Plainview to third and fourth grade students. Michelle introduced me as a Ph.D. student from the local university, and then asked me to introduce myself and talk about the purpose of my research. I explained to the students that I was interested in documenting what kinds of conversations and relationships were taking place in their TWI classroom, as my initial focus was the often-overlooked goal of TWI around fomenting cross-cultural relationships and competencies in the classroom (Feinauer & Howard, 2014; Palmer et al., In Press). In my letter to Michelle's parents and at her first parent house meeting, I also outlined that this would be the focus of the research. Nonetheless, as I spent more time in Michelle's classroom I became more

interested and focused on her integration of critical pedagogy, as her dialogical approach and deliberate attention to issues of race, class, and gender were staples of the classroom context. This focus was intensified starting in February, as I was invited to contribute to a manuscript that, due to inequalities documented in the TWI literature, was proposing a Freirian fourth pillar around the development of students' critical consciousness (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017). My participation in the manuscript coupled with the critical work and engagement in Michelle's classroom offered clarity and most importantly an agentic opportunity to document the processes that were taking place around this proposed fourth pillar in TWI spaces. It was this focus on the development of students' critical consciousness through critical pedagogy that engendered the transformation of personal views and theoretical perspectives in the elaboration of field notes (Emerson et al., 2011). The authors point out "The process of writing field notes helps the researcher to understand what he has been observing in the first place and thus enables him to participate in new ways to hear with greater acuteness, and to observe with a new lens" (p. 19). This "new lens" offered a "greater acuteness" in my research process, and was the impetus for my collaborative participation with Michelle in our decision to carry out a thematic unit about gentrification. Below, I outline the different data sources and participants in Michelle's classroom.

**Michelle's Classroom**

As previously mentioned, the decision to collaborate with Michelle and her students was because the class: (1) was the initial pilot group that began the TWI

program when they were in Kindergarten; (2) still maintained a relative balance between native English and native Spanish speakers; (3) and was imbued with Michelle's critical pedagogical perspectives. I began data collection in Michelle's classroom two weeks after school started and stayed until the last week of school. I went to the classroom every Monday, Thursday, and Friday, and usually stayed for most of the day. I was immediately captivated by her language policy that fronted Spanish all the time, unless she was teaching math which was the only subject taught exclusively in English. Michelle's language policy is discussed in more depth in chapter five. During the first three weeks in the classroom I participated in small group activities to get to know the thirty students, as it was this participation in the normal events of the classroom that got me close to the students (Emerson et al., 2011). During this increased level of participation, I took limited field notes in the classroom, as I decided to write up reflective notes upon leaving the classroom. After those initial three weeks and after knowing all the students by name, I stepped back from participation, began taking detailed jottings in my notebook, and participated less frequently. On most occasions, within twenty-four hours I expanded upon these jottings and developed comprehensive electronic field notes (Emerson et al., 2011; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). On most occasions, I concluded the field notes with "in-process memos" (Emerson et al., 2011) which were two to three paragraph summaries that included connections to the TWI literature and neoliberalism. It was this dialectical relationship between theory and field notes that began to shape how classroom events were understood and written up in forthcoming field notes (Emerson et al., 2011). Hence, these narrative reflections were a

form of in-process data analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1984) that strategically offered me opportunities to reconceptualize theoretical perspectives while still immersed in Michelle's classroom (Enriquez, 2014). Michelle, as my focal participant, "anthropological confidant" (Foley & Valenzuela, 2005), and critical educator, was essential in the construction of these narrative reflections and made the study a "shared intellectual project" (De Lissovoy et al., 2013). Her knowledge was centered throughout the entire study, which offered unique vantage points both inside and outside of the classroom. I describe Michelle's personal and educational background in more detail in chapter three.

**The Students**

There were thirty students in Michelle's classroom, and it was the only fifth-grade classroom at Plainview. Gentrification had contributed to the dwindling numbers, as in previous years there had been at least two teachers with this group of students. Twenty-one of the thirty had been together since Kindergarten, which contributed to the cohesiveness in the group. Nine students were officially designated as ELLs, with Michelle labeling four of them and three other students as being simultaneous bilinguals. Michelle identified eleven students as being low SES and twelve as having been displaced due to gentrification. This displacement coupled with fourteen other students who were transfers that did not live in the neighborhood meant that only four of her students lived in the immediate neighborhood. Overall, it was an incredibly diverse group of students, many of whom had started the TWI journey together and witnessed others

who were no longer with them due to the transformation of the neighborhood. Even though I did not pinpoint any focal students in the study, critical ethnography vouches for tapping into tools that foment the investigation and transformation of inequities from myriad perspectives, specifically from the point of view of the oppressed (Trueba, 1999). Michelle's critical pedagogy and our collaboration on the gentrification unit were examples of "tools" that offered insight into the "perspectives" of students who could no longer live in the Plainview community.

**The Parents**

Michelle developed strong relationships with parents and communicated with them through multiple mediums. She sent emails, text messages, newsletters, and sought parents out after school if necessary. She knew which medium(s) to use with every parent, and in addition she conducted what she called "house meetings" with them periodically through the year. These were well attended teacher *and* parent-directed dialogues that usually discussed two or three agenda items and then veered into an open conversation about issues that were on the minds of parents. The warmth and openness I noticed amongst the students was evident with the parents, as they had also developed relationships over the years as part of the TWI program. Michelle fronted Spanish in all communication mediums and at house meetings in the same way she did when delivering content to her students. I attended three of these house meetings, and it was where I first talked about the purpose of my study. At the second and third house meetings, she offered time to talk about what I was documenting, which led into parents asking me

questions both in the large group format and individually after the meeting. Michelle positioned me as first and foremost a collaborator/teacher in the classroom, and then as a university researcher, which contributed to a relationship of trust. I had met many of the parents through schoolwide meetings and events, and Tanya and Viviana, the key informants I previously mentioned, also had children in Michelle's classroom. Finally, these parent relationships and dialogues should also be viewed as an essential facet and byproduct of the frequently overlooked TWI goal that fosters the development of cross-cultural relationships and competencies amongst students (Feinauer & Howard, 2014), as Michelle extended these relationships to include *the parents*, which has implications for future research in TWI spaces.

**The Gentrification Unit**

The thematic unit around gentrification emerged organically through our conversations and schoolwide processes and inequities that were taking place at Plainview. Most importantly we believed it was an ethical responsibility (Madison, 2012) that we were obligated to carry out through deliberate methods and products we positioned as tools to seek deeper forms of social justice in the school and community (Barton, 2001; Pizarro, 1998). We specifically framed the gentrification unit as knowledge production in an active context-based process that succinctly connected our values, histories, and practices as a researcher/activist and a teacher/activist to the Plainview community where the unit was carried out with students (Atwater, 1996). Approximately two hours a day was dedicated to the unit, and all sessions were audio

recorded and later transcribed. This three-week thematic unit is the focus of chapter six, and is documented through field notes, student blog entries, and semi-structured interviews with students and Michelle.

**Semi-structured Interviews**

I interviewed Michelle using a different protocol (Appendix C) than Michelle and I used with the rest of the teachers, as I wanted to hone in on specific processes in her classroom context. I conducted nine semi-structured interviews with students in groups of three during the final weeks of the study. Michelle chose the groups, as she thought that the assigned pairings would foment more dialogue on behalf of students. The student interview protocol is found in Appendix D. I also conducted seven semi-structured interviews with parents, and specifically chose parents who had been at Plainview since the inception of the TWI program in 2010. Viviana and Tanya, who were fellow activists and key informants at the schoolwide level, were interviewed a second time about processes relating specifically to Michelle's classroom. Michelle classified two of the parents as low SES, three as native Spanish speaking, and four self-identified as being middle-class. The parent interview protocol is found in Appendix E. All interviews were audiorecorded and later transcribed.

**Conference Presentation and Guest Speaker Opportunity**

Michelle and I, along with four of her students, presented preliminary findings from the gentrification unit at a local activist bilingual conference in April. I also invited

Michelle to the *Foundations of Bilingual Education* course I was teaching during the Spring semester. Critical pedagogy was the topic for that week, and she dialogued with my students about how she integrated critical perspectives into her pedagogy, curriculum, and engagement with the community. The conference presentation and dialogue with my students were carried out in Spanish, audiorecorded, and later transcribed. Her discussion of the data at these events was a generative source of collaboration and analysis, and demonstrated how she had a succinct grasp of the events I had documented ethnographically at both the schoolwide and classroom levels (Foley & Valenzuela, 2005). In both spaces she decentered my "authoritative voice" as the researcher and revealed the agentic role that she enacted in the "shared intellectual project" of the gentrification unit (De Lissovoy et al., 2013).

**Michelle's Perspectives on Data Sources**

Michelle and I dialogued informally in person and via email throughout the entire data collection phase about salient processes taking place in her classroom and in the Plainview community. This informed the way I participated, observed, and analyzed the data sources. We also engaged in more formal interactions around the data sources. I sent her transcripts of the semi-structured interviews with parents and students, and she provided insight through written responses. We also audiorecorded our conversation about the interviews, which was later transcribed. Our researcher/participant relationship was grounded in *cariño* and social justice (Duncan-Andrade, 2006), as we developed a relationship of authentic caring (Valenzuela, 1999) that matched her manifestations of

this same caring with students and parents. She developed deep authentic relationships with them, knew them well, and would even reveal her vulnerabilities in front of them (hooks, 1994). Hence, she *needed* to offer insight into the parent and student interviews and other data sources, as her closeness to the data and most importantly to the lives in the data demanded that she play an integral role in the analysis at both the classroom and school levels.

## Data Analysis

Data analysis and data collection were concurrent processes (Emerson et al., 2011; Miles & Huberman, 1984). The elaboration of "in-process memos" at both the schoolwide and classroom levels were catalysts in the data collection and analysis, as the dialectical relationship between data and theory were essential when beginning the process of reading over the corpus of field notes, interviews, artifacts, *and* in-process memos. It is important to emphasize that the *processes* of data analysis at both levels were the same, even though they were analyzed as two separate sets of data. I read over the corpus of data two times, and each iteration had a unique focus. During the first reading I highlighted the elements that grabbed my attention based on my research questions and theoretical commitments, while also highlighting other elements that were not directly linked to these questions and commitments. During the second reading I wrote brief reflective notes called "asides" (Emerson et al., 2011) next to the highlighted data, as they served as guides when deciding on "open codes," which was the next phase in my analysis. These "asides" were reflective and theoretical, as during this phase I was

also disentangling perspectives of neoliberalism and inequalities in TWI in the context of my corpus of data. This open-coding process should embrace our theoretical commitments and research questions, while also being open to codes that emerged through data collection that lacked any succinct connections to those commitments and research questions. At the schoolwide level I created 131 open codes, and at the classroom level there were 78 open codes. I sent these open codes to Michelle for transparency purposes, as her role as my "anthropological confidant" (Foley & Valenzuela, 2005) demanded I seek out her insight about these initial coding decisions and analysis decisions that would follow.

After rereading the open codes at both the schoolwide and classroom levels, I discarded some of them while seeking to gain a deeper sense of others through the elaboration of "code memos" (Emerson et al., 2011). These code memos were descriptions of specific incidents, participants, and possible connections to other open codes. I highlight two of these code memos from both analytic levels to demonstrate this analytic process:

> **CC (Critical consciousness/classroom level)**: This can be gleaned from their dialogues and blogs. This should be an integral piece and a great empirical example of why the proposal for a 4th pillar in TWI is a reality that we should push for in classrooms. At the same time, opportunities to develop critical consciousness go hand in hand with critically-driven curriculum around issues that have a high interest to students. When social justice is embedded in practice, there is a higher propensity for students to question the effects of things like gentrification. This came through not only around gentrification, but around their understanding of important historical figures and their quest to want to know the truth (Tyrone and Ofelia). This connects well to agency, as students became conscious of the inequitable situation in local middle schools and in turn a lot of them made their decision not to go to one particular magnet school. They also

> deepened their sense of critical consciousness around societal issues. (Code memo, 9/8/16)
>
> **DLT (Dual language tours/schoolwide level)**: I attended two of these, and they were talked about in positive ways in other meetings. They were carried out exclusively in ENG (English), were not appreciated by all of the TCHs (teachers), were attended by folks from out of state, were told things that at times were not true (specials teachers are not bilingual nor do they teach bilingually; he responded about the language of the day but didn't answer the question), and most importantly were taken by folks from the SCAP (high levels of social/economic/cultural capital), NP (new population), GENT (gentrification), PROG (progressive) crowd. In those two visits, I didn't see any low SES families, SSP families (Spanish-speaking), or anything resembling the OP (old population) of Plainview. There were some great reactions form TCHs about how they felt about the tours, and most of their responses weren't positive. Lozano was the only one (Riddle, too) that treated them nonchalantly and seemed to be used to the whole thing. This will also have to be unpacked in the implications, as there was no intentional effort to make these tours more EQ (equitable) at all. It's key to go back and revisit when they were written about in the Chronicle when they were part of a response team that went out and checked on their OP (old population)/immigrant families. That effort was not made to make the tours more EQ and ensure that Plainview would be better equipped to have a genuine TWI program. (Code memo, 12/17/16)

Both code memos displayed references to specific incidents and participants, and the schoolwide memo made connections to other initial open codes. Upon completion of the code memos, I repeated the same process that I carried out with the open codes; highlighting salient elements and then writing "asides" in the margins, while also including relevant open codes that related to the code memo. This narrowing and focusing of open codes into code memos eventually led to a limited number of main themes that I ended up pursuing through a more focused coding process (Emerson et al., 2011). I was eager for Michelle's feedback about the focused codes, and asked her for any insight she may have had around them. She responded via email:

> I would say that all of these encompass the idea of value. I advocate because everyone has value. I call people out because my students need to hear these critical conversations so that they can see how value is put on someone or a group of people because of what they have, but these critical conversations are for all students to understand that all people are intrinsically valuable. (Email, 9/15/16)

Her observations contributed to a dialogical data analysis collaboration that went against the norm in educational research that typically positions the researcher as the expert who determines meaning and reports the truth about the experiences being studied (De Lissovoy et al., 2013). Michelle's voice was a consistent factor in my data analysis process, as critical ethnographies demand we act morally when questioning and interacting with participants. Madison (2012) emphasizes "the critical in critical ethnography means that our inquiries and our intent will always encompass moral action" (p. 98). Thus, a major piece of this "moral action" was the sharing of data sources and Michelle's observations of those sources, which, in critical ethnography is viewed as an ethical stance centered on integrity, effectiveness, and a political commitment in striving to make a difference in the world (Madison, 2012). This collaborative, ethical, and systematic data analysis process was essential in the development of theoretical breakthroughs that sought greater social justice and equity at Plainview (Barton, 2001; Madison, 2012; Pizarro, 1998).

In the final phase of data analysis, I constructed visual diagrams on three large poster papers of what would become one schoolwide findings chapter and two classroom findings chapters, with each focused code occupying a large section on that poster paper. In each section or focused code, I placed post-it notes of open codes that directly related

to the focused code with references to specific page numbers and identifying information that would lead me to the specific data source of relevance. This "identifying information" specifically included names of participants, key phrases, and at times connections to theory and the literature. For example, at the schoolwide level one of my focused codes was called "TWI as product." In this section (focused code) on the large poster paper I placed a post-it note that referenced: (1) the dual language tours that principal said were "booked solid;" (2) Escondido Spanish immersion day-care; (3) community building in past versus the present; and (4) administration lip service about house meetings. At the classroom level one of my focused codes was called "Michelle's deep engagement with the community." Following the same process described above about "TWI as product" I placed post-it notes that highlighted: (1) texting parents about the upcoming house meeting; (2) parents don't attend PTA meetings but won't miss Michelle's house meetings; (3) tamale lesson in the classroom; (4) have meetings in Spanish; and (5) Aaron (student)- people that Michelle brought into classroom as curriculum. There were five focused codes at the schoolwide level, and nine focused codes at the classroom level. The three visual diagrams served as outlines that guided the writing process. The main themes that emerged at the schoolwide level were *TWI as product, TWI as a political vehicle, neoliberal discourses,* and *discourses of resistance and advocacy*. The salient themes that emerged in conjunction with Michelle's classroom were *language as empowerment, enacting the fourth pillar around critical consciousness, love, critical pedagogy, deep engagement with community, centering the interests of transnational bilinguals,* and *Spanish for criticality*. In the next chapter I provide a brief

description of the city and school district, and then offer a more in-depth historical perspective of Plainview.

**A Note on Translation**

Throughout the next four chapters there are frequent instances of Spanish from my participants. A portion of these instances take place in the context of dialogical interactions. When Spanish occupies two lines or more in these respective dialogues, the translation in English that proceeds the Spanish is highlighted in grey text.

## Chapter 3- Narrowing Down the Neoliberal Path: City, school district, and Plainview Elementary

This chapter briefly describes Austin, Texas and the school district where Plainview was located, before going into a detailed description of the school from the perspective of key stakeholders. Gentrification, as a specific force that targets urban neighborhoods and public schools, was propagating at a rapid pace in the city, which impacted both the school district, its bilingual education program, and Plainview's TWI program. The neoliberal path (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Peck et al., 2009; Smith, 1996) that impacted Plainview's TWI program took root at the level of the city (Austin), which has been described as "neoliberalism on steroids" (Auyero, 2015) and a "playground for beautiful people" (Wacquant, 2015) of the creative class (Florida, 2005). Its motto of "Keep Austin Weird" is emblazoned on myriad memorabilia and the city has become the fastest growing metro area in the US (Castillo, 2013) due to a robust music scene, a plethora of green spaces, a vibrant economy with low unemployment, and an overall "hip cool" vibe that has created a sense of "Austin exceptionalism" (Tate, 2015). Nonetheless, this "Austin exceptionalism" that "Keeps Austin Weird," has created a neoliberal path that erects barriers for historically marginalized African-American and Latino participation in this "technopolis" (Straubhaar, Spence, Tufecki, & Lentz, 2012).

Gentrification has severely limited the opportunity for African Americans and Latinos to "stay put" in rebranded communities (Lipman, 2011) designed for the "beautiful people" (Wacquant, 2015) and elite consumption practices (Brenner &

Theodore, 2002; Giroux, 2009). Manifestations of this "neoliberal suffering" are the skyrocketing increase in property taxes, the dismal state of affordable housing options (Mueller, 2010), and eventual displacement of "gentrification refugees" to the periphery of the city (Cantú, 2015). This neoliberal path that targeted Austin also impacted the local school district, which is the topic of the next section.

## Neoliberal Processes at the District Level: Priced Out, Recapture, and Marketing Strategies

Gentrification, when conceptualized as a "social force" of neoliberalism, is read as a verb due to the processes and interactions that unfold along the neoliberal path (Springer, 2015). Part of the unfolding of gentrification at the city level was a process that also impacted the large socially/economically/culturally diverse school district in the thriving "technopolis" of Austin. As should be expected due to the rapid displacement of minoritized communities, the district was losing students at a rate of one thousand each year (Field notes, 4/13/16). It is important to highlight that low birth rates and the increased enrollment at charter schools contributed to this loss of students, but the bulk of the loss was due to gentrification. Schools in east and northeast parts of the city were impacted the most, as many African-Americans and Latinos were priced out and were forced to surrounding suburban and rural school districts. (Taboda, 2015). As a district housed in a property rich city made up of 60% Hispanic students, 7.5% African American students, along with an ELL population of 30% and low income population of 60%, the district lost out on $50,000,000 due to recapturing (Field notes, 4/13/16). Property rich

districts like Austin, in spite of glaring needs for resources and funds in many marginalized schools, are forced to forfeit money that is "recaptured" and destined for districts with more needs based on the statistics mentioned above. Due to this loss of students and potential for even more losses due to Austin's unfettered growth, the district rolled out a widespread marketing effort that promoted its acceptance of out of district transfers, three-year old Pre-Kindergarten programs, magnet school options, and dual language programs (Taboda, 2015), which I position as the next stop on the neoliberal path to Plainview and the topic of the next section. This marketing effort by the district around a "progressive policy" (Duncan-Andrade, 2006; De Lissovoy, 2008) like TWI reveals the complexities of processes that unfolded along the neoliberal path (Springer, 2015), as this marketing effort was also a strategic *response* to a neoliberal social force like gentrification. I provide more context about the district's dual language program in the next section.

**The Expansion of Dual Language: A "Shifting Mindset" Around Bilingualism**

The recent upsurge in dual language programs on a national scale (de Jong, 2016; Milton, 2008; Wilson, 2011) was also taking place at the district level, as there were 18,000 students enrolled in 56 dual language elementary schools (Chang, 2015). There were 36 one-way dual language programs that served one-language minoritized group (mostly Spanish speakers), 13 TWI programs, and six schools that had both one-way and TWI strands. The widespread expansion of dual language since 2010 when the district began piloting six one-way programs and four TWI programs revealed a "shifting

mindset" around bilingual education in the district (Taboda, 2015). Prior to 2010 all the district's elementary schools used a transitional model, which accesses the first language as a pathway to English acquisition, and not as a tool for bilingualism and biliteracy. This tremendous growth of dual language programs that coalesced with the pricing out of minoritized populations in the east and northeast areas of the city revealed a paradox of sorts, as it pointed to the emergence of more TWI programs that offered "new skills to English-only speakers" (Taboda, 2015). These contextual factors at the city, district, and programming levels are key in gaining a deeper understanding of the final destination on the neoliberal path, Plainview Elementary.

## Context of the Research: A Historical Look at Plainview

Plainview Elementary School is located four miles northeast of the city center. The school is located one block from a major thoroughfare that, prior to gentrification and TWI, separated a wealthier neighborhood from a working-class Latino neighborhood with affordable apartment complexes. From the inception of TWI in 2010 the wealthier neighborhood got even more expensive, while the privately owned low-income apartment complexes had been, and were being rebranded into complexes for the "creative class" and college students. These demographic shifts, coupled with the "shifting mindset" that was framing bilingualism as a useful tool, were powerful "social forces" in the rapid transformation of Plainview. The neoliberal path that targeted Plainview's TWI program is the main focus of this chapter, and the next section offers a historical look at Plainview in the eyes of administrators, teachers, and parents.

Plainview was a unique place, as it was the only elementary school in a large urban district in central Texas to have a schoolwide TWI program. The other elementary schools with dual language programs boasted either a strand program with one or two TWI classrooms in each grade, offered a one-way dual language model, or used a transitional or ESL model. The school was part of the district's experiment with dual language, as it was one of four schools that piloted the program in 2010-2011. Mr. González, the current principal who had been at Plainview since 1999, had been "tinkering with the dual language" since 2007 (Interview, 12/11/16), and believed this positioned Plainview to take on the challenges of implementing an official dual language program. In 2009, the school's population experimented a dramatic drop in enrollment, as the combination of the gentrification that specifically impacted low-income apartment complexes coupled with neighborhood kids from the more affluent neighborhood opting to transfer to other schools contributed to a loss of 165 students. Thus, it was Plainview's "experiment" with dual language that saved the school from being closed. Mr. González commented on this transformation:

> So. I came here in 2000. Ms. Patterson was the principal here, and at the time there were about 350 kids at Plainview. And it was predominantly Hispanic, 99% Hispanic. A low SES Title 1 school. They were transferring out, cuz we had too many bilingual kids. But when we started doing the two-way dual language. It was like a magnet to bring people in. And not only the neighborhood kids, but kids from all over. We had parents coming from the faraway circles to walkthroughs and learn about dual language and all that. It wasn't so much about Plainview, it was the opportunity for their kids to pick up a second language regardless of where they went, and they were willing to drive that far just to get their kids in the program. A lot of families had come from California and New York where there was already dual language programs and they knew about it. (Interview, 12/11/16).

My intimate conversations and interactions with Mr. González over the years revealed a deep sense of care and commitment to the "bilingual kids" and traditional Spanish-speaking families of the Plainview community. His description of Plainview's transformation due to the visionary decision to implement TWI would prove to be prescient words, as the school's imminent closing instead became a "magnet" for parents from "all over" the district, while also bringing back those students who originally "transferred out" because there were "too many bilingual kids." Ms. Riddle, the veteran white middle-class librarian who had been at Plainview for twelve years at the time of the study, spoke to this transformation:

> Plainview used to kind of have a bad reputation. I think long ago we had a reputation, an undeserved reputation (laughs) as kind of a, there was gang stuff going on here maybe. I was never aware of that, but I was aware of the reputation we had…So I think we have a little better reputation than we used to (laughs), and maybe it had to do with us being a brown school, frankly…And then about 2008 or 2009 we were sitting in the faculty meeting and Mr. González says, "we're going to become a dual language school" (laughs), and we just looked at each other like "what?" Cause I guess this whole time our focus was getting our Hispanic students to read English and pass the test. (Interview, 12/14/15)

Ms. Riddle's description of Plainview's transition from a transitional bilingual education program that focused on English and testing to a dual language program that focused on biliteracy was relevant, as this transition also signaled a shift in the school's perception from a bad (Brown) school to a promising (Whiter, additive bilingual) school. Pearson, Wolgemuth, and Colomer (2015) described a similar shift in perception, as they argued that agentic voices from the white English dominant community in a TWI program in Colorado were catalysts in framing a typically low performing TWI school as a "beacon

of hope." As the neighborhood continued to gentrify, the ELL population diminished, and the interest from dominant English speaking parents continued to expand, Plainview became well known around the district for its strong "reputation" in dual language. Tours for prospective families were now in high demand, and started in late October and went through January. Mr. González mentioned that they "were booked solid" (Interview, 12/11/15), which spoke volumes of Plainview's transformation from bad school to highly sought out school. This transformation and high demand for the tours impacted teachers on the ground, as many veteran teachers who had been at Plainview before and after the implementation of TWI offered critical perspectives about what they were seeing. Ms. Edison, a second-grade teacher who had been at Plainview for eight years, described what happened when the tours came to her classroom:

> Yeah, I mean, think about when I first started. Were parents gonna tour a school? No, this is the school you go to, that's it. And now it's all upper-class parents who are checking out schools, and is this the school I should go to. There's definitely not a low-income Hispanic parent walking with them in the tours. It's all the same type of people. It's a little, I mean we're used to it, but it's still aggravating to have 18 to 20 parents walking in, they just stand there in a cluster, watch you teach or watch the kids. Of course, they always come in the morning when we have that dance class that we have to do or something, so it's a little ridiculous…cause that's what Mr. González wants, he wants to sell the school. I mean that's how it was when we first got dual language, right? That was one of the main reasons. There was teachers who wanted it, but they were gonna close the school, so. How do we keep it open? We do tours and we show that we're gonna teach Spanish to the kids. (Interview, 12/15/15)

Ms. Edison's reference to the population who was taking the tours, the focus on selling Plainview, and the purpose of tours being to showcase the teaching of Spanish were powerful examples of the need for a "reissuing" of Valdés' (1997) "cautionary note."

Critical scholars who are vouching for this "reissuing" refer to the phenomenon described by Ms. Edison as neoliberalism's impact on TWI, specifically, the amassing of human capital, framing of TWI in market-oriented terms, and the commodification of Spanish (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017; Cervantes-Soon, 2014; Valdez et al., 2016; Varghese & Park, 2010). This "gentrification" of TWI (Valdez et al., 2013, 2016) took root at Plainview and the surrounding community, as neoliberal processes targeted both spatial and ideological terrains. As the conceptualization of neoliberalism takes on more complex meaning (De Lissovoy, 2015) as it did at Plainview, the "path" (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Peck et al., 2009; Smith, 1996) neoliberalism forges impacts the ontologies and epistemologies (Dardot & Laval, 2014; De Lissovoy, 2012, 2015; Foucault, 2008: Giroux, 2009) of specific social actors. Ms. Schneider, who had been at Plainview for twenty years as a teacher and now vice-principal, demonstrated how these processes impacted her ontological and epistemological perspectives of the school as it gentrified:

> Yeah, it was hard, because you know as your population changes, it's your customer that's changing. And you have to change with the customer. And kind of related, if you went to Disneyland to work and they gave you a job as being a princess, but you are morally opposed to the whole theory of princess, you feel like it's feminist or whatever, but if that was the job they gave you, then you would have to do that job, or you would not, right? So you have to change, you have to at least fake it (laughs) to do it. And so, it can be hard, and so our newer families want tons and tons of information, which before a lot of our parents were like "it's your job, do it," and that's fine. So creating newsletters and making sure that there's emails and text messages and Facebook, all that new media stuff, which wasn't around years ago but is now. And that plethora of information that is there to be had, they want it. And so taking that extra step and doing all those things was something new. It's not something that's difficult, it's not something that they're not able to do, it's just that expectation was new for a lot of

> teachers. And so, kind of changing that mindset, "okay, this is my new customer, this is what they need, this is what I need to do." So yeah. (Interview, 1/27/16)

Undoubtedly, the population of Plainview had changed dramatically since the introduction of TWI in 2010. Nonetheless, there was still a significant percentage of English Language Learners (ELLs) and low SES students, as identified by the state's education agency. At the time of the study the Hispanic, ELL and low-income populations were 61%, 27% and 35%, respectively (TEA, 2016). Ms. Schneider, as an integral social actor at Plainview, revealed how new "customers" were changing how teachers needed to go about their work to satisfy these customers. Her allusion to "customers" and the "new media stuff" demonstrated a business-model orientation that was centering the interests of those dominant "customers," in spite of the continued presence of the original "customer" whose interests should be centered in TWI programs (Flores, 2016; Palmer et al., In Press). Ms. Schneider's description of Plainview's changes highlighted the complexities of neoliberalism's impact on urban schools and communities, as the school's "mindset" needed to be altered to satisfy the new "customer," which revealed how this phenomenon extends into the ontological and epistemological domains of our public lives (De Lissovoy, 2015; Foucault, 2008; Giroux, 2009). The new "customer" at Plainview was an issue that was being discussed in nuanced ways by teachers who had witnessed firsthand the transformation of the school over the years. Veteran teachers, administration, and staff recalled a Plainview that was a site of grass roots activism due to collaboration with a local Faith Alliance group that was instrumental in promoting community *before and after* the TWI program began at

Plainview. Ms. Riddle, the librarian, talked about Plainview's relationship with the Faith Alliance group prior to TWI:

> We'd have some good parent meetings. We were more involved with Faith Alliance in the beginning when I was here, we did more kind of social justice kind of stuff in the beginning. I remember doing block walks with some of the organizers…Just going around and meeting parents, going to parents' houses and meeting them. (Interview, 12/14/15)

Mr. González touched upon Faith Alliance's role at Plainview when I asked him about the major changes he had noticed since the TWI program began:

> Gentrification. That's the biggest change. It's something that we worried about at the beginning when we started because we had our families who were here, core families, about 150 kids. We were worried that those families were gonna get squashed, that they were gonna feel like they were, this was still their school and they would disengage or move away or just give up. So initially we did a lot of relationship building with Faith Alliance, a lot of house meetings; did a lot of get to know each other face to face. There used to be pictures of that, where we had a room full, cafeteria full, gym full of people sitting together playing games, talking to each other, talking about issues, talking about what they wanted for their kids, ultimately goals for their kids, from both sides. And with translation, with signs, and relationships were built. More than anything trust was established. And I don't think anybody felt like anybody was gonna push anybody out and we're all here for the same reason and we want the kids to learn side by side. (Interview, 12/11/15)

The Plainview community, as described by Ms. Riddle and Mr. González, was a vibrant space where "block walks," "house meetings," and other "face to face" interactions that were focused on "relationship building" were the norm. As the "customer" base began to change due to gentrification, the influx of more affluent transfer families, and the surging popularity of TWI, Plainview also lost a major portion of its Title 1 funding and its parent support specialist, both of which were based on its percentage of low-income students. During the year of this study, Plainview had a 35% low SES population (Interview, Mr.

González, 12/11/15), with a large percentage being bilingual special education students who were the *only* students bused to the school because their home school did not offer bilingual special education. As a "hub" for bilingual special education, Plainview compensated for the gentrification that was pushing its traditional Hispanic population out of the community. Ms. Arellano, the Latina bilingual special education teacher who had been at Plainview for eleven years, talked about this and other changes at the school:

> As far as the community I mean I came here and it was a very small, it is still a small community, still family oriented. But it's changed over the years. I obviously, not obviously, but I went into education to service my people, anyone at-risk quite possibly more importantly I guess. And again being a special ed teacher I've always been able to just, to kind of meet that need professionally. But the bigger picture of Plainview has changed over the years. We're not low SES as we have been in the past…We are the only special/bilingual special ed program in our entire vertical team, so we get all of the kids from other schools that are bilingual and that qualify for special services, bilingual special services. So my programming is not reflective of the larger Plainview community. (Interview, 12/8/15)

The "bigger picture" at Plainview had transformed due to a dual gentrification process that pushed people "out" of the community due to rising rents and pushed other people "in" to the TWI program due to increased interest from the dominant group in becoming bilingual. Valdez et al. (2013, 2016) describe the "gentrification" of dual language as processes that push out transnational bilinguals and non-privileged students to the benefit of the dominant group. Ms. Arellano alluded to this "benefit" she was taking note of as Plainview gentrified:

> I feel like it's (TWI program) really catered to our parents who their kids, their native English speakers to speak Spanish, and not really catered to our bilingual students who come to us with strong Spanish needing more academic language or more rigor in their home language. So, it's been an adjustment…I feel like at this point I often wonder, this is a horrible,

> sounds horrible to say this, but I almost feel like the Spanish speaking culture is being used to give those who have power even more power by making them biliterate, and it's not really empowering our traditional bilingual students…I know pressures that teachers are having is that parents want to know "why isn't my kid speaking more Spanish, and why aren't you doing this in Spanish, and why aren't you doing this in Spanish?" (Interview, 12/8/15)

My interactions with parents in formal and informal contexts revealed that this "pressure" around "more Spanish" came from English dominant families and middle-class Latino families, and *never* from working-class Latino families. There were two specific events during the data collection process that pushed me reflect in more nuanced ways about this "pressure" to provide more Spanish in the classroom. During my interview with Ms. Edison, who had been my son's teacher the year before data collection, she called me out as being one of those parents that was "pressuring" for more Spanish. On another occasion a working-class Latino immigrant parent with whom I frequently talked with after school asked me why I was at Plainview all the time. I let him know I was helping out in Michelle's classroom, and when he inquired about my thoughts of her classroom I told him "*pues hay mucho español* (there's a lot of Spanish)!" He seemed taken back, and later told me he had been in the country for fifteen years, at Plainview for seven years, and spoke limited English due to a labor context that operated mainly in Spanish. The interactions with Ms. Edison and the parent were insightful, as they revealed my privilege as a white middle-class bilingual, forced me to rethink some of my beliefs, and were the impetus for having a more nuanced understanding of TWI. First of all, Ms. Edison was on point when she described me as a "pressure" person around teaching more Spanish, as I previously vouched for more Spanish because "English is in the air." This perspective,

from mostly white middle to upper-class monolinguals and a few middle-class Latinos, was the norm because we/they could fill in the gaps in English at home. There was a thirst for Spanish language instruction, as they had a strategic understanding of how bilingualism could augment their educational, professional, and social opportunities. I did not vouch for this kind of "pressure" around providing more Spanish, but by default my social location as a white middle-class bilingual researcher positions me as thirsting for those same opportunities. Educational, professional, and networking opportunities are important and should be emphasized in the journey to bilingualism, but strict adherence to these neoliberal aims should be combined with opportunities to interact in contexts that foment critical consciousness around bilingualism, social justice, and cross-cultural relationships. I gained a deeper sense of critical consciousness around bilingualism by talking to the parent mentioned above, as I realized that I needed to unpack my "pressure" for Spanish by stepping away from my privileged social location. This social location blinded me from understanding that this "thirst" for bilingualism also meant providing intentional opportunities and spaces for *English*, especially for parents who speak Spanish at home and are interested in improving their second language. These two watershed events were catalysts in thinking differently about TWI, as we must always be vigilant and ask ourselves "who's asking for more Spanish?" It certainly was not the working-class Latinos who spoke Spanish at home!

There were other teachers at Plainview who were taking note of the impact of this dual gentrification process. Miss Baker, a white middle-class veteran second-grade

teacher spoke to the school's transformation and this "usage" of the "Spanish speaking culture" in her classroom:

> The majority of my students, the vast majority of them, are not native Spanish speakers. There's a few, and I love that there's such a family, not quest, but there's such a desire in our community for these students who are English speakers, native English speakers, to learn both languages. I think that's great. But it does end up creating sort of a strange like problem in and of itself with the influx of higher income families and with the way Austin has changed, we've lost a lot of our traditional families, but the program's sort of based on having a strong population of Spanish speakers and we don't. And it's so hard to find that it's kind of this ever evolving, ever shifting program that people have one expectation of what it's going to be, and if it were a textbook it would be that, but it's not, because we're talking about real people and families who, their apartments are torn down, and they have to move. And now we have two Spanish speakers in a class instead of twelve, and those two Spanish speakers can be made to feel very important and very special, but at the same time it feels a little like you're taking from them, and not necessarily in a great way…It's cool for them to get to translate and really help other kids. But at the same time I mean it does feel a little bit like taking from them. I don't know. They're kind of a commodity (laughs), we have a few of them and like we gotta keep them 'cause we need them. (Interview, Ms. Baker, 12/14/15)

Critical scholars in bilingual education have been warning the field through a "reiussing" of Valdés' (1997) "cautionary note" about the hegemonic impact that neoliberal processes can potentially have on TWI programs (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017; Cervantes-Soon, 2014; Palmer et al., In Press; Varghese & Park, 2010). Gentrification, as a salient process of neoliberalism has gained the attention of critical scholars of urban education (Anyon, 2005; Cucchiara, 2013; Lipman, 2011; Means, 2013), principally in the area of educational policy. The transformation of Plainview revealed how a neoliberal "path" (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Peck et al., 2009) had found a new target in a TWI

program that some key stakeholders believed was being commodified by the dominant group (Cervantes-Soon, 2014).

At the same time, it was crucial to highlight how the gentrification of Plainview was being understood by other stakeholders, specifically parents from both the dominant and non-dominant groups that came together at the school. As a researcher, this was the facet of the study that challenged me to think differently about how I had originally believed that Plainview's traditional working-class Latinx community would respond to the rapid gentrification of the community and school. The "rage" I was feeling as a parent, activist, and critical ethnographer (Erickson, 1984) due to the changes I had witnessed over the previous five years was an emotion I thought many would share, especially those families directly affected by the "brutal rule" of neoliberalism (De Lissovoy, 2015). Mónica, a working-class Latina who had been a parent at Plainview for eighteen years and had recently been priced out of the neighborhood, discussed the changes she had seen and her experience at the school:

> *Pues para mí, no han tenido ningún cambio, yo he visto todo bien, normal, igual, lo único si es diferente fue el lenguaje dual, fue algo muy diferente eso, y muy bonito porque el que hablen dos idiomas es muy bien para su futuro de ellas…Mi hija la mayor tiene veintiuno, ella vino a esa escuela cuando tenía tres añitos de edad; so prácticamente esta escuela la siento mía porque conozco todos los maestros conozco la señorita de la oficina, Mr. González, todos me dan no sé confianza para yo seguir en esa escuela. Es muy buen escuela, por eso es que todas mis hijas han venido aquí, mis cuatro hijas…yo he pasado por muchas cosas bastantes fuertes con mis hijas, entonces, esa escuela más que escuela yo la veo como mi casa, porque me quedo a platicar con la maestra, me meto a la oficina*. (Interview, 5/19/16)
>
> In my opinion there have not been any changes. I see everything as good, normal, and the same. The only difference is the dual language program.

> That was something very different and beautiful because there is a better future for one who speaks two languages. My oldest daughter is twenty-one, and she came to this school when she was three, so this school feels like it's mine because I know all the teachers, the women in the office, Mr. González, and all of them give me reassurance for me to stay at the school. It's a great school, and that's why all my daughters have come here. I have gone through some really difficult times with my daughters, and this school more than a school I see it like my house, because I hang out and chat with the teacher and I stick my head into the office. (Interview, 5/19/16)

Lucía, a working-class Latina who had been a parent at Plainview for ten years and had also recently been pushed out of the neighborhood, voiced similar praise about the school:

> *Me siento muy contenta muy a gusto porque siento el apoyo de los maestros, de todo el personal de la escuela. Nunca he tenido problemas. Yo he venido a pedir ayuda y siempre han estado dispuestos a ayudarme. Siempre están pendientes de los niños, que nada les pase y siempre estoy informada de todos los cambios que están ocurriendo. Entonces eso para mí es una experiencia muy buena porque me gusta estar al día con las cosas que pasa.* (Interview, 5/31/16)

> I am very happy and feel comfortable because I have the teachers' support, and from the rest of the school. I have never had any problems. I have come to ask for help and they are always willing to help me out. They always know what's going on with my kids, and that nothing bad happens to them. I am always aware of any changes and what's going on. So, this is a great experience for me because I like to know what's going on on a daily basis. (Interview, 5/31/16)

Mónica's powerful history about her love and appreciation for Plainview and Lucía's great experience at the school were good reminders that even though gentrification was a source of "rage," counterhegemonic activism, and at times sadness, there was also a caring, welcoming, and innovative school that was loved by many new and traditional families. In spite of gentrification pushing Mónica and Lucía out of the neighborhood,

they felt a sense of belonging and connection to teachers, administrators, and staff. Bo, a middle-class white parent who worked at an educational non-profit and had been at the school since the start of the TWI program in 2010, emphasized this about Plainview:

> It's definitely a warm setting. I mean it's a warm and convivial place. It doesn't have the work like feel of some other elementary schools that are perhaps more strictly academic in focus. I think size contributes to that, but certainly the leadership of the school has embraced this notion they are first and foremost a community. (Interview, 7/12/16)

Bo's partner Carlota, who was from Uruguay, had been a former principal in the district, director of parent support specialists and at the time of the study was the assistant director of the dual language department. She believed this welcoming and caring ethos at Plainview continued to flourish even as the community experienced a rapid transformation due to the exodus of traditional families. She discussed this when recalling how Plainview brought her in during the initial pilot year with the goal of promoting parent dialogue within the new TWI community:

> The first year was challenging because the school was struggling to really involve parents. They had a parent support specialist, and back then that was my job, to be over the parent support specialists and help with parent engagement. So, they brought me in as a parent support specialist to really do conversation circles and do things that were more organic for parents because those were that were there, they spoke all Spanish and we ran the meetings all in Spanish. It's almost like a whole different world six years later. But those are the kinds of experiences as a parent that I think that I appreciated the most is just that diversity and that rich Spanish, Latino presence. And the teachers were very kind and welcoming since it was such a small school, continues to be. There were only two teachers at each grade level then. It's grown to three in some grade levels, but we felt like it had a great sense of community and everyone knew my daughter, not just her teachers but the other teachers knew her very quickly and knew us, so there was always that community feeling there. I feel like that core of community continues at Plainview, which is important to us. (Interview, 6/22/16)

Based on my interviews and other informal conversions with both Bo and Carlota they were indeed concerned about how the "path" of gentrification had altered Plainview's landscape, while also very cognizant of the need to recognize the welcoming community atmosphere that was maintained regardless of the challenges that had materialized since the inception of the TWI program. This same concern about the "path" was on the minds of many of Plainview's teachers, while at the same time they shared opinions about the school being a great place that exuded similar values that were expressed by the parents above. Ms. Zimmer, a white middle-class first-grade teacher who had been at Plainview for four years talked about the community and the changes she had taken note of:

> I think from day one here at Plainview I was really in love with the community feeling, and especially when it comes to the community between the Spanish speaking families and English speaking families. There seems to be mutual appreciation for each other for what we're doing for the children. And it's a very warm school. It's a very inviting and comfortable place to be…When I came here the school, from what I would hear from other staff, was that the school was kind of in transition, and of being a predominantly Spanish speaking school to predominantly English speaking. So, my first year here I had a good balance of native Spanish speakers and English speakers. And as the years have gone on, the Spanish speakers are rapidly decreasing every year. In numbers, not in ability, I should clarify. (Interview, 12/12/15)

Ms. Austin, a white middle-class veteran Pre-Kindergarten teacher, revealed a similar sentiment:

> It's a very very welcoming place, and it's a place that you can tell a lot of people feel comfortable in. When they walk in, it's one of those places you walk in and you just get a feel instantly, and I've always liked that. It's been interesting over the years, especially since I taught here starting in 2001, to see the demographic shift that's happened. I was here right after they closed the airport down, which was just across the highway. It would fly right over the playground and you could like see the bolts on the

> bottom of the airplanes. And so, this was a pretty depressed area for quite a while, and it's been strange to see the student, how the student group has changed over time. (Interview, 12/15/15)

As a parent who had been at the school for two and a half years when I started the study, I wholeheartedly concurred with the descriptions put forth above, while also realizing that there were injustices and violence taking root due to the dual gentrification processes. Nonetheless, it should be recognized that despite the neoliberal processes that had targeted Plainview there was a welcoming atmosphere, a human focus, and a committed staff that were student and family driven, and who were also preoccupied with the rapid "gentrification" of its TWI program. The next chapter narrows down the neoliberal "path" and how it targeted Plainview's TWI program, specifically highlighting neoliberal discourses (*TWI as product*) and discourses of resistance (*TWI as a political vehicle*).

## Chapter 4- The Neoliberal Path Targets Plainview: TWI as Product or Political?

This chapter will narrow down the neoliberal "path" (Peck et al., 2009) that targeted Austin and the school district and discuss how it specifically impacted the Plainview community and its TWI program. Critical scholars in the field of bilingual education have sounded the call for a reissuing of Valdés' "cautionary note" (1997) around how these programs have the potential to be aligned with neoliberal "paths" that position these programs as apolitical, ripe for commodification, and driven by market principles (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017; Cervantes-Soon, 2014; Petrovic, 2005; Varghese & Park, 2010). This "reissuing" looks to add to the already critical line of scholarship that addressed the first "cautionary note" by addressing inequalities; (1) at the sociopolitical level (Dorner, 2011; López, 2013; Muro, 2016; Paciotto & Delany-Barmann, 2011; Palmer, 2010; Pearson, Wolgemuth, & Colomer, 2015; Peña, 1998), (2) around teachers' backgrounds, orientations, and preparation (Cervantes-Soon & Turner, 2017; Juárez & McKay, 2008; Lee & Jeong, 2013; Martín-Beltrán, 2010; Palmer, 2009), (3) at the level of curriculum and instruction (DeNicolo, 2010; Fitts, 2006; McCollum, 1999; Palmer, 2008; Palmer, Martínez, Mateus, & Henderson, 2014; Smith, 2001). This work has demonstrated that "interest convergence inherent in TWI may result in advancing the goals of the dominant group, while benefits for minoritized students may be rendered only as a byproduct of such efforts" (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017, p. 10). This chapter documents how inequalities took root at Plainview, specifically related to the gentrification of TWI (Valdez et al., 2016) that manifested at the school. These findings

offer empirical support for a reissuing of Valdés' "cautionary note" (1997) around the havoc that was unleashed when neoliberal processes of urban gentrification (Auyero, 2015) aligned with the gentrification of a TWI program at Plainview. Critical scholars cautioned the field through a reissuing of Valdés' "note" that was framed as a potential neoliberal assault of TWI programs (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017; Cervantes-Soon, 2014; Petrovic; 2005), and the case of Plainview revealed this process was threatening the original race radical vision of bilingual education (Flores, 2016). This chapter addresses the following questions: (1) how did recent demographic shifts/processes shape an urban TWI community/school, and (2) how did the same TWI community/school respond to these demographic shifts processes?

## Introduction

The findings in this chapter emerged from the following data sources: (1) semi-structured interviews with teachers, administrators, school staff, parents, and a district employee in the dual language department, (2) field notes from PTA meetings, CAC (Campus Advisory Council) meetings, dual language tours for families interested in Plainview's TWI program, (3) a Google Groups on-line platform, and (4) my focal participant Michelle's insight about the said field notes. My positionalities in these spaces are important to highlight, as I participated in different ways depending on the respective space. As a co-founder and co-facilitator of Plainview's dual language committee, we positioned ourselves as activists, advocates, and educators at PTA meetings. The year prior to the research we held our own monthly meetings, but the year I collected data we

decided to combine our meetings with the monthly PTA events, and we offered insight and updates about pertinent issues and events about dual language at the school, district, and city levels. During the data collection process, I was also serving the first of a two-year commitment on the CAC, a committee that was comprised of administrators, teachers, and parents. The role of the CAC was to dialogue about current pertinent issues in the school and in the district. A typical meeting usually centered around updates from administration about the dual language program, recognitions of outstanding teaching, issues from the surrounding community, and any items that members wanted to bring up with the rest of the committee. At times both the PTA and CAC meetings were marked by contentious conversations. There was a group of activist-minded parents who felt not enough was being done to promote equity and social justice in Plainview's TWI program, and another group of parents who were more focused on issues such as fundraising, extra-curricular offerings at the school, and other apolitical items. The principal, Mr. González, also invited me to take part in the dual language tours that he led, and I attended two of them.

Due to these different activist roles at Plainview coupled with the fact that I was a parent of a second grader student, I was undoubtedly positioned in nuanced ways by the different groups I interviewed. My analysis of the field notes from the PTA meetings, CAC meetings, dual language tours, and the Google Groups platform was also guided by Michelle's insight, as she was my "anthropological confidant" (Foley & Valenzuela, 2005) whose intimate knowledge of the pulse of Plainview offered me a unique vantage point of these school happenings. In the following sections I; (1) describe the

transformation of Plainview since becoming a TWI school, and how a reigning neoliberal commonsense (Apple, 2006; Harvey, 2005) manifested *and* was resisted around this transformation, (2) offer a description of *TWI as product* and *TWI as a political vehicle* discourses around the *Tamalada* event, and contextualize them in conjunction with the "reissuing" of Valdés' (1997) "cautionary note" due to the neoliberal "paths" (Peck et al., 2009) taking aim at TWI programs (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017; Cervantes-Soon, 2014; Martínez, 2017; Valdez et al., 2016; Varghese & Park, 2010), (3) conceptualize the *political* stance as integral when promoting the proposed fourth pillar of TWI around the development of critical consciousness (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017), which was enacted and documented in the classroom by Michelle. This *TWI as a political vehicle* then becomes the focus of the rest of this study, as I highlight Michelle's critical "counter-path" to the "brutal rule" of neoliberalism's "path" through her critical pedagogy of "love, imagination, and fury" (De Lissovoy, 2015).

## "It Will Never be Like it was": A "Path" of Neoliberal Common Sense Targets Plainview

The rapid transformation of Plainview from the initiation of the TWI program (2010-2011) to the year of the study (2015-2016) was unique, as it combined the powerful "forces" of urban gentrification and the dominant group's rising interest for TWI programming. The interactions and processes that specifically play out in urban contexts take root around specific forces such as privatization, marketization, and commodification, and due to specific social actors (Birch & Siemiatycki, 2015; Peck &

Tickell, 2015; Springer, 2015). These human geographers describe these processes and interactions as neoliberalization, and is distinct from a neoliberal ideology which assumes that these forces will play out in similar fashion regardless of where they are unleashed (Peck et al., 2009). Hence, this "actually-existing neoliberalism" emphasizes how these forces are "unleashed" in urban settings that are contextually positioned to be conduits of neoliberal paths of restructuring (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Peck et al., 2009; Smith, 1996). For this study, the "specific forces" that took root in Plainview were spatial gentrification and the gentrification of TWI (Valdez et al., 2013, 2016). The neoliberal "path" found an ideal target in Plainview, as it was contextually positioned for these social forces to be unleashed. This section highlights how the "forces" of gentrification(s) impacted the processes and interactions at Plainview, and how different "social actors" positioned themselves around these processes and interactions. Specifically, the findings revealed the administration's neoliberal common sense acceptance (Apple, 2006; De Lissovoy et al., 2015; Harvey, 2005) of these "forces" as natural manifestations of gentrification (*TWI as product*), and a position of resistance and activism against the said forces (*TWI as a political vehicle*). Most importantly, these findings reveal the complexities of neoliberalism, as the gentrification forces operated on Plainview's social actors at the ontological and epistemological levels in diverging ways (Dardot & Laval, 2014; De Lissovoy, 2012, 2015; De Lissovoy & Cedillo, 2016; Foucault, 2008: Giroux, 2009). Below I highlight some examples of the salient processes and interactions that I documented "on the ground" on the tours for prospective families and at PTA/CAC meetings.

**Plainview as a School of Choice: "This is Real Exciting and it Makes us Look Good!"**

It was late January 2016 and we were meeting, as usual, for our monthly CAC meeting on the last Tuesday of the month. Ms. Schneider, the vice principal, informed us that out of 290 students at Plainview only 72 lived in the school's catchment area, which revealed that 75% of students transferred from outside of the area. The projections of neighborhood kids and transfers for the following year were almost identical. She also let us know that she sent Mr. González home to rest because an extra tour had been scheduled the following day for prospective families who wanted to attend Plainview. This extra tour was deemed necessary, as the required paperwork by prospective families needed to be turned in by the end of the week. Ms. Schneider talked about the "success" of the tours and the impending deadline for parents to turn in their paperwork for the lottery to enter Plainview:

> We've had lots of tours. We added an extra one for tomorrow. There is definitely going to be a lottery. Paperwork needs to be turned in by 4PM on Friday and no exceptions will be made for deliveries after that time. This real exciting and it makes us look good. (Field notes, 1/26/16)

Ms. Schneider's comment sparked observations from a key informant, Viviana, and I, as we were curious as to why this was "so exciting" and in the eyes of whom does Plainview "look good?" As activists at the school we conceptualized these tours as "exciting" if they were serving the interests of transnational bilinguals and their families, which would "look good" to the district in their promotion of TWI. Unfortunately, the administration did not align with our stance around the tours, as they were "excited" and

seemed to want to "look good" for different reasons. I had multiple interactions with both administrators during school related meetings, informal conversations, and interviews. Those interactions revealed an intentional "do good by kids" philosophy and human focus that I value as a parent, and was also why Mónica and Lucía loved Plainview so much. At the same time, my "rage" as a researcher who was documenting the dual gentrifications of Plainview felt that the sense of urgency around issues of social justice and equity was being overshadowed by a commonsensical acceptance that gentrification was bound to happen, so let's satisfy our "new customer!" The lack of urgency around social justice, equity, and centering the interests of Plainview's original population was understandable, as the school was a model for TWI, required a lottery system due to the volume of interest, attracted families from all over the city, and was a small school of 331 students (TEA, 2016). This made Plainview a school of choice for progressive middle to upper-class English dominant families who knew the value of being bilingual, thus there would be no future threat of closure due to low enrollment. Plainview administration was comfortable with the school becoming an immersion school with limited numbers of transnational bilinguals, which was something that provoked more rage on my behalf. The gentrification of TWI (Valdez et al., 2013, 2016) should be resisted, as it pushes out transnational populations who should be centered, while also pushing in more privileged populations who know how to navigate systems of power at the district level and advocate for the educational goals of their children. As a researcher, parent, and activist I believed there needed to be an intentional effort to seek out an economically, linguistically, culturally diverse TWI program, as the program was not designed to serve

the interests of the dominant group. Mr. González had invited me to participate and take questions during two of these "successful" tours that were cause for such excitement, and I observed the following:

> There were eight parents in all who attended. I noticed that some for the tour ran into current parents at the school. From their appearance and conversations, they seemed to be educated middle to upper-middle class English speakers. There was also a young Latino couple with two young children who I overheard speaking English amongst themselves. I don't know if they speak Spanish and there was no attempt to gauge that by Mr. González, who led the tour. After about a half hour the particular family dropped out of the tour. (Field notes, 1/15/16)

I did not need to attend all of these tours to know that they were being "marketed" to a specific population, as my "anthropological confidant" (Foley & Valenzuela, 2005) Michelle and other teachers had brought this to my attention. Michelle reflected on how the "tourists" did not look like the students in her fifth-grade classroom:

> Because even though I don't go on the tours (for interested parents) and I try not to dip my toe in that, I'm there during planning time when people are checking in and I see the people who are coming in. And they're not the people I have in my classroom. So, I think it's like a free McMillan (elite dual language private school in the city). (Interview, 2/24/16)

The perspectives, observations, and field notes about the tours from Ms. Schneider, Michelle, and myself need to be contextualized around the spatial gentrification that altered the landscape of the neighborhood (only 25% of students came from the catchment area), and the gentrification of TWI that made these tours such an "exciting" event. First of all, the "lottery" that Ms. Schneider referred to above was not an equitable process. Neighborhood students, who would make up only one-fourth of next year's population were automatically enrolled and did not participate in the lottery process. The

first priority in the process were "Spanish speakers," and if there were spots remaining the lottery would be open to "non-Spanish speakers." The inequities became apparent when mapping the pipeline that Plainview had forged with private Spanish immersion daycares that indeed boasted "Spanish speakers," but limited numbers of "native Spanish speakers" from *any* SES background. Mr. González addressed this "pipeline" when talking about the tours in one an interview I carried out with the other research mentioned previously:

> **Me:** And do you do them throughout the year?
> **Mr. G.:** I start late October.
> **Michelle M.:** Okay.
> **Mr. G.:** And go through January.
> **Me:** And it's every other Friday?
> **Mr. G.:** Every other Friday, and it January we'll do every Friday.
> **Michelle M.:** Okay.
> **Mr. G.:** And they're booked solid. You should come (laughs). Last Friday we had 10 couples. I think half of them were from Escondido, um some from Mariposa, and then some from St. Gregorio.
> **Michelle M.:** And you keep an ongoing relationship with these preschools at this point?
> **Mr. G.:** Um, yeah, we do. They contact me and they wanna know when the tours start, and then some of the directors will actually come out and walk with them, yeah, and see what it's like, or we're involving them too. And they'll recognize a lot of their kids.
> **Michelle M.:** Yeah.
> **Mr. G:** Yeah, definitely. But Escondido's the biggest one, I get a lot more kids from Escondido. (Interview, 12/11/15)

I had intimate knowledge of Escondido, as my daughter attended the school for six months. We intentionally enrolled her there for the Spanish immersion program, and we were the *only* Spanish speaking household in her class of fifteen. The majority of the families came from middle to upper-class English speaking backgrounds, and the tuition started at around $900 a month. The fact that Mr. González got "a lot more kids from

Escondido" was integral in Plainview's transformation into a school of choice, which made "sense" to Ms. Schneider due to the gentrification of the community (Apple, 2006; De Lissovoy et al., 2015; Harvey, 2005). When she was asked at the same CAC meeting that was referenced above if spots would be set aside for ELLs she responded nonchalantly "the ELL population will diminish. It will never be like it was, but it's okay" (Field Notes, 1/26/16). Ms. Schneider's observation requires a description of the position that ELLs occupied in the neoliberal structure at Plainview.

**Plainview's Traditional Families in a Gentrifying Plainview**

I use the term 'traditional families" to describe the families who used to live in the neighborhood and were priced out but provided their own transportation, and those students' families who were bused in for special education services. Based on TEA's identifying information in the table below, the children of these "traditional families" were majority Hispanic, Economically Disadvantaged, and ELLs. I highlight some of the most salient changes that point to the "dual gentrifications" that transformed the terrain at Plainview.

**Table 1 Plainview Demographic Information (TEA, 2016)**

| | Total Population | Latinx | White | Other | Economically Disadvantaged | ELLs |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ’09-‘10 | 188 | 164/87% | 13/7% | 11/6% | 173/92% | 113/60% |
| ‘10-‘11 | 220 | 178/81% | 26/12% | 16/7% | 174/79% | 112/51% |
| ‘11-‘12 | 293 | 217/74% | 59/20% | 17/6% | 205/70% | 117/40% |
| ‘12-‘13 | 300 | 210/70% | 78/26% | 12/4% | 189/63% | 114/38% |
| ‘13-‘14 | 285 | 188/66% | 86/30% | 11/4% | 148/52% | 94/33% |
| ‘14-‘15 | 302 | 193/64% | 91/30% | 18/6% | 136/45% | 91/30% |
| ‘15-‘16 | 331 | 202/61% | 99/30% | 30/9% | 116/35% | 89/27% |

As the table clearly highlights, the decision to take on the TWI program was the “magnet” that Mr. González mentioned, as it simultaneously increased overall student population and “saved” the school from being closed. As the TWI program gained more traction and interest from the dominant group due to its position as a highly-regarded TWI school, gentrification also began pushing “traditional families” to the margins of the city and into surrounding school districts. This dialectical relationship of “pushing in” the dominant group and “pushing out” the “traditional families” was paradoxical, as the

group originally intended to benefit from the TWI program was "pushed out" while the overall population at Plainview *increased*. From the initiation of Plainview's TWI program (2010-2011) to the year of the study (2015-2016) the percentage of ELLs and Economically Disadvantaged dropped by nearly one-fourth and one-third, respectively. These stark changes, coupled with a transfer population that comprised 75% of the population during the year of the study (Field notes, 1/26/16), clearly revealed the "dual gentrifications" that had taken aim at Plainview. With only 25% of students now coming from the neighborhood, this phenomenon revealed the dismantling of affordable housing options in the neighborhood and a TWI program that had been radically transformed into a place of privilege for economic elites. This "elitism," due to a 23% *increase* in the Latinx population due to the overall site growth at Plainview, should not be used to only describe the middle and upper-class English dominant white families. The school was also attracting Austin's Hispanic "elite," which contributed to the growth in the Latinx population. Carolina, an upper-middle class Latina professional, described this population when asked about Plainview being a diverse school:

> I don't necessarily consider Plainview to be a super diverse school. It makes me, I think it's getting less diverse. The Hispanic numbers are great, when I look at the Hispanic numbers. But I think what it is becoming, it is becoming the school of choice for the Austin Hispanic elite. So when I look at people that are there, that's who's coming. The Austin Hispanic elite. (Interview, 3/2/16)

Carolina's observation about the *increase* in the Latinx population demonstrated that Plainview's transformation was arguably a story about rapidly changing social class dynamics and its intersection with race, ethnicity, and language. Thus, the "neoliberal

path" (Peck et al., 2009) targeting Plainview's TWI program benefited both English dominant white *and* Hispanic elites. Ms. Schneider's observation about it being okay that the "ELL population would diminish" and how it would never return to the halcyon days of a balanced TWI program, was essentially a euphemism for it being okay that Plainview's "traditional families" "would diminish" due to the dual gentrifications.

**Satisfying the New TWI Customer**

In an interview with Ms. Schneider the day after her insightful comment about it being okay that Plainview would never the same, she talked about the changes at Plainview. "As your population changes, it's your customer that's changing, and you have to change with the customer" (Interview, 1/27/16). Her position about the "customer," which was also mentioned in the previous chapter, revealed the complexities of the impact of neoliberalism, as a social force such as gentrification(s) impacted her ways of being and knowing the TWI world at Plainview (Dardot & Laval, 2014; De Lissovoy, 2012, 2015; Foucault, 2008: Giroux, 2009). Ms. Schneider made sense of this world by accepting the changes brought on by gentrification (ontological condition), while also demonstrating an epistemological standpoint of TWI in a gentrifying Plainview. She revealed this stance during the same CAC meeting when the topic of Plainview becoming a TWI Magnet School/Academy was proposed by one of the members. Ms. Schneider exuded "excitement" about this proposal and declared "this will show we're serious about DL; we need a fancy name too" (field notes, 1/26/16)! As a "social actor," one with considerable power as vice-principal, Ms. Schneider was fueling

the neoliberal "path" (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Peck et al., 2009; Smith, 1996) that was targeting the essence and race radical vision of bilingual education (Flores, 2016). She reinforced this position in the interview mentioned above, specifically about how she envisioned Plainview in the future:

> I really hope to see it as a thriving immersion school or dual language academy, whatever they decide they wanna call it. Cause some people were saying "we wanted to call it a Spanish immersion school" or whatever. I think that it needs to be something other than just Plainview Elementary cause I think that there are really great things happening here. (Interview, 1/27/16)

The interview with Ms. Schneider mirrored her "excited" stance at the previous day's CAC meeting that was highlighted in a previous section. She was intent on "looking good," but to whom? Her tacit commonsensical acceptance of gentrification and the new influx of more privileged populations demanded that the school move on and realize that "it will never be like it was, but it's okay." This acceptance of Plainview's transformation was a phenomenon I documented at other stages of the research. Ms. Schneider, who "speak(s) Spanish and [has] good relationships with all families" (Interview, Ms. Schneider, 1/27/16), made no attempt to speak Spanish in Michelle's first house meeting or at a middle school panel event, both of which were attended by monolingual Spanish speaking parents. Michelle informed me that "Ms. S. didn't speak in Spanish at the panel because she was too tired" (Field notes, 11/12/15). Another teacher mentioned to me that she thought Ms. Schneider was working harder than ever to placate the powerful white families who were now at the school. As these processes and interactions revealed, neoliberalism (gentrification) impacts our public lives (Giroux, 2009) and our ontological

and epistemological perspectives of a social force such as TWI, which succinctly demonstrates the urgency for a "reissuing" of Valdés' (1997) "cautionary note." I reflected on this gentrification of TWI at Plainview (Valdez et al., 2013, 2016) and its potentially harmful "path" that interpellated "social actors" like Ms. Schneider into the belief that Plainview deserved to be a magnet school:

> Ms. Schneider's comment about needing a fancy name. For a boutique public school, this seems like a logical progression of things. Sort of like creating a niche market. This is a really good way to make connection to neoliberalization. Again, these processes affect the way we operate and are operated on by dominant power structures in society. Hasn't the housing "market" coupled with the DL "market" contributed to the unfortunate situation that is happening? Neoliberalism on the ground that comes out in the discourses that we speak; the "fancy name" interpellates or "hails" people into the program (mostly people in power). If DL "saved" the program 6 years ago, DL is "gentrifying" the school in the current neoliberal moment. (Field notes, 1/26/16)

De Lissovoy (2015) highlights how the terrain of neoliberalism has become more complex, and Ms. Schneider's stance spoke to this complexity. Specifically, her stance demonstrated how the impact of neoliberalism reached into the realms of the ontological and epistemological, specifically, by her "being" too tired to speak Spanish and "knowing" that the population would never be the same at Plainview. Ms. Schneider had moved into a more comfortable space in a gentrifying Plainview. The Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser (cited in Madison, 2012) defined this interpellation as the "manner in which representations and messages in culture- particularly the media, art forms, advertising, and so forth- coerce, seduce, or call us forth to accept the ideologies and value that these forms project (p. 65). Ms. Schneider was "seduced" by the "message" that, due to the high demand and popularity of its TWI program, Plainview

deserved to be renamed as an elite academy and because of this "accepted" the "ideology" that it "projected." This was an ideology that denied issues of equity and social justice and was driven by a neoliberal common sense that accepted Plainview's transformation into a boutique public school. It was this same interpellation process that "called forth" prospective parents to take the tours and "accept" Plainview's reigning TWI ideology that it was indeed a "thriving immersion school" that *should* be gentrified by the dominant group (Muro, 2016; Valdez et al., 2013, 2016). In the next section I highlight how teachers viewed the tours, as they were the ones who were being observed by the TWI "tourists."

**Plainview in Flux: "This can't be an Elite Program for Spanish Learners"**

The excitement and "looking good" that surrounded the tours was not shared by all stakeholders at Plainview, as teachers viewed them in nuanced ways. As Michelle revealed above, those families participating in the tours did not mirror the population of students in her fifth-grade classroom. This "gentrification" of the said tours became a normal occurrence for teachers in grades Pre-K to 2nd, and for many of them this was an added distraction to their already complex and demanding job in a prestigious TWI school like Plainview. After attending and participating in my second tour, I ran into some teachers in the hallway and they offered the following observations about them:

> **Ms. Arellano:** They are really weird!
> **Mr. Castillo:** I'm happy I have been getting ready for specials when the tours have been coming (which meant they didn't stop in his room).
> **Ms. Baker:** I feel like a zoo animal!
> **Ms. Lozano**: The kids are used to it by now.

Michelle, who commented how the tours did not reflect the student demographics of her fifth-grade classroom, offered the following written observation in response to some research data and proposed coding schemes I had forwarded to her:

> The dumb school tours!!! I cannot say enough about this. Who created this policy of having a lottery? If we're a DL campus, shouldn't we be choosy about who steps into our classroom to make this DL program truly viable? The teacher frustration level with admin lip service about DL is high as a kite, and this policy is bullshit. (Email, 7/8/16)

The dual language tours, an integral facet of the neoliberal "path" that was targeting Plainview, were impacting the school's most important "social actors" in unique ways; feeling a sense of relief, being under a microscope, and as events that had become both the norm, dumb, bullshit, and weird. Most importantly, all four responses were powerful reminders of how neoliberalism should be conceptualized as a complex process that impacts our ontologies and epistemologies, as teachers' state of being a teacher "under the microscope" in a gentrifying TWI school affected their understanding of the program. Ms. Edison's observations from the previous chapter about the tours revealed the transformation that Plainview had undertaken since being threatened with closing to becoming a highly sought out school that was "gonna teach Spanish to the kids." The transition from being a school you just "go to" to needing to "sell the school" to "upper-class parents," while also being "used to it," was a powerful example of the dual gentrification "paths" that had taken root at Plainview. Prior to the TWI program, it was the neighborhood school that students "went to," as there was no need to "sell the school" to upper-class parents from across the city. In fact, as Mr. González mentioned

previously, before TWI there were "too many bilingual kids," which was the impetus for neighborhood families from the dominant group to opt for a more affluent school that was not their neighborhood school. The geographical gentrification that began to push out the "bilingual kids" from the neighborhood coalesced with the gentrification of a highly-desired TWI program that was being "checked out" by large numbers of "upper-class parents" impacted Plainview's community in unique ways. As the "bilingual kids" were pushed out to more affordable parts of the city due to gentrification, the other "neighborhood kids" were now interested in coming back to Plainview because of the TWI program. Mr. González discussed this during a conversation we had about the process of moving from a transitional bilingual program to TWI:

> **Mr. G.:** So at the time we started tinkering with the dual language with three teachers. And then so we did for a couple years, maybe three years, and then the district came out with wanting schools to step up and take on dual language, so naturally we said we would do it. At the time we thought we were gonna do one-way only, but then folks from the neighborhood started coming in and saying "we wanna go back to Plainview cause our kids don't speak Spanish, but if you're gonna teach Spanish, we'll come to Plainview."
> **Me:** When you say back to Plainview, so these students that were living in the neighborhood were going to like Lehman or Mason
> **Mr. G.:** Lehman, yeah
> **Me:** Okay
> **Mr. G.:** Lehman, Mason, yeah

Lehman and Mason were nearby schools that boasted a much whiter and more affluent student population, with only the latter having a strand TWI program with one classroom in each grade. Plainview's shift from a subtractive bilingual model that did not promote bilingualism, to a TWI model that promoted bilingualism and the "teaching of Spanish" as a resource (Ruíz, 1984), was the key factor in bringing back neighborhood kids who

had previously gone to Lehman or Mason. Unfortunately, this new additive "path" at Plainview manifested interdependently with a geographical gentrification that forced the neighborhood "bilingual kids" out of the neighborhood. Mr. González, who was looked upon admirably by these traditional families who had been pushed out, also was quick to point out that some of these families found ways to remain at Plainview despite no longer living in the immediate catchment area. My time and extended interactions with this traditional population revealed a deep connection with the school and its teachers, which made it clear that Plainview was a special place and that some families would make the necessary sacrifices regardless of the gentrification. Hence, these "bilingual kids" were also classified as transfers, albeit ones that should also be considered gentrification refugees (Cantú, 2015) who were no longer able to "stay put" in their former neighborhood (Lipman, 2011). Mr. González commented on this phenomenon:

> They've been priced out. I think all our ELLs are now here on transfer pretty much, just like everybody else. I shouldn't say all, about half that come. They used to live in the neighborhood, but have now been displaced and live off of Klein or Collins back behind Liberty Plaza is where there's apartment complexes that are a lot more reasonable in what they pay, and they're still within reach, and they come. (Interview, 12/11/15)

Mr. González's description of Plainview in 2015-2016 was a complete transformation of a school that only ten years earlier was comprised of "all neighborhood kids, every single one of them was neighborhood kids, from all the different apartment complexes that are now gone" (Interview, Mr. González, 12/11/15). His description above about how the ELLs still found their way to Plainview requires more context and explanation. As previously mentioned Plainview was the only elementary school in the area to offer

bilingual special education services, as ELLs were bused in from other neighborhoods where these services were not offered. These were the *only* students bused to Plainview, as the rest of the ELLs who had been pushed out had to provide their own transportation. Hence, the combination of bilingual special education students, ELLs who no longer lived in the neighborhood but were determined to stay at the school, and the explosive growth of the dominant group made up the 75% transfer population at Plainview during the year of the study. This rapid transformation of Plainview into a majority transfer school was a powerful testament to the dual gentrification "paths" that targeted the school and community, as the "apartment complexes that are now gone" and the surging interest in TWI from the city's elite contributed to its new identity. Nonetheless, and as Ms. Edison pointed out poignantly, "low-income Hispanic parents" were not priorities in Plainview's attempt to "sell the school." Michelle and I talked about this during one of our many interviews, as she alluded to an administration that had lost sight of its priorities as a TWI school:

> So, I know our admin means well and our admin can sometimes be real agents of change in our community, but I feel like they're losing steam, cause it's hard to always be social justice conscious. And I feel like they're losing steam. Or maybe Plainview isn't getting all these Latinos into our dual language program because we're not going the extra mile to set the example to like bring them in, because they are valued, because you are important, because the program was designed with Spanish speakers in mind, so we need you…We have to push, and I have to push my admin to do something, to bring in kids from other schools. Some other people need to come in here and stoke up this fire, because this can't be an elite program for Spanish learners. This has to be the program for Spanish speakers. And I don't know how to motivate Mr. González to do that, and I don't think Ms. Schneider could do it alone without Mr. González. So he's the key, he's the key, and he's just like "it'll happen." (Interview, 4/27/16)

Michelle's race radical vision of bilingual education that centered the interests of Latinos (Flores, 2016; Palmer et al., In Press) was a vision she believed was "losing steam" due to a lack of urgency on behalf of administration. Mr. González's "it'll happen" stance, one that became a salient code that I called "administrative lip service," was a stance that I took note of consistently at CAC and PTA meetings. He made myriad recommendations to our dual language committee, as we were consistently posing the question of how Plainview would work to keep and attract the students that these programs were "designed" for, as stated by Michelle above. He recommended that *we* carry out community conversations about the possibility of bringing in students from overcrowded schools, talk to the area superintendent about providing transportation to ELLs who were currently in schools with no TWI program, and reach out to the city officials about their plans for affordable housing in the Plainview neighborhood. We carried out the first two of his "recommendations," but it became clear that without support from "key" people like administration this became a futile effort. This futility was confirmed when Mr. González let us know that of the 39 accepted families for the 2016-2017 school year, only three of them were considered ELLs (Field notes, 3/29/16). In order to prevent this gentrification of TWI, there are deliberate steps that should be taken to ensure that these programs are centered on issues of social justice and equity. Valdez et al. (2016) posit that TWI programs should; (1) explicitly plan for the ways they will address inequities in the recruitment and admission processes, (2) offer special opportunities for marginalized populations to have access to TWI programs in order to preserve or recover their

languages, and (3) most importantly they claim, be reconceptualized as spaces that deliberately center equity and heritage concerns that are not overshadowed by global human capital concerns of bilingualism. My findings demonstrated that administration was not going the "extra mile" to "bring them in," which contributed to the gentrification of Plainview's TWI program.

## TWI as Product or TWI as a Political Vehicle?

A reigning neoliberal common sense (Apple, 2006; De Lissovoy et al., 2015; Harvey, 2005) that was colonizing the imagination of Plainview (De Lissovoy, 2015) was the impetus for two distinct discourses around TWI at the school; *TWI as product* and *TWI as a political vehicle*. I start by highlighting a specific school event called the *Tamalada* to discuss the discourses, while also introducing an integral facet of the neoliberal "path," cyber dialogues of exclusivity that contributed to the *TWI as product* and *TWI as a political vehicle* discourses. I then conclude the chapter by conceptualizing the *TWI as a political vehicle* discourse as integral when working towards TWI's proposed fourth goal around the development of critical consciousness (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017), which was the trademark of Michelle's classroom and the focus of the next two chapters.

**Cyber Dialogues of Exclusivity: "Who has Access to Google Group Posting or Reading?"**

The *Tamalada* was an event that was spearheaded by Plainview's multicultural committee, which was one of various committees made up of teachers and staff in charge of different kinds of school events throughout the year. The event was first brought to the school community's attention as part of a Google Groups on-line posting on November 10, 2015. It is important to go into more depth about this on-line forum, as daily postings were sent to *only* those parents who had signed up to be part of the Group. Ms. Schneider, who earlier highlighted the need to change due to the "new customer" at Plainview, discussed her perspective on tapping into technologies to reach parents:

> The district is very big on Twitter, so keeping up with Twitter, and Facebook, doing Facebook, and doing the Google Group emails and the tweets, or not the tweets, like the text message reminders and stuff. It can be very time consuming, but I've gotten lots of compliments like "thank you so much for doing that, I really liked reading your Facebook post because I knew what was happening this week," or, "I got to see pictures of my kid from last week, seeing what's happening." So, think it takes a little time and effort and a little shift from what you're used to doing, but I think that the rewards can, I think if you give them the information, then they're not freaking out on you because they don't know. So, there is a trade-off that is just kind of getting used to, like if you do a lot of the frontload work, then the backload is a lot easier. But just kind of getting people to see that is also difficult. (Interview, 1/27/16)

Ms. Schneider's references to "they" were those who had access to these technologies and/or those who were signed up to participate in them were what I coded as "cyber dialogues." Dorner (2011) documented that "cyber dialogues" of this type were exclusionary because they silenced marginalized populations during the process of deciding where to implement a dual language program. Hence, those more privileged

populations were better positioned through technology to be "policy agents" to advocate for their interests around dual language implementation. Dorner revealed that the process was inequitable, as not all "policy agents" were part of the on-line conversation and therefore certain voices were not considered in deciding on the location of the school. I took note of the exclusivity of Plainview's Google Groups platform after a CAC meeting in which parents referred to the platform as a great place to let people know about the upcoming Parent *Pachanga* (party) and Community Gardening Day:

> Cyber dialogues are conversations that are exclusionary to a certain group of parents that have access to technology, but mostly it's a "conversation" that is geared towards this certain group. These same "conversations" are not conveyed through another medium. They are Facebook, Google groups, and certain email trails. This definitely caters to the new populations and does not try to bridge the gaps and make the original population aware. There is so much emphasis on the "new" community (K-2nd), while there is a disregard for the "original" community that we still have in grades 3rd-5th. (Field notes, 2/23/16)

Based on my interviews with teachers and observations, there was a distinct difference between the "traditional" and "new" populations that I mentioned above. I used the term "traditional" in reference to, and as TWI programs aim for, a balance between native English and Spanish speakers, which was *still* the case in third through fifth grades. On the other hand, the "new" population in Kindergarten through second grade had very few native Spanish speaking students. Michelle, who as a fifth-grade teacher did have this "traditional" population in her classroom wrote, after looking at the "cyber dialogues" data I shared with her, "who has access to Google Groups posting or reading? Or for that matter Facebook groups" (Email, 7/8/16)? These "cyber-dialogues" should be considered as part of the neoliberal "path" that targeted Plainview and privileged economic elites

(Foucault, 2008; Harvey, 2005; De Lissovoy, 2008) in a gentrifying TWI school. Hence, this "cyber-dialogue" path is where I begin my discussion of *TWI as product*, specifically around the *Tamalada* event, as this *product* motif is specifically what critical scholars have cautioned the field about as neoliberal processes take aim at TWI programs (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017; Cervantes-Soon, 2014, Palmer et al., 2017; Valdez et al., 2016; Varghese & Park, 2010). Hence, the "reissuing" of Valdés' (1997) "cautionary note" is imperative due to a neoliberal "path" that has great potential to be exclusionary (Dorner, 2011) and commodify the realities of transnational bilinguals and their families (Cervantes-Soon, 2014). This "reissuing" demands that TWI be framed as *political* terrain, a place that goes beyond the academic, bilingualism, and multicultural competences to include the development of critical consciousness (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017). The *Tamalada* event, and how it was interpreted by social actors at Plainview, revealed discourses of both *TWI as product* and *TWI as a political vehicle.*

**The *Tamalada* Incident: Product or Political?**

What exactly is a *Tamalada?* On the same date that Ms. Schneider announced the upcoming event (11/10/15), a parent responded with "what is a *Tamalada*?" Ms. Schneider replied a few hours later "Good question; it is a time where we will get together to make tamales and then get to take them home" (Google Groups, 11/10/15). Ms. Arellano, a veteran bilingual special education teacher, revealed how the event materialized:

> I had brought it up with Ms. Olivera, cuz we'd been part of the multicultural committee. And the one event we've had yearly that all the parents love is our multicultural night where everybody brings a dish from their culture, a little explanation of where it comes from, and it's just a potluck. It's a huge potluck and the kids are performing and we've had outside groups perform. I was just telling Ms. Olivera people really love these kinds of things, and I knew that my daughter's school does a Tamalada. I said we should start that, we should start something where our parents can teach you know. And so Olivera and I had asked of we could put the tamalada in, and it was scheduled and it happened. (Interview, 12/8/15)

In unpacking this *Tamalada* event, it is important to emphasize the two goals as outlined by Ms. Schneider and Ms. Arellano, which were to come together and make tamales to take home and position parents as teachers in the making of these tamales. The "coming together to make tamales to take home" aligned with the *TWI as product* stance, as food was positioned as a tangible item to be "taken" or commodified (Cervantes-Soon, 2014). On the other hand, positioning parents as teachers of cultural knowledge aligned with *TWI as political*, as there was a stated goal of promoting a sense of critical consciousness around the process and most importantly people connected to the tamale making (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017). A week before the schoolwide *Tamalada* event, I captured parents being positioned as experts in tamale making in Michelle's classroom. Even though I do not go into extensive depth about Michelle's pedagogy, curriculum, and engagement with the community until the following two chapters, I highlight how the event took shape in her classroom because it succinctly aligned with the *TWI as political* stance, and provides a powerful counter example to how the event played out at the school wide level a week later. I summarized the event in my field notes:

> Michelle was doing a unit on procedural texts and she decided to invite three Latino parents into the classroom as experts to teach students how to make tamales. Students were standing/sitting at three larger tables, each with a parent "expert." The parents were speaking mainly in Spanish. It was very interesting that most of the time there was no measurement going on when they were using the ingredients. They said it was all about the feel of the "masa" and the way that you use your hands (amasajar). This was relevant because we are so used to having measurable recipes that tell us exactly how much to add to the "mix." The parents did an amazing job of seamlessly switching languages, as Ms. Tatum (Michelle's teacher assistant) does not speak Spanish. The students were being prepared for the schoolwide Tamalada, as they were going to make a procedural text (instructions) to give out to the participants that day. Michelle then interviewed the parents at the end of the experience in front of the class and their bilingualism was put on display. All three "experts" talked about the importance of the getting the "feel" of the "masa" and how most of the times there is no need to measure anything. After the parents departed Michelle put them in groups of two to work on the instructions in both languages. I comment to her heading out to recess how engaged students were when writing about something of this nature and she said, "yeah it was pretty awesome." Most importantly, this was a great example of centering the interests and realities of emergent bilingual students. Also, the "knowledges" that were presented were not measureable in the usual sense, and this is important when talking about subaltern knowledges that usually aren't valued in our schools. Having a "feel" for something is not valued in our learning spaces, but this should be the case, especially in dual language contexts. This was a very powerful event, especially the "work" of the parents. (Field notes, 11/30/15)

Michelle commented on centering the interests and realities of her Latinx students and the importance of bringing these knowledges to the forefront in her classroom, which, based on my extended time in her classroom was the *norm*:

> *Pienso yo que fue una experiencia donde esos niños encontraron valor en su cultura, donde los estudiantes, los otros estudiantes que no son latinos encontraron valor en la cultura de los latinos, y vieron qué tan rico somos. Después de que las madres vinieron a hacer tamales nosotros disfrutamos un buen almuerzo después con tamales, pero el propósito de eso era para que todos los niños pudieran tener esa experiencia para que el sábado siguiente cuando esas mismas madres y más vinieron a la escuela pudieron impartir su conocimiento a la gente que no es latina.*

> *Mucha gente decía "I bought tamales before but I had no idea (laughing)." Get the idea! Porque es importante que nuestras ideas, nuestras voces sean escuchadas.* (Interview, 3/25/16)

> I think this was an experience where those kids found value in their culture. And where the other students who aren't Latino saw value in the Latino culture, and realized how rich we are culturally. After the moms came and made tamales we enjoyed a delicious lunch, but the purpose of this was so that all of the kids could be exposed to this experience so that on the following Saturday when the same moms and others came to the school they could show what they know to the folks who aren't Latino. A lot of people mentioned "I bought tamales before but I had no idea (laughing)." Get the idea! Because it's important that our ideas and voices are heard. (Interview, 3/25/16)

Smith (2001) documented on the US/Mexico border how it was the knowledges of elite bilinguals based on privileged social class and educational background that had greater influence on curriculum and instruction, as opposed to knowledges of the working-class women Michelle positioned as experts in her classroom. Michelle's description of the "imparted knowledge" that students gained that day revealed that it was much deeper and complex than just "enjoying a good lunch" of tamales. At the schoolwide event her students would share the "knowledge" they gained in the classroom by providing their procedural texts to those in attendance. Michelle positioned the classroom *Tamalada* as an event that should go beyond academics (procedural texts), bilingualism (produce texts in both languages), and multicultural competence (cultural knowledges) to include the development of critical consciousness in TWI spaces (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017). Thus, TWI was framed as a *political* endeavor that transgressed what could have been an apolitical celebration of a cultural tradition by centering the people, processes, and knowledges of oftentimes marginalized populations. The "purpose" was to convey the

complexity of tamale making, as she deemed that these ideas and voices should be listened to at Plainview so that people could grasp "the idea" that these familiar roots and stories were central to her students' identities (López, 2013). It was obvious that her students grasped this "idea," and this came through when I interviewed three of them about their experience in Michelle's classroom. Molly defined herself as 75% Mexican, Amanda as Latina, and Susan as Czech, and we were talking about the different community resources that Michelle brought into the classroom and thematic units that were memorable for them:

> **Amanda:** I think it was really fun, like what she did for our education. She brought in Karina's mom I think, right, for like tamales.
> **Molly:** Oh yeah!
> **Amanda:** Remember that?
> **Molly:** That was just for fun, this is supposed to be like a unit.
> **Me:** No, it can be for fun too!
> **Amanda:** I liked making the tamales with the peppers.
> **Molly:** Oh yeah it was like procedural texts, we had to write like how
> **Amanda:** Yeah!
> **Molly:** Yeah it is.
> **Amanda:** So we had to do a procedural text that was fun because she actually got someone to help us make tamales and we ate 'em for lunch.
> **Molly:** Like Bradley's mom, Leo' mom, and Karina's mom.
> **Susan:** It was really fun because she brought in a lot of people, parents and just people who she knew, to talk about gentrification and the tamale thing and she brought in some people when we were talking about rights for people. (Interview, 5/18/16)

This conversation was relevant to highlight, as Susan emphasized it being the norm that people were "brought in" to the classroom, while Molly and Amanda highlighted that the Tamale event was enjoyable *and* educational because of the focus on "procedural texts." As documented in the following chapters, Michelle deliberately worked towards preserving and protecting the values and epistemologies of working-class Latino parents

(Peña, 1998), which was not what took root at the schoolwide event a week later. In the following sections I describe how parents went from being producers of generative knowledges for procedural texts to "material objects" (Peña, 1998) that revealed a "symbolic integration" (Muro, 2016) and masked problematic processes at the schoolwide *Tamalada*- specifically it was a manifestation of *TWI as product.*

**"Experts" or servitude: Reactions and Lessons from the Schoolwide *Tamalada***

A week after taking part in the *Tamalada* in Michelle's classroom, I attended the schoolwide event with my family. Upon arrival to the cafeteria that morning the president of the Plainview PTA greeted us and asked for payment of the dozen tamales that we had signed up for a few weeks back to make on the day of the actual event. This was done in advance so the PTA had a general idea of how much of the necessary ingredients would be needed for the event. The *Tamalada* was documented ethnographically by Michelle M., the researcher I previously mentioned who was investigating gentrification and school choice at Plainview. The following reflection of the *Tamalada* was augmented by her field notes on that day:

> We walked into the cafeteria and I noticed four long tables that were covered with butcher paper. There were four Latina women at the head of each table working hard kneading the "masa" with their hands, and I recognized them from the event in Michelle's classroom. I also noticed some of her students passing out their copies of their procedural texts, but it wasn't clear if participants were actually using them for anything. We sat down at the chicken tamale table, and said hello in Spanish to the woman at the head of the table kneading the "masa." We weren't sure really what the protocol was, and noticed that others at our table were just grabbing some corn husks, filling them with the "masa," and then putting the chicken inside and rolling them up to make the tamale. We did the

> same, and then put our dozen Tamales into a plastic bag. They would need to be steamed at home. Besides the four women kneading the "masa," most of the participants were white. We chatted with a family next to us about things non-related to the event. We stayed for a brief Christmas concert by the fourth and fifth grade chorus. The four women who were kneading the "masa" didn't stop doing that the whole time we were there. We stayed for about forty-five minutes. It was completely different than the hands-on process-based approach that I had documented in Michelle's classroom a week before. (Reflection, 12/19/15)

Cervantes-Soon (2014) emphasizes how neoliberal processes in TWI programs have potential to frame Latino cultural and linguistic resources as highly desired *products* that relegate the people who produce these cultural and linguistic manifestations as disposable (Giroux, 2009) and not worthy of the same attention as the *product.* Tamale making in the context of this *Tamalada,* was a highly-desired labor that was welcomed, while the persons producing the tamale were not welcomed and appreciated in a similar vein (Murillo, 2002), and in turn became "material objects" (Peña, 1998). Michelle M. captured this sentiment when chatting with a white female parent who stated "This is too hard for me. I'm going to let them do it…it's in their blood" (Field notes/Michelle, 12/5/15). The *Tamalada*, as a manifestation of "symbolic integration" (Muro, 2016) around a product like tamales, engendered racial hierarchies around whose bodies should be doing the work of kneading the "masa" and who should receive the benefit/product of that work. As an event that was originally promoted by Ms. Schneider as being about a time to come together, make tamales, and take them home became only focused on the latter, a *product* that was sequestered by the dominant group (Palmer et al., In Press) in the context of a rapidly gentrifying TWI program like Plainview. This focus on the *product* over the *political* did not go unnoticed by teachers, as there were diverging

perspectives of whether the *Tamalada* took shape as it was envisioned by stakeholders. Ms. Schneider reflected on the event:

> We were able to showcase some of our Spanish speaking parents as the experts. And so, having them be able to do that, and then our other parents coming in and being able to learn from them, 'cause it doesn't really take language to model how to do something. Like that was able to bridge the gap, and so I think that was a very successful event where both parent populations felt comfortable and felt valued and felt needed, and so I think that that was a good event. (Interview, 1/27/16)

Ms. Arellano, who was integral in planning the event and who had deep connections with the featured "experts" that day thought it was a good start when considering the rapid transformation of Plainview's community and her opinion that TWI at the school now "catered to our parents who want their native English speakers to speak Spanish" (Interview, 12/8/15). She commented on the *Tamalada* in the context of a gentrifying Plainview:

> I think it's kind of a natural consequence of what happens when your school gets gentrified. I believe many of these parents consider themselves quite liberal, but aren't aware of how it's affecting the students. We need lots of work. We need lots of work on relationship building. I think the tamalada was a good start; had mixed feelings about that too. But I think it was a good start where our parents, our Spanish-speaking parents kind of felt a sense of pride in what they can, where I hadn't seen that before in these past I think have been five, six, seven years since this change has happened. I don't think I've seen our parents that have traditionally been here part of the position of expert and running anything. It's always been our new population that's been running I think since they got here. (Interview, 12/8/15)

As one of the teachers that I interacted and communicated with frequently during my year at Plainview, Ms. Arellano demonstrated a critical orientation around issues of equity, social justice, and TWI. Throughout the year, she consistently advocated for traditional

families who had been priced out of the neighborhood, spoke out against inequities and addressed the need for complicated conversations to take place due to Plainview's rapid transformation into a highly-desired TWI school. Ms. Arellano had experienced Plainview pre-TWI, and the changes brought on by gentrification were difficult for her to accept. At the same time, she vouched for dialogue through the Faith Alliance group that the school was affiliated with:

> I think hard discussions have to be had about power. I think transparency about people's feelings about power have to be discussed in order, for one your Spanish speaking families, our low SES families, can be self-reflective without guilt, but so that those with power can also hear it and try to be self-reflective. I don't think really anything, I won't say anything. I don't think the progress we want can happen without those honest conversations. And I think it's really too difficult for teachers and principals and parents to try and have them without mediators. And I think what's in place right now is Faith Alliance, but that's time and energy. (Interview, 12/8/15)

The "honest conversations" that Ms. Arellano highlighted above have succinct connections to oftentimes overlooked TWI's third goal about the fostering of cross-cultural relations and competencies (Feinauer & Howard, 2014). Even though this goal, when discussed in the literature, has specifically documented inequalities that have led to segregation along linguistic, racial, ethnic, and class lines *in the classroom* (Amrein & Peña, 2000; Feinauer & Whiting, 2014; Fitts, 2006; Hernández, 2015; Muro, 2016), the "reissuing" of Valdés' (1997) "cautionary note" due to the explosive growth and potential gentrification of TWI demands that we contextualize this third goal at a broader level. It is not enough to just haphazardly place two groups together in TWI settings and expect these cross-cultural relations to come to fruition (Palmer et al., In Press). Ms. Arellano's

comment that the *Tamalada* was a "good start" in that it positioned traditional families in the role of experts at the same time fell short due the lack of attention to issues of "power" and "self-reflection" from both groups. Hence, TWI in the context of the *Tamalada* was focused on the *product* and not on the *political*, as my main participant Michelle emphasized in her reflection of the event. Even though she and Ms. Arellano, who were intimately connected to the "experts" and had intentions of not making it about the *product*, Michelle realized the *Tamalada* was indeed a "good start," but lacked in the *political* arena:

> There is a lot of improvement to be made. And at least parents know about it, and it was engaging for a lot of parents, it was eye opening. But I want the moms who do it to do less work than what they were doing…and then I went back to the moms. I said "hey, I really appreciate you coming, it was a lot of work that you did. If we do this next year, how can we make it better?" They were like "well, maybe we should all have the materials there, and they need to do the masa. They fucking need to do the masa, that's the hardest part of the whole thing. You just need to tell them, and they need to do good work, and if they need help we could go help them but we don't have to make it." I agree. And so, it was a safe place for them to, and it was all individual, it wasn't all together. It was a safe place for them where they could say "this didn't quite work out," and that's okay. I totally agree with everything they said. And I don't know how to make it a more, a less taking of my culture but a more contributive approach. Other than them just not making it, like being totally hands of, and just being the experts. 'Cause when you go to Whole Foods and you pay $60 to get a Whole Foods teaching class or cooking class, then the person doing it isn't doing anything, they're just talking to you about how to do it. So that's what needs to happen, they just need to talk to, they just need to talk, and not to do it. (Interview, 4/27/16)

Michelle's reflexivity, dialogue, and "stance" (Reyes & Villone, 2007) with parents, which I document in more detail in the following chapters, was not reciprocated by administration regardless of Ms. Schneider often claiming to "bridge the gap" between

the two groups. During my time at Plainview as a parent and a researcher I had heard her talking about "bridging the gap," but had never seen her enact a stance of being a culturally and linguistically competent mediator between the traditional and new populations at Plainview. During a CAC meeting I voiced my opinion that the traditional population that was still flourishing in grades three to five was being silenced by the interests of the new population, and I specifically highlighted the elaborate marketing scheme of a parent *pachanga* (party) exclusively for adults that was charging twenty-five dollars a ticket and out of reach for many Plainview families. Ms. Schneider responded "It's been a continuous challenge to engage with low SES parents. It's their school too" (Field notes, 2/23/16)! In an email correspondence after having read the field notes and my codes around schoolwide events, she addressed Ms. Schneider's deficit discourse around "low SES" parent involvement:

> I like Schneider as a person, she's always been full of grace toward me, yet her comments about Latinos needing to up their game to be part of our new Plainview community is wrong. Latinos make our program happen, and I have a hard time believing that our admin team truly understands that. I don't mind going to recruit from other schools. We need strong Spanish speakers to make our program. Fill this under the first point of new versus old populations! (Email, 7/8/16)

Michelle's reflection, which was contextualized around field notes that I had specifically coded "new" and "old" (traditional) Plainview populations, mirrored my observations of how Ms. Schneider made very little effort to "bridge the gap" between the new and the old populations. Michelle's race radical vision of a *political* bilingual education (Flores, 2016) and the need to have "strong Spanish speakers" to "make our program happen" was not on the administration's radar, as a certain comfort level permeated Plainview due

to the high demand of the TWI *product*. It was more comfortable to reach out in the cyber world than to truly "bridge the gap" that had become even wider during my time at Plainview. I addressed this in a reflective memo after the CAC meeting mentioned above:

> There is so much emphasis on the "new" community (K-2nd), while there is a disregard for the "original" community that we still have in grades 3-5. There is "palabría" (wordage) around making sure that the "original" is being considered and served, but the actions have been few and far between. Again, it's not so much the geographical gentrification that is impacting the community (it certainly is happening and should not be discarded), but the metaphorical gentrification that is playing out as well. (Reflective Memo, 2/23/16)

This "metaphorical gentrification" was a key facet of the commonsensical acceptance that the TWI program would "never be the same," and this contributed to Ms. Schneider's beliefs that the "new customer" should be served the *product* they were asking for. Her interpretation of the *Tamalada* as a "good event" was an attempt to "bridge the gap" by offering a *product* to a new population that was not encouraged to move beyond a "symbolic integration" (Muro, 2016) with Plainview's traditional population. As highlighted by Michelle and Ms. Arellano, the *Tamalada* was a "good start," while also a missed opportunity to enact *TWI as a political vehicle* and promote the development of critical consciousness around "expert" knowledges and processes that were instrumental in the elaboration of the *product*. Unfortunately, the event became a live display of "specimens" (Petrovic, 2005) for the benefit of a new population who was gentrifying Plainview's TWI imagination, a "path" (Peck et al., 2009) that was fueled by social actors such as Ms. Schneider and resisted by teachers such as Ms. Arellano and Michelle.

I conclude this chapter by conceptualizing the *TWI as a political vehicle* discourse as the critical "counter-path" to the neoliberal processes playing out at Plainview, as it is this stance that seeks to address the hegemonic forces and inequities that impact bilingual education's most vulnerable populations, transnational bilinguals, for whom these programs were originally developed (Flores, 2016; Grinberg & Saavedra, 2000). This brutal rule of the neoliberal "path" (De Lissovoy, 2015) was resisted through a critical pedagogy of "Spanish, love, content, not in that order" (Interview, Michelle, 2/24/16), an urgent and necessary response to the "reissuing" of the "cautionary note" due to the gentrification of TWI (Valdez et al., 2013, 2016). In the next two chapters I document Michelle's "on the ground" response to neoliberal processes at Plainview, as it is this pedagogy of hope (Freire, 2007) that provided powerful insight into the "rich promise" (Lindholm-Leary, 2005) that can take root when the development of students' critical consciousness becomes an intentional goal alongside academic achievement and bilingualism for both groups (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017).

## Chapter 5- The Foundations for the Enactment of TWI's 4th Pillar

Despite the rapid transformation of Plainview and the surrounding community due to *both* gentrification and the increase of dominant English speaking families, the lone fifth-grade classroom still offered remnants of what a true TWI classroom *should* look like. There were twenty-eight students in the class, with eleven of them being officially classified as English Language Learners (ELLs). Even though the school district uses the term ELL in its official discourse, I will remain consistent and use the term from the previous chapters, transnational bilinguals; "Students who have traversed cultures, have one or more foreign-born parents, and speak language(s) other than, or in addition to, English at home" (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017, p. 5). My decision to undertake the bulk of my critical ethnographic research in this fifth-grade classroom stemmed from; (1) the aforementioned balance between dominant English speakers and transnational bilinguals, (2) the class had been part of the original pilot program in the district that started when the students were in Kindergarten, (3) and most importantly due to the teacher's critical orientation around TWI processes; specifically around issues of equity, social justice, critical pedagogy, and concern about the transformation of Plainview. During the previous year, I interacted with Michelle at dual language committee and PTA meetings, where she demonstrated an intentional commitment to always front Spanish, a deep engagement with her students, parents and the school community, and critical perspectives around curriculum and instruction. She read my dissertation proposal and then graciously opened up her classroom to me during the

2015-2016 school year. Specifically, the next two chapters address the proposed fourth pillar of TWI around laying the foundation for/and the development of students' critical consciousness (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017) by revealing Michelle's background, critical consciousness/orientation/pedagogy and how this impacted the classroom, a description of her language-as-empowerment paradigm in the context of the gentrification of Plainview, and the gentrification unit we carried out with students. The order of discussion is intentional, as the call for addressing the fourth pillar of TWI hinged on Michelle's critical stance (Reyes & Villone, 2007), as the possibilities of students developing critical consciousness without this stance would have been next to impossible. Thus, the enactment of the fourth pillar in the TWI classroom requires a critical teacher like Michelle, who defined her work as driven by her personal TWI pillars of "Spanish, love, and content, not in that order" (interview, 2/24/16).

This chapter begins with Michelle's background and her critical consciousness about the sociopolitical context of TWI at Plainview. I then move into a description of Michelle's personal pillars of TWI, and how they were enacted with students and parents. I conclude with a proposal for a language-as-empowerment framework that extends upon Ruíz's (1984) language-as-resource paradigm, which I argue is necessary when the fourth pillar of developing students' critical consciousness is a goal of the TWI classroom.

## Michelle's Background

Michelle, who self-defined as "*Salvadoreña en mi corazón, pero canadiense en espíritu*" (Salvadoran at heart, but Canadian in spirit) (member check, 10/20/16), has a

unique trajectory that informed her critical orientation of being a TWI teacher at Plainview. She was born in Los Angeles to Salvadoran parents who were in graduate school at the time, and was sent back to El Salvador at three months to live with her grandparents until the age of one when her parents returned from the US. As a family who supported the "guerrilla" in El Salvador it became very dangerous, which led to her parents fleeing the country and gaining refugee status in Canada. Later they sent for Michelle and her cousin and they settled in Montreal when she was six. She described those first years in Montreal:

> And so they worked as whatever, right? Like so during the day they would go to school and then they would go to work and we would go to offices and clean and we would go to dentists' offices and lawyer offices and clean and we would go to school in the morning to learn the language and then go clean and then study because they were in school, so that their credits could then get transferred to like Canadian credits, so that they could work as their profession. (Mother was an immigration lawyer and Father was a psychology professor). (Interview, 2/24/16)

At the same time, Michelle was very open with students about coming from a place of privilege in El Salvador. She revealed this when students were engaged in a dialogue about first-generation college goers:

> *Like yo reconozco que mi familia en El Salvador tiene privilegio, y privilegio varias veces es dinero, pero no siempre es así. La mayoría de la gente salvadoreña es pobre igual que en Uruguay (a student had mentioned having family here), con casas de metal, pobre, o igual que la abuela de Molly (who lived in México). So, yo reconozco que mi familia tiene privilegio en El Salvador, y que yo tengo privilegio porque yo pasé el achievement gap,* like, historically Latinos have seldomly gone to college have seldomly done great on STAAR (state assessment), you know they hardly ever graduate from high school. I know that I have broken the achievement gap, but that's not always the case. (Transcription, 4/12/16)

> Like I recognize that my family in El Salvador has privilege, and oftentimes privilege is money, but this isn't always the case. The majority of people in El Salvador are poor just like they are in Uruguay (a student had mentioned having family there), houses made of metal, poor, or just like Molly's grandmother (who lived in Mexico). So, I recognize that my family has privilege in El Salvador, and I have privilege because I overcame the achievement gap. (Transcription, 4/12/16)

These initial years in Canada and her experience with the "guerrilla" in El Salvador were facets of her life that she shared with students and were powerful reminders of the community she believed she was hired to serve as a TWI teacher. Michelle was very open about sharing her experiences and "confessional narratives" (hooks, 1994), while always willing to address current political events and issues she felt students should know about. Her students' knowledge of her trajectory was documented when Michelle invited Ms. Ordaz, a fourth-grade teacher at Plainview who was a former soldier. As always, they debriefed after Ms. Ordaz's visit:

> **Michelle**: *La Army fue su única opción, no tenía plata. Aunque muera, fue la única opción, Ordaz fue una de ellos. No sabía la historia de Ordaz, tan fuerte para sobrevivir. Sé que es fuerte como persona.* How do you define courage*? Aunque no fue a Irak y a la batalla, hizo lo que pensaba que era bien. Courage! Llegó hasta la costa de Irak. Piensan que yo iría a la guerra?*
> **Michelle:** The Army was her only option, she didn't have money. Even if she died, it was the the only option. I didn't know Ordaz's background, she was so strong to survive. I know she is a strong person. Even though she didn't go to the battlefield in Iraq, she did what she thought was best. She arrived to the Iraqi coast! Do you think I would go to war?
> **Lydia**: No!
> **Anita**: We're used to you as a teacher!
> **Molly**: Too much suffering for you!
> **Shawn**: You were in a war more or less.
> **Michelle**: *No sé qué pienso, no estaría en ningún ejército, con ningún país, Canada ni El Salvador.*
> **Michelle:** I don't know what I think. I wouldn't be in the Army with any country, Canada or El Salvador.

**Nate**: Hurt other people.
**Michelle**: *Exactamente* (Exactly).
(Field notes, 11/12/15)

Shawn's comment about her being "more or less" in a war demonstrated that students were aware of Michelle's trajectory and lived experiences. She was also their teacher in fourth grade, and looped up with them into fifth grade when I carried out the study, which contributed to her intimate relationships with students. Michelle's experiences and clarity around a vision of bilingual education that centered the interests of her transnational bilinguals and their families (Palmer et al., In Press) was succinctly connected with her early experiences in Canada described above. When we were discussing my interview with one of her parents (Mónica) who had been pushed out of the Plainview community due to gentrification, Michelle made the following reference to her mother's plight upon arrival in Canada:

> What can I say? I love this woman's courage to lay it all out there. It's really difficult with Latina momma's sometimes because they are so guarded. I think of Magda, Ernesto's mom, or Paula, Bradley's mom, that are so guarded. I don't know the Latina mom myth, but I know that if they hustled like my own mom has hustled, their story is my story. I think Mónica says what all Latina's mom's wish they could say, and we can all tell that she suffers for her children and worries about life in America, food security, job security. (Interview, 7/8/16)

Michelle's commitment to transnational bilinguals and their families was embodied in her practice in the classroom and in the community, as she emphasized passionately; "I guess because they remind me of my own family I have a bias towards them. But they're also the reason why I'm here. Like research shows that I am here for them" (Interview,

2/24/16). Her critical consciousness as a TWI teacher was shaped through both her family, and her teaching trajectory, which will be described in the next section.

### From Segregation to Integration: Michelle Comes to Plainview

Michelle was an experienced bilingual teacher who was in her second year of teaching at Plainview. She had also taught at two other schools in the district, in Ottawa, Canada, and in England. In all of these respective sites she had worked with linguistically and culturally diverse populations in marginalized communities. In Canada, Michelle worked with newcomer students from Iraq, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, and in London her students were mainly Indian and from Africa. Prior to her arrival at Plainview, she worked at Gómez Elementary, a low-income Latino and Black school in Austin she described as "a super different population, it was 98% free or reduced lunch, there was a lot of homelessness, just a lot of basic needs that students weren't being met with. Food, safety, security, love" (Interview, 4/27/16). During these three years, she typically put in twelve-hour work days and even took in a student and her sibling due to serious drug issues that were affecting the family. The long hours and myriad demands started to take a hefty toll on Michelle, which was the impetus for her coming to Plainview:

> There were a lot of students that I had to be their caregiver and their support system and their counselor, even though we had all those things on campus. They were so stretched thin that I eventually became whatever they needed. So that was really hard. And then I started grad school and I was like okay, so I either have to do grad school or I have to do Gómez, and I need to set my priorities straight cuz I can't get both. And in the short term, Gómez was like a super priority, but in the long term advancing my education was more of a priority. And so I did grad school and then I came to Plainview…Yeah, I came here not only for my personal life, to have more sanity, in time, but also because I knew

> Verónica, she was in my grad school program, and she talked about how administrators here gave a lot of just freedom curricularly. And to me that sounded awesome, because we didn't have that. It was "this is your STAAR passage for the week, this is your practice one, this is your testing what, this is what you do and here are your photocopies," and I was a robot and I hated it. (Interview, 2/24/16)

Verónica and Michelle had met in a graduate school, as Michelle was studying education administration because she was considering a move into a leadership role at some point. Graduate school and the opportunity to meet Verónica, who was the impetus in bringing Michelle to Plainview, offered her a fresh opportunity to have "curricular freedom" after being a "robot" at her previous school. Verónica was a highly respected white middle-class veteran teacher at Plainview and was the other fourth grade TWI teacher. She was determined to learn Spanish due to her deep understanding of the importance of relationships in a successful TWI community, which is key in striving to make alliances with the Latinx community. Michelle recognized Verónica's commitment to Plainview:

> She knew that dual language was a thing they did, and she worked her booty off to speak Spanish, to learn Spanish, to write Spanish. Um, she was a super force on this campus. (Interview, 2/24/16)

Verónica's experience, strong relationships with students and parents, and collaborative spirit was what Michelle described as her "saving grace" (Interview, 7/8/16). They worked closely together during Michelle's first year at Plainview, and they began this collaboration by meeting consistently over the summer to plan how they were going to team teach and tackle head on the tumultuous year that both students and parents had experienced in third grade the previous year. Students had been segregated based on their dominant language due to the demands of standardized testing (Palmer, Henderson, Wall,

Zuñiga, & Berthelsen, 2015) [2] and the frustration of one of the teachers, a decision that resulted in the abandonment of Plainview's biliteracy goals for all students. Michelle reflected upon this and the challenges that she and Verónica were up against:

> In third grade a teacher saw that the dual language program wasn't working as well as she wanted it to be. And so the Spanish speaking third-grade teacher said, "well you don't speak Spanish, so I'm getting too frustrated with you being in my class and teaching you Spanish, why don't you just stay with Ms. Lewis on the other side." And so she had her Spanish speaking class the whole day, and Ms. Lewis had her English speaking class the whole day…And so, I wasn't here for that, and I don't know how our admin thought about it. I don't know. And I was here the following year. But Verónica was wise enough to be like "we need to bring this back together, we need to be unified and we need to get it back." Awesome, let's do it! (Interview, 4/27/16)

Michelle and Verónica tackled this issue head on by calling a house meeting with parents a month *before* the school year even started. They realized that that the segregation issue from the previous year needed to be addressed immediately, as they were both advocates for TWI spaces that offered generative potential for solidarity between the dominant English speaking and minoritized groups (Palmer et al., In Press). These house meetings would become hallmarks of Michelle's deep engagement with her parent community over the next two years. Bo, the white middle-class bilingual parent mentioned previously, described that first house meeting before the school year:

> She said to us, "yeah I know you bring a little bit of baggage with you all, we'll have to work through that (laughing)." And just lay it out there and do so with a smile on her face. "This is life you know. This is what we all deal with." (Interview, 6/10/16)

[2] Palmer studied the same school and revealed that a focus on preparing students for standardized tests was a key factor in their decision to disrupt the biliteracy goals in order to prepare students in their stronger language, which segregated the students. This was especially troubling for language-minoritized students, who received mostly monolingual English instruction based on results of a practice test.

Michelle and Verónica worked extremely hard to "bring this back together" with the students, as the segregation had created clear divisions between the students. They were very systematic in working through these divisions, which even led to a strategy for recess time:

> So there was a lot of building to be done in fourth grade at the beginning of fourth grade. And Verónica and I were super systematic about that. They didn't have recess where we could just go free-for-all for the first three months, we always played kickball, always. "I don't wanna play kickball today." "You can be referee." I don't wanna play kickball today." "You can count how many runs are coming in." Everybody always played kickball. I played kickball. Verónica played kickball. We all played kickball. And that was because there was a huge, a huge divide between the Spanish speakers and the English speakers. (Interview, 4/27/16)

This intentional integration of students in kickball proved to be generative, as the "divide" that was bridged through Michelle and Verónica's work went beyond symbolic, superficial, and utilitarian forms of integration (Muro, 2016). Even though I was not collecting data during Michelle's first year at Plainview, this intentional attempt to "bring this back together" after the tumultuous third grade year is important to highlight. Michelle's activism from the outset at Plainview revealed that she did not leave Gómez because she wanted a more comfortable place to work. The "freedom" she was eager to find at Plainview allowed her to focus on social justice issues and critical pedagogy. This work, a form of radical love (Cervantes-Soon, 2017) with both parents and students laid the foundation for her second year at Plainview, as students remained integrated throughout my data collection process. In the next section I highlight Michelle's relevant experiences as a language learner, her positionality around language policy, and critically-infused teaching philosophy around being a TWI teacher. These factors

contributed to the "stance" that she enacted, which Reyes and Vallone (2007) describe as that position, in Michelle's case a critical one, that is taken up in TWI contexts by individual teachers based on their trajectories, unique lived experiences, and critical consciousness. By describing Michelle's unique linguistic trajectory, positionality in the area of language policy, and teaching philosophy in the context of TWI, they provide a standpoint to ground Michelle's embodiment as a critically-conscious TWI teacher around her personal pillars of "Spanish, love, and content, not in that order." The complexities of the inherent diversity of TWI require a unique teacher who is pedagogically and linguistically equipped to take on these challenges with vigor (Palmer & Martínez, 2013), and Michelle provided a strong model for how to go about tackling these challenges.

### Michelle's Language Learning, Positionality, and Teaching Philosophy

The educational trajectories of bilingual teachers have been documented as "subtractive" experiences (Sutterby, Ayala, & Murillo, 2005; Valenzuela, 1999) that have positioned Spanish as a deficit or as a transitional tool for English language acquisition (Guerrero, 1997), which presents challenges for more additive infused models like TWI. With the explosive growth of TWI programs across the country (de Jong, 2016; Palmer et al., In Press; Valdez et al., 2014; Wilson, 2011), coupled with their potential commodification (Cervantes-Soon, 2014) and "Columbusing" (Flores, 2015) as part of the neoliberal "path," the field requires teachers with strong pedagogical, linguistic, philosophical, and social justice orientations. It is through the embodiment of these

orientations that the original core goals for TWI students around developing high levels of academic/linguistic proficiency in two languages, multicultural competence (Christian, 2016; de Jong, 2016), and the proposed fourth goal of developing critical consciousness (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017) have greater potential to be realized, especially for those transnational bilinguals who have the most to benefit from bilingual education. Michelle's strong orientations in all of these areas made her an ideal TWI teacher to research and work with in the classroom.

Michelle's K-12 schooling in Montreal and Toronto provided her an additive language learning experience that contributed to her development as trilingual in Spanish, French, and English. She described her initial years in Montreal:

> In Montreal I was in a French only classroom. We lived in an apartment complex which housed many refugees. For most of our neighbors, including my parents, English was the language in common. We only spoke Spanish at home. (Member check, 10/25/16)

Michelle and her family moved to Anglophone Toronto when she was going into ninth-grade, where she became part of the French immersion model that is well-known as being one of the original "additive" bilingual programs, while also serving as a guidepost in the design of additive programs in the US. During the elementary years, students are exposed to more French, and as they move up into middle and high schools English is eventually used as the medium of instruction 50% of the time. She talked about this experience:

> I know that in grade nine, we were in Toronto where I went to a French immersion high school which decreased the amount of French in upper grades. By the time I got to grade 12- I was doing 50/50. (Member check, 10/25/16)

This is important to highlight in comparison with the TWI context in the US, as the previously mentioned explosion of growth in the US has only just began to take root at the elementary level due to these programs being in a relatively nascent stage of development (Palmer & Martínez, 2013). This educational and linguistic trajectory influenced Michelle's perspectives of TWI, and she recognized this when I asked her about what she thought of the TWI model at Plainview:

> I don't know, I don't know if it really works. I don't know. And I guess I'm, not I guess, I know I'm biased, because I was in a full French immersion school growing up until grade eleven. And I was like under the, umbrella of language development…I think it's like *apaciguando* (pacifying) you know, there's another saying, like *tapando el sol con un dedo* (bury your head in the sand). It's just remedial, if you want someone to be truly bilingual, truly understand what a culture is like and truly understand like people that aren't your people, then do it right, like do it all or nothing. (Interview, 2/24/16)

Michelle's experiences in Canada and her participation in an additive bilingual program made her a unique teacher to study, as this undoubtedly contributed to her positionality in the area of language policy, which will be discussed in the next section.

**"So It's Always Spanish First, Everything"**

When I began my research in Michelle's classroom in late August, I was immediately captivated by her harmonious relationships with students *and* parents, the dialogical structure of her pedagogy, how students were not required to raise hands to participate, and her intentionality about fronting Spanish *all the time*! Michelle's position of "doing it all or nothing" through this centering and fronting of Spanish was not the norm at Plainview, as the gentrification of the community and school undoubtedly

contributed to this phenomenon. This was evident at PTA meetings, the tours for prospective families, and at a musical event in which students sang David Bowie songs in honor of his death. Bo, the parent mentioned previously around Michelle's house meetings, took note of this:

> I mean there was the lovely concert that was given, the David Bowie tribute concert, got news attention. It was a lovely, lovely, lovely moment. It would have been an outstanding earth shattering moment if at least one of those Bowie songs had been sung in Spanish, that (laughing) would have taken it from this really cool event to this mind-blowing event! (Interview, 6/10/16)

Tanya, a middle-class monolingual English speaker and key informant previously mentioned, reacted to the event in a similar way, while also highlighting the lack of effort to integrate Spanish into the specials classes. Tanya offered her opinion in conjunction with the conversation around converting Plainview into a Spanish language academy, which was discussed in previous chapters:

> There's just so many opportunities for Spanish to be (inaudible) and structured and you know (laughing), it's a wonderful program (chorus) and I love her to death but you know they had a David Bowie thing was their concert (laughing), there's like zero you know Hispanic music programs or anything through the specials and, that's just an expectation of the principal I just can't believe! It's not like she's not (chorus teacher) capable of doing it, it's not like the culture doesn't exist. You know it's without fail I'm surprised every year on something like that, I'm like oh well if we can't even make something like that happen, I don't know if we deserve to be an academy. I mean what makes us an academy beyond just being a school in the DL program? (Interview, 5/16/16)

Michelle's position of fronting Spanish all the time was not reciprocated during her first parent meeting (she called them house meetings) when Ms. Schneider, the bilingual vice-principal mentioned previously, was invited to talk about the previous year's test results.

The vice-principal did not "follow the lead" (Zentella, 1997) of Michelle, as she presented all the data exclusively in English. In my field notes I commented on this first house meeting:

> Michelle takes her work very seriously and it's obvious she created a lot of synergy with the parents the previous year. I have a lot of respect for the way she always fronts with Spanish and then makes sure to translate into English, although there are things left out when translating (into English). It is very relevant that the vice principal did not do the same with her language practices when discussing the test results. Then again, I never recall her using her Spanish in social settings at school. (Field notes, 8/26/15)

Ms. Schneider's English-only presentation revealed that Michelle's language policy was a distinct facet of her own classroom, as this deliberate fronting of Spanish was not a campus wide policy enacted with fidelity. Michelle's personal "stance" to front the realities of her transnational bilinguals and their families (Reyes & Villone, 2007) was a language policy she "made" in her own classroom (Menken & García, 2010). This language policy extended into other spaces outside of the classroom, as Michelle revealed:

> So it's always Spanish first. Even graduation stuff, it's always Spanish first. All our newsletters, it's always Spanish first. All our emails, it's always Spanish first. Everything. And so that's why I got hired at Plainview and that's what I'm gonna do. (Interview, 4/27/16)

Thus, not only was Michelle a language policy maker in the classroom, as she expanded Menken & Garcia's (2010) ideas to include technology and print. She had a very clear idea of her "race radical" (Flores, 2016) role at Plainview, which centered the interests of transnational bilinguals (Palmer et al., In Press) while also satisfying the goal that Spanish be used at least 50% of the time (Tedick & Wesley, 2015). Michelle's language

policy tread against the grain, as research has shown that myriad TWI programs do not provide at least 50% of the instruction in Spanish (Torres-Guzman, Klein, Morales-Rodriguez, & Han, 2005).

**"I'm very liberal, but I Try not to Put That on my Students"**

Michelle's philosophical orientation around curriculum and instruction was critical, strategic, and from a problem-posing perspective. Her combination of lived experiences and teaching experiences provided her a critical foundation that positioned her to engage students in difficult conversations, while at the same time satisfy the objectives of the required curriculum. During my year-long study in her classroom I never saw Michelle use a basal or "official" textbook of the district, and she had an amazingly diverse personal library that offered a variety of different genres. She commented on how she strategically covered her state-mandated objectives:

> *Es importante que yo cubra todos mis objetivos que el estado me da, usando literatura auténtica que pueda tener impacto. De ahí puedo sacar todas mis lecciones para cubrir mis objetivos, es trabajo porque sería más fácil que imprimir yo las lecciones que me da el distrito,* great scripted let's do it*, pero eso no tiene autencidad en mi salón.* (Presentation, 3/25/16)
>
> It's important that I cover the state objectives through the integration of authentic literature that can make an impact. From that I can get all the lessons to cover my objectives. It's not easy because it would be easier to just print the lessons that the district gives me. But that's not authentic in my classroom. (Presentation, 3/25/16)

She went about satisfying the "objectives" and creating lessons that "impacted" her students through a problem-posing pedagogy (Freire, 1997) that was driven by social

justice, equity, and by de-centering the white curriculum (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017). Michelle's intentionality in integrating a politically-oriented curriculum offered students' opportunities to develop critical consciousness, the fourth pillar of TWI that the authors are calling for amongst the complexity and diversity of TWI classrooms (Palmer & Martínez, 2013). Michelle spoke to her problem-posing pedagogy (Freire, 1997) that sought to de-center the white curriculum; specifically, when planning a unit on the American Revolution with a veteran colleague who had previously focused on the famous battles when teaching the unit:

> *Yo le dije* (I said to her) *"*Great! So who fought in the American Revolution?" *durante nuestro* (during our) planning. "Oh well the British." "Y eso well why? "Well you know like for independence I don't even know." "Where were black people?" "I don't know." "They need to find that out. They need to find out what happened to black people during the American Revolution." "Why I never thought about that." "Cuz they were on our land, Mexican people were on this land, where were they? Where were the natives?" "Well I guess some people, but we're doing battles Michelle." "Wait a minute, what's our TEK?" "Find the causes and the effects of the American revolution." "Great, I could tell them the causes, they fought because they wanted independence. Great, now find the effects. So now what happened to black people what happened to native people what happened to Mexican people let's go there! Cuz that seems way more interesting than just figuring out the battle of Ticonderoga!*"* (*Foundations of Bilingual Education* class, 3/25/16).

Michelle's conversation about how she envisioned de-centering a white perspective of teaching the American revolution was critically-framed (going beyond the battles of the American Revolution), strategic (included the state teaching objectives), and from a standpoint of posing problems (Where were Blacks, Mexicans, and Native Americans?). Her philosophical orientation around curriculum and instruction was also centered on dialoguing with students about relevant current events, such as politics and the

gentrification that was transforming the school and community (The thematic unit Michelle and I designed and carried around gentrification is the focus of the next chapter). During one of our conversations about the student interviews we analyzed together, Michelle referenced a specific conversation they had about the upcoming Presidential primary elections:

> Like we spoke about some pretty controversial things in our classroom…Sarah for example, her dad voted for Ted Cruz and I was like go home and ask him why, and so she came back and she's like he voted for Ted Cruz because Sanders is not going to win and Clinton is a crook (Michelle laughing). Yeah, and Micah (Sarah's mother) would talk to me, her mama would talk to me at pickup and she's like I don't know what you're telling Sarah in the classroom but her and her dad got in a very big argument about Donald Trump (Michelle laughing). Micah's a super liberal and her dude is a super Republican, and I'm pretty liberal, but I try not to put that on my students. (Discussion of data, 7/8/16)

Michelle's embodiment of a critical TWI teacher was never dogmatic or seeking to indoctrinate students, as she consistently provided space for students to grapple with the content under study. She did not have to "put that on [her] students," as the way she embodied her critical teaching practice was clearly "liberal" without her having to pontificate about her extreme disdain for the likes of Donald Trump. The purpose of this section was to offer insight and an introduction into Michelle's language learning trajectory, positionality as it relates to her language policy, and philosophical orientation, which, succinctly aligned with her own pillars of TWI. It also provides the necessary background of a critically-conscious teacher embodying the complexities, challenges, and diversity of the TWI classroom (Palmer & Martínez, 2013). The rest of the chapter will go into more depth about Michelle's personal pillars of "Spanish, love, content, not in

that order," as interdependently, they are essential in fomenting TWI spaces that are conducive to the developing all three "official" pillars of TWI; academic rigor in two languages, bilingualism/biculturalism, multicultural competence, and the proposed fourth pillar (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017) that will be the standpoint throughout these two chapters.

### Pillar #1 (Spanish)- Spanish as a tool of empowerment

Research in TWI contexts has revealed that even when concerted attempts are made to front Spanish during instruction, the default language on behalf of students has been English (DeNicolo, 2010; DePalma, 2010; Potowski, 2004). Michelle's classroom *was not* any different, as while Michelle easily satisfied the goal of Spanish instruction 50% of the time (Tedick & Wesley, 2015), her students usually did not follow her lead (Zentella, 1997) and instead opted for English. The purpose of this section on Michelle's "Spanish" pillar of classroom instruction and use in other school spaces is not to be viewed as another example of the challenges that Spanish faces in the face of English hegemony (Martínez, Hikida, & Durán, 2015). The inequalities that have been exposed in TWI contexts, specifically at the classroom level where it has been documented that the propensity to favor English offers native English speakers the upper hand academically (Amrein & Peña, 2000; Muro, 2016; Palmer, 2008, 2009), are relevant to highlight when discussing the realities of TWI.

Additionally, the gentrification of Plainview's TWI program (Valdez et al., 2016) and community discussed in previous chapters cannot be overlooked, and contributed to

English dominant parents demanding more Spanish. Research has demonstrated that this has dangerous consequences, as the dominant group could gain more power (Valdés, 1997) through a bilingualism that is looked upon admirably in comparison with transnational students' bilingualism (McCollum, 1999; Muro, 2016). This global human capital framework (Valdez, Delavan, & Freire, 2014) was in a sense predicted through Valdés' "cautionary note" (1997), and is currently being framed as how neoliberal processes are impacting TWI contexts (Cervantes-Soon, 2014, Petrovic, 2005; Varghese & Park, 2010). These gentrification processes (Valdez et al., 2016) driven by the acquisition of human capital are counter to the original race radical (Flores, 2016) and equity/heritage vision (Valdez et al., 2014) that center the realities of transnational students, equity, and social justice. Despite these documented inequalities *and* Michelle's students' preference for English, I argue in this chapter that Michelle adheres to the original race radical tenants (Flores, 2016) through an equity/heritage vision of bilingual education that centers the interests of her transnational bilingual students and families. Specifically, Michelle frames the use of Spanish, "it's always Spanish first" (Interview, 4/27/16), as a tool that empowered the language, culture, and parent community. She talked about her role and how Spanish came into play:

> And my job at Plainview is to be a dual language teacher, the Spanish version. So here you go, this is what I do. And I also think it empowers my language, it empowers my culture. It empowers the parents that speak my language. So, it's a tool of empowerment to oftentimes people who have been pushed out of Plainview, of Austin. And I think parents know that, parents appreciate that. (Interview, 4/27/16)

Michelle's critical consciousness about the role of Spanish being about empowerment succinctly aligns with the proposed fourth pillar of TWI around the development of critical consciousness, which, although directed at the *students and families* (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017) could not come to fruition without a teacher in the mold of Michelle. Her positioning of Spanish as a tool of empowerment should also be considered a counter-hegemonic stance that takes place in those contexts where power relationships are reconstituted to center the voices and realities of those who have historically been positioned at the margins of society (Darder, Baltodono, & Torres, 2003). Michelle was aware of the rapidly transforming power dynamics at Plainview, and was determined, transparent, and compassionate about the language of those families who had been pushed to the margins. The challenge presented by gentrification at Plainview demanded that Michelle enact a discourse that was used to interrogate the school's complex manifestations of culture and power and promote sites of pedagogical contestation (Giroux, 1988).

Menken and García (2010) highlight how teachers interpret and enact language policy in their classrooms, which may go against the policy of the school. Michelle's classroom language policy was a site of resistance and interrogation, as she did not follow Plainview's "language of the day" policy that alternated daily. This policy extended into Michelle's interactions with parents, as she carried out what she called house meetings (discussed later in the chapter) with parents to provide a glimpse of what was happening in the classroom and offer a space for dialogue. She described those meetings:

> *Todo es en español. Mi power points son en espanol. Si la gente American que no habla español no entiende,* well *amigos están en un programa de DL, así que encuentran su bilingual partner porque eso va a ser en español.* (Interview, 3/25/16)
>
> Everything is in Spanish. My power points are in Spanish. If the American folks who don't speak Spanish don't understand, well friends you are in a DL program, find your bilingual partner because because this is going to be in Spanish. (Interview, 3/25/16)

Reyes and Villone (2007) remind us that the decision to take up critical stances and formally explore asymmetrical power relations is one made by the teacher or the school. Michelle's Spanish "pillar," and her conceptualization of Spanish as a tool of empowerment, was an individual decision of solidarity with those students and families whose realities were meant to be centered in a race radical vision of bilingual education (Flores, 2016). Michelle spoke to this solidarity during our unit on gentrification (discussed in full in the next chapter), while at the same time revealing that the native-English speaking students were transgressing complicated terrain:

> *No todos estamos en Plainview para aprender español, ese es mi idioma, ese es el idioma de Karina,* right. *Pero lo estamos compartiendo con todos, right, ese es nuestro idioma. Qué yeah like Larry lo puede usar* that's cool, *pero eso es mi voz* and I'm gonna use it for what's right, *y hoy qué gente como Larry o Carly sabe mi idioma…*This is our language, I grew up with this language, Karina grew up with this language, Javier grew up with this language, like we grew, this is my language, and now I'm sharing it with you. So now you also have to stand up with me, and like fight for what's right. (Field notes, 4/13/16)
>
> Not all of us in Plainview are here to learn Spanish, this is my language, this is Karina's language, right. But we're sharing it with everybody, right, it's our language. But yeah Larry can use it that's cool, but this is my voice and I'm gonna use it for what's right, and now that people like Larry or Carly know my language. (Field notes, 4/13/16)

Michelle's description of Spanish in the context of a gentrifying Plainview, a process that was pushing out families who grew up with her "language" while pushing in more affluent families to "learn the language," positioned the language as a tool of empowerment that demanded transgression from non-native speakers.

The TWI literature reveals that Spanish can frequently be framed as a useful tool for the job market with great potential of being commodified by the dominant English speaking population (Cervantes-Soon, 2014; Muro, 2016; Paciotto & Delany-Barmann, 2011). This discourse that surrounds TWI programs frequently positions these additive and enrichment labels in an apolitical manner, as this "resource" perspective of bilingual education (Ruíz, 1984) does not problematize who is actually gaining the most from these labels. As a result, this resource orientation offers a neoliberal ethos (Petrovic, 2005; Ricento, 2005) that is framed from a globalized human capital discourse orientation (Valdéz et al., 2014), which is a serious threat to intellectual endeavors that seek to engage minoritized groups in social justice and critical thinking that has the potential to empower these groups. In the context of a rapidly gentrifying Plainview where "they used to really didn't care about Spanish" (student, interview, 5/16/16) before the TWI program arrived in 2010, this neoliberal ethos around the push for more Spanish, as described in previous chapters, manifested as an apolitical language-as-resource orientation that promoted the commodification, disembodiment, and the depoliticizing of language and the erasure of Latino civil rights struggles. Michelle challenged this neoliberal orientation in her own classroom by positioning the use of Spanish as a tool that empowers "her language, culture, and parents who speak [her] language." In the context of Michelle's

TWI classroom, language as empowerment was a tool for criticality and action for social change (Duncan-Andrade, 2008) in striving to build community between historically marginalized groups together with the dominant group (Palmer et al., In Press). Even though *both* groups responded to Michelle's Spanish frequently in English, her language policy of empowerment was a critical stance that promoted dialogue about issues of race, class, and gender. These conversations promoted dialogue across social class, race, culture, and gender (TWI's pillar 3; multicultural competence) and generative opportunities for the development of critical consciousness by students (proposed 4th pillar of TWI). In the following section I highlight how Michelle empowered her language and culture by tapping into Spanish as a tool for criticality through the integration of her "content" pillar. The "Spanish" pillar is essential for critical TWI contexts and this should not be discounted, and Michelle augmented this through critical pedagogy.

### Pillar #2 (Content)- Spanish for Criticality

As a critically-conscious and experienced TWI/bilingual teacher, Michelle had a deep understanding of the complexities of race relations in the US (Valdés, 2002), which contributed to her ability to grasp the lived experiences and realities of her transnational bilingual students and their families (de Mejía, 2002; Smith, 2001). Her personal TWI pillars of "Spanish, love, content," were evident in her curricular decisions, conversations with students, and overarching embodiment of a critical TWI teacher. I specifically refer to three conversations that took place, as this kind of critical dialogue around "content"

was the *norm* and should not be viewed as isolated incidents. One day in early fall, students were listening to Michelle read *Sylvia and Aki*, a powerful book that documents the experience of a young girl whose family has been placed in a Japanese internment camp. Michelle got to the phrase "a threat to national security," and the following conversation took place:

> **Michelle**: What's a threat to national security? *Qué sería un threat, ahora*? (What would be a threat now)
> **Many Students**: Donald Trump!
> **Michelle**: Reasonable? *Nuestro* (our) national security?
> **Shawn**: Syria, Afghanistan, terrorists
> **Michelle:** *De acuerdo* (Do you agree)? Un threat?
> **Aaron**: No! At this time, but not always.
> **Michelle**: *Hay gente como en este libro que son un threat adentro del EEUU? Algo en contra de EEUU adentro del EEUU?*
> **Michelle:** Are there people in this book who are a threat inside the US? Something against the US inside the US?
> **Ofelia:** America could be threat to America. More harm to themselves.
> **Shawn**: *Meten en problemas* (They make trouble)
> **Michelle**: *Meten en problemas*? (They make trouble?)
> **Ofelia**: Yeah
> **Bradley**: I'm with you!
> **Michelle**: *Por qué? Yo sé que muchos dijeron Trump*. (Why? I know that many said Trump) Why?
> **Aaron**: Not a really good man, really racist
> **Michelle**: *Por qué*? (Why?)
> **Charlie**: Wants to put Mexicans back in Mexico; thinks they belong there
> **Ofelia**: Most of US folks are from other parts of the world; if we send back only a couple of people. Trumps wants things to be the same, like segregation
> **Michelle**: *Pero, acuérdame lo que dijo; pared entre US Y México cuz los mexicanos son un* threat*, dijo Trump. Tiene que quedar afuera. Dijo* national threat! Háblame Bradley!
> **Michelle:** But remind me what he said; a wall between the US and Mexico cuz Mexicans are a threat Trump said. They have to be kept out. He said national threat! Talk to me Bradley!
> **Bradley**: Don't like it; my mom is Mexican; rude!
> **Molly**: More opportunities if you come to the US; my grandma did it; would be hard to come in and out

**Tatiana**: Most Mexicans aren't bad; Understand what he's thinking is rude; would you like people destroying your country?
**Shawn**: If he did, how far back is he going? Who goes back?
**Tatiana**: Maybe Donald Trump would have to go back! (class laughing)
**Charlie**: He would send darker students back
**Michelle**: *Me mandaría a mí?* (Would he send me back?)
**Students**: *Sí!*
**Michelle**: *No soy Mexicana!* (I'm not Mexican)
**Leo**: Modern Hitler
**Aaron**: Sad
(Field notes, 10/2/15)

Michelle exposed students to "content" in the form of a book that promoted critical classroom dialogue while also fronting "Spanish," which was the norm. This free-flowing dialogue between students, often focused on pertinent current social issues, was the norm during my time in Michelle's classroom. She was very deliberate about providing space for complex topics (Osorio, 2015) such as the one above about national security, which led into a conversation about then Republican primary candidate Donald Trump and race. Michelle's willingness to engage students in complicated conversations (Pinar, 2004) can be conceptualized as a form of radical love (Cervantes-Soon, 2017) from a Freirian perspective, and was demonstrated in the conversation around national security. She dialogued *with* students and did not talk *to* students, revealed her vulnerability and personal narratives (hooks, 1994), and most importantly displayed love in the form of emotions and action (taking up the conversation about national security in the US). Anita, who self-defined as a Venezuelan Austinite, evoked this radical love of Michelle when she described her as "valiant, cuz I don't know, just because she has done a lot for us" (Interview, 5/23/16). Lydia, who self-defined as Mexicana, reiterated Michelle's radical love for students when I asked her to describe Michelle in her own words:

> Well, we didn't just learn like academics, we learned stuff like that were real world problems, things that aren't just happening in the US but like across the world, like poverty, gentrification for instance, just many things that you don't get at a lot of schools, and many teachers don't teach. (Interview, 5/23/16)

Michelle's criticality, as referenced by Anita and Lydia, stemmed from her being "valiant" based on her eagerness to engage students dialogically around complex issues that went beyond strictly "academics" to include real world problems. It is important to also highlight that Michelle *could have* opted for English as the default language, as all students were proficient in English. Spanish was used as a form of linguistic, cultural, and familiar empowerment, specifically for the transnational bilinguals Michelle always talked about as being hired to serve. This came through in another conversation in conjunction with *Sylvia and Aki,* when the issue of gender was addressed. Michelle made a connection to the book *Separate but Equal*, and was encouraged by students to share a particular excerpt. After sharing the excerpt, the following conversation took place:

> **Michelle**: The role of gender?
> **Holly**: Hard labor, expecting [them] to cook
> **Lydia**: Getting them ready
> **Michelle**: (to Latino boys) How does that sit with you? *Ya sé qué piensan las muchachas.* (I know what the girls think)
> **Zuleima**: Still happens
> **Anita**: Girls are weak, raised that way
> **Lydia**: Boys are stronger than girls
> **Zuleima**: Damsel in distress
> **Molly**: Queen Elizabeth proved that
> **Michelle**: *Leo, hay separación de trabajo de mujer y hombres? Es normal, Nestor?*
> **Michelle:** Leo, is there a work divide between men and women? Is this normal Nestor?
> **Nestor**: Most of the time it's happening

**Michelle***: El punto de Nestor es válido, los cinco crecimos en eso. Tu mama quedó en casa. La mujer no pudo trabajar. Leo, cómo es en tu casa?*
**Michelle:** Nestor has a valid point, the five of us were raised in this. Your mom stayed at home. Women couldn't work. Leo, what it's like at your house?
**Nestor**: *Los dos trabajan en restaurantes* (They both work in restaurants), mom works less than dad
**Michelle**: *José, tu mama trabaja duro* (José, your mom works hard)
**Michelle**: *Cultura latina, a veces la mujer está puesta en la cocina y los hombres van a trabajar. Mi papa no quería que yo hiciera nada en la cocina. Mi mama era la opuesta al normal de mujer Latina.*
**Michelle:** Latin culture, at times the woman is placed in the kitchen and the men go and work. My dad didn't want me to do anything in the kitchen. My mom was the opposite of the typical Latina woman.
**Andrea**: Dad is always driving; mom at Ross picking up crates
**Michelle**: *Suena pesado* (sounds tough)
**Tuti**: My mom only cooks eggs and spaghetti, dad cooks a lot cuz he's his own boss, work two to three hours then watches TV while mom works
**Michelle**: *No sé cómo lo hace Ms. Ordaz* (Plainview teacher) (I don't know how Ms. Ordaz does it)
**Molly**: Like it is at my grandparents, abuelita cooks everything and others don't help
**Alina**: Great aunt and uncle's house, sexism, aunt always cooking and uncle is out working and paying for house, different than here
**Holly**: Like sports, not expected for girls
(Field notes, 10/8/15)

This conversation shed light on the complexities and inherent diversity of TWI spaces (Palmer & Martínez, 2013), while once again indexing Michelle's criticality centered around "love, content, and Spanish." She addressed the issue of gender roles (content), which fomented a dialogue across social class, gender, and cultural barriers, while maintaining her fidelity to her language policy of "Spanish" as a tool of empowerment. Michelle's demonstration of "love" emerged when she empathized with Nestor's comment about distinct gender roles being the case "most of the time." On the other hand, Tuti referred to gender roles in her family as being the opposite, with the father

being the one who "cooks a lot." These types of conversations, the *norm* in Michelle's classroom, were integral in fostering a multicultural competence that is rarely documented in TWI spaces (Feinauer & Howard, 2014; Palmer et al., In Press). During an interview with Lorena, who self-identified as Jewish, she touched upon being open to new things:

> **Me:** What do you think the purpose of dual language is?
> **Lorena:** I think it's meant for kids to open their minds to new things because most kids, well I don't know how many kids in America speak Spanish, but the kids in DL are earning a new language and they're opening their mind to new things, so I think that's the purpose of DL. (Interview, 5/23/16)

Palmer et al. (In Press) emphasize that the mere integration of diverse students in the TWI classroom does not guarantee that meaningful or even possibly transformative multicultural interactions will come to fruition. Michelle went beyond the integration of students, as her critical curriculum fostered critical dialogue and pushed them to "open their minds" to diverging ontologies and epistemologies. Leo, who self-defined as Mexicano-Americano, spoke to this in our interview:

> **Me:** What are the most important things that you think that she's taught you all in these last two years?
> **Leo:** How everyone is different and special in their own ways.
> (Interview, 5/18/16)

Leo' powerful comment reveals that his mind was "opened up" to different ways of being and knowing. Reyes and Villone (2007) remind us that the decision to "open their minds" to these different ways of being and knowing is one that is made by the teacher. Michelle's stance was key in providing opportunities for students to critically dialogue across difference through "content," as will be demonstrated in the following

conversation. Once again, they were reading *Sylvia and Aki* and they reached a point in the story where there was a reference to erecting fences to keep people in a designated place. Michelle connected this to a book they read earlier in the year, *Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote*, which documents "animals" making the dangerous trek across the US Mexican border:

> **Michelle**: Pancho Rabbit
> **Michelle**: *Hay más de 20 túneles que van de Mexico a EEUU* (There are more than 20 tunnels that go from Mexico to the US)
> **Nate**: Scary!
> **Michelle**: *Son grandes, puedes caminar y parar* (They're huge, and you can walk in them and stand up)
> **Nate**: People die like that!
> **Michelle**: *Muere en túneles* (shows map of the border on the doc-cam) (People die in the tunnels)
> **Michelle**: Author of Sylvia and Aki *dice* (says) keep some in shutting others out, *qué piensan?* (What do you all think?)
> **Tatiana**: Not good that they build walls
> **Shawn**: With a purpose
> **Michelle**: What?
> **Shawn**: Too crowded!
> **Ofelia**: Wouldn't have these buildings or Austin!
> **Shawn**: What makes you say that?
> **Nate**: Wouldn't have Plainview!
> **Michelle**: (to Ned) *Tu familia es Mexicana*? (Your family is Mexican?)
> **Ned**: *Sí* (Yes)
> **Michelle**: *Cuántos años tenía?* (How old was she?)
> **Ned**: I think she was an adult
> **Nate**: How did she cross?
> **Ned**: In a car
> **Nate**: Pancho Rabbit is not a cool story
> **Lydia**: With passports they let you come!
> **Michelle**: *Qué decías?* (What were you saying?)
> **Shawn**: Passport is a privilege!
> **Michelle**: *Había una diferencia, tener, sin pasaporte?* (Was there a difference having or not a passport)
> **Nate**: It's a necessity
> **Michelle**: Andre (special education teacher's aide) *nació y creció aquí y no pienso que es menos sabio porque ha estado en Austin. Es sabio tener*

> *un pasaporte? Si no tengo plata? Puedo comprar Rice Chex porque tengo plata, pasaporte?*
> **Michelle:** Andre was born and raised here and I don't think he's any less smart because he's stayed in Austin. One is considered smart with a passport? And if I don't have enough money? I can buy Rice Chex because I have money, and a passport?
> **Nate**: Money is all you need to live, I'm being serious.
> **Susan**: We could hunt, build houses
> **Michelle**: *Algunas culturas, no en EEUU*. (In some cultures, but not in the US)
> (Field notes, 11/2/15)

This third and last example that was used to demonstrate how students dialogued across difference, specifically social class, offered insight into the cross-cultural awareness that is possible in TWI spaces. This generative opportunity did not emerge just by placing two groups together (Palmer et al., In Press), as Michelle's embodiment of a critical TWI teacher was the catalyst for these kinds of conversations to take place on a regular basis. Ofelia recognized that Austin would be different without immigrant labor. Shawn named the fact the having a passport was a privilege. Tatiana opined that building walls was a bad idea. Michelle created the space through critical content, Spanish as the language of empowerment, and a radical love for students and parents that allowed for their emotions to come to the forefront. This section around critical content demonstrated that Michelle's fronting of Spanish played a major role in the classroom, while at the same time her poignant questioning techniques, the open dialogue that took place, the radical love that was demonstrated through discussions that mattered to the kids, and allowing the students to express themselves in the language and form of their choice made this TWI space unique. Mateus (2016) documented a TWI classroom where the teacher centered and demanded Spanish, but no emphasis was placed on the quality and

criticality of the discussion. These types of classrooms tend to emphasize form over content, right and wrong answers, and the surveillance of the use of Spanish becomes a stumbling block against generating insightful dialogue. The next section highlights Michelle's work with parents, which reveals her commitment to her personal pillar around "love."

### Pillar 3 (Love)- Radical Love: House meetings with parents

Michelle's critical consciousness around TWI included the previously mentioned house meetings, which each month provided parents space to dialogue about what was happening in the classroom. Michelle viewed these meetings as a requirement that came with the territory of being a TWI teacher, especially in light of Plainview losing its parent-support specialist as a result of the changing demographics. She felt that parents should be brought together and put into what could be uncomfortable situations, while at the same time centering the interests of the original Spanish-speaking families who were being pushed out of the community She referred to her intentions and the discomfort of a typical house meeting:

> *La situacion para mi es cómo incluir a esas familias, que sus voces sean parte integral de nuestras conversaciones, en correo electrónico que a veces no tienen acceso a eso, para que sus voces puedan ser parte de nuestras conversaciones, tenemos, para que eso pueda suceder en nuestra clase tenemos cosa que se llaman house meetings. Todo es en español, mis power points son en español, si la gente americana que no habla inglés no entiende, well amigos están en un programa de DL, así que encuentran su bilingual partner porque eso va a ser en español. Yo siempre frontload todo con español, en mi salón a los padres en juntas, ayer hubo una junta de PTA; yo sé que no hubo nadie que hablaba español ahí, yo hice el anuncio en español, a mí me da igual, me da igual que ustedes no hablen el idioma que sus hijos hablen y que yo hable su idioma porque yo estoy*

> *ahí para representar a mi comunidad latina. Es difícil hacer, no es fácil hacer eso pero es importante que del principio tengan unas expectativas muy altas para su rol en una escuela. Entonces va a ser fácil ir con la corriente de decir OK everybody to tomorrow's board meeting, no la mesa directiva va a tener una cita el lunes en la tarde, todos los padres tienen que estar ahí. "What did she say, what did she say?" Well find your bilingual partner amigo, porque eso es lo que sus hijos tienen que hacer, para entender mi idioma mi cultura*. (Interview, 3/25/16)
>
> The situation for me is how do I include these families, so these voices are an integral part of our conversations. Sometimes they don't have access to email. We have, so that their voices can be part of the conversation in our classroom, what we call house meetings. Everything is in Spanish. My power points are in Spanish, and if the American folks don't understand, well friends find your bilingual pair because it's going to be in Spanish. I always frontload in Spanish to the parents in my classroom. Yesterday there was a PTA meeting, and I know that there wasn't anyone who spoke Spanish there, but I did the announcement in Spanish. I don't care, I don't care that you don't speak the language your children speak, and I speak their language because I am here to represent the Latino community. It's hard to do, it's not easy to do but it's important right from the start that they have high expectations about their role in the school. So, it's going to be easy to go with the flow and say OK everybody to tomorrow's board meeting, no *la mesa directiva* is going to have a meeting on Monday afternoon, and all parents need to be there. "What did she say? What did she say? Well find your bilingual partner friend, because this is what your kids have to do to understand my language and culture. (Interview, 3/25/16)

This was not the norm at Plainview, as Michelle's "stance" about parent engagement was unique. Michelle's work with parents was appreciated by both the dominant group and the traditional Plainview families who had been pushed out of the neighborhood. At the same time, she was aware of the dominant group's social, economic, and cultural capital and how it was affecting Plainview, and as a result of this was up front about the purpose of house meetings being about providing information to those traditional Spanish speaking parents:

> My meeting was for this table. They're gonna get it. Like, the rest of these tables are gonna get it, with or without me. They will find ways to contact, to talk, to communicate with me. But my tables were these, my meeting was for these moms. (Interview, 2/24/16).

I attended and participated in three of these house meetings, and will pinpoint a few specific events that demonstrated how Michelle centered the interests of "these moms." There was a lot of confusion about the different middle school paths that students could take the following year, as the district had just extended the dual language program to a few of the middle schools that Michelle's students would have access to. In addition, there were magnet schools that required applications, which she required each student to do even if they were not going to apply. This process required intimate knowledge of how to navigate district power structures, specifically, how to apply for a transfer to a middle school offering dual language. Michelle knew that the dominant English speaking parents would "get it," and took extra time to explain to Andrea's mother the ins and outs of going to one's neighborhood school, a dual language campus, or one of the magnets in science, math, and the humanities. She was appreciative of Michelle's detailed explanation of the complex path to middle school. Ernesto's mom voiced concern about how she could go about getting the ELL label removed for him, as she was worried that he wouldn't have access to the "*mejores clases*" (better classes) (field notes, 12/2/15). Michelle let her know that they would talk one on one after the meeting, while an English-dominant parent recommended she make an appointment with the vice-principal and that she had a right to "*rechazar servicios*" (opt to reject ELL services). These critical dialogues in house meetings between Michelle and parents went beyond "symbolic

integration," which Muro (2016) describes as "polite, surface-level, interactions that are enjoyable, voluntary, and additive" (p.2). I commented on this in my field notes from the meeting:

> Undoubtedly there were a lot of cultural/economic/social capitals that came to the surface. Most importantly, some having the tools to navigate the middle school systems (the privileged populations), while others not having any idea about the process (Andrea's mom) nor the policies that come into play for their child (Ernesto's mom). Nonetheless, the conversation brought necessary topics to the forefront around equity and social justice, which is why TWI schools should require their parents to attend house meetings such as this. (Field notes, 12/2/15)

Both groups of parents believed Michelle's "intentional integration" of parents through house meetings was helpful in grasping their children's classroom realities and what was on other parents' minds. Alice, a self-defined middle-class Hispanic with high-school level Spanish, reflected on the house meetings:

> So yeah, she does those house meetings which are great, kinda lets us know what's going on and gives everyone an opportunity to ask questions and it's good in that forum. I like that group forum because sometimes people ask questions that I wouldn't have thought of, and so you're like oh that's a good idea, I wasn't even thinking of that, and of course everyone has a different perspective, I'm sure based on their child…My impression is that you're getting into what your child is you know experiencing every day. (Interview, 5/17/16)

Mónica, a working-class *Mexicana* parent, also appreciated the house meetings:

> *Me gusta que haga esas juntas, ya tenía muchos años que maestros no hacían esa clase de juntas, de juntarnos todos los padres de familia. Yo siempre me gustaba a mí que hicieran esa clase de reuniones para hablar todos los papas con la maestra, se me hace muy muy buena idea y qué bueno que la maestra Michelle lo trajo otra vez.* (Interview, Mónica, 5/19/16)
>
> I'm glad that she has these meetings. It had been a long time since a teacher did this type of meeting, of getting all of the parents together. I

> always used to like these types of meetings that gave parents the opportunity to talk to the teacher. I think it's a very good idea and it's great that Michelle brought them back again. (Interview, Mónica, 5/19/16)

House meetings were a demonstration of Michelle's radical love for her students and parents, and the last one I attended was a testament of this. The confusion around the upcoming middle-school transition was the impetus for Michelle to invite the district's middle school dual language coordinator to talk with parents and answer their questions. As people were getting settled for the meeting I noticed the following interaction between Javier's mom (working-class Mexicana) and Ofelia's Mom (middle-class bilingual from Uruguay):

> Before meeting even starts Michelle starts to help Javier's mom with the middle school transfer from that she hasn't filled out yet. Karina also gets in the mix and starts to figure out what their home school would be. She later asks Michelle for her computer because her phone connection is not working well. (Field notes, 1/28/16)

These kinds of interactions were the norm in Michelle's house meetings, as parents consistently crossed linguistic, cultural, and social class barriers like their children did in the classroom. Her decision to invite a district staff member to take questions about the confusion surrounding the middle-school transition revealed Michelle's deliberate attention to the needs of her families, especially the original population who were being pushed out of the school due to gentrification. She provided a platform where all groups had access to the "content," could freely ask questions, and most importantly be listened to. Michelle dialogued "with" parents (Freire, 1997), in a human manner and with love. When reflecting on my house meeting field notes, as was the norm in our research relationship, she wrote me the following email:

> The common theme of the three house meetings is that we can all learn from each other. I saw amazing things when people expressed concern, felt vulnerable, utter their preoccupations. Other parents rose up to the occasion by providing advice, encouragement, and different ways to solve problems. Teachers that lead house meetings must realize that it's very different from teaching kids. My job was to hold space for parents to have dialogue about subjects that I thought may be on parents' minds. That's what shaped my agenda for house meetings, yet it was the conversations that made true impact in our little $4^{th}/5^{th}$ grade tribe. (email, 8/15/16).

Palmer and Martínez (2013) emphasize the inherent complexities of TWI spaces that offer linguistic and curricular challenges for practicing teachers when bringing together two distinct groups of students. Michelle's commitment and work with two distinct groups of *parents* only adds to these complexities, and contributed to her critical embodiment of a TWI teacher. Up to this point I have contextualized Michelle's background experiences, critical sociopolitical consciousness of Plainview and TWI and her personal pillars of TWI of "Spanish, content, and love, not in that order." These elements contributed interdependently to lay the groundwork for the development of students' critical consciousness, the proposed fourth pillar of TWI (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017). I document this manifestation of critical consciousness in the next section, and is discussed in more detail in the following chapter that focuses on the gentrification unit that Michelle and I planned.

### Enacting the Fourth Pillar: Students Take on the School Board

Duncan-Andrade (2008) highlights the importance of using language as a vehicle for social change, which succinctly aligns with Freire's (1997) conceptualization of praxis and the development of critical consciousness in TWI spaces (Cervantes-Soon et

al., 2017). Michelle's beliefs around Spanish being a tool of empowerment for her "language and culture" and for those families "who have been pushed out of Plainview" coalesced into other spaces outside of her classroom. In October of 2015 Plainview's school board representative mentioned at a recent meeting that constituents in her area were asking for a quicker transition to English, as opposed to the dual language model that was in place at their schools. Parents at Plainview were irate, and invited the school board representative to a community conversation in November to gain more insight about her respective stance on dual language. The conversation was facilitated by the local Faith Alliance group mentioned previously who had partnered with Plainview to promote positive community interactions, as many parents and teachers were troubled about the transformation of the school due to gentrification. The representative engaged with a large group of parents, teachers, and students around dual language, and there was a sense of tension that permeated the space. She was combative and on the defensive, and I captured this in my field notes:

> Taylor kind of gave it to the folks at Plainview! She said she had been waiting three years for an invitation to come back. She mentioned that she is very involved in the other schools in the district and they invite her to PTA, parent coffees and other events. She told them to invite her to school events so that she can get to know the community at Plainview. She also scolded parents who claimed that their kids did great with Spanish at school but it was not being used at home. Mr. González invited her to come into the classroom and she responded if it was even necessary by saying "has anything changed?" (Field notes, 11/15/15)

I recall walking out of the conversation that night with a bitter taste in my mouth due to the combative attitude from the school board representative. She did nonchalantly commit to supporting dual language at the district level, but many were unsettled by her

expression of feeling disregarded by the Plainview community. Due to that incident, there was a sense of rallying around dual language at the school and by Michelle and her families that was reflected in my field notes:

> Since Ann Taylor's visit to Plainview there has been a lot of momentum around dual language. Her comments about constituents in her district wanting more English as soon as possible has galvanized certain folks; those of us working with the Faith Alliance group; Michelle's parents and students were worried about middle school dual language options. January, which was School Board Appreciation month, was coming up and Michelle wanted her students to thank the school board for their overall efforts This is especially relevant being that the district is losing students to surrounding districts as a result of gentrification and to charter schools. (Field notes, 2/1/16)

Michelle's students were galvanized around this issue as well, and many of them proposed speaking in front of the school board in support of dual language. Michelle felt the need to write Ms. Taylor a thank you card for her efforts on the school board in spite of her combative rhetoric. She also wanted to move beyond their feelings of anger directed towards Ms. Taylor, and proceeded to pull up an impressive biography marked by thirty-four years of service in the field of education. Michelle emphasized "she does a lot" (Field notes, 1/20/16) in Austin's local education context, which went against the negativity that was being directed at Ms. Taylor at the campus level. She could have easily contributed to the bashing, but instead spoke through her stance of radical love. In combination with the thank you card they wrote as a class, five students volunteered to speak at upcoming school board meeting in support of dual language. I took note of this praxis on behalf of Michelle and students:

> Michelle has been absent at lunch in preparation for the five students who will speak to the board about dual language. This is another good example

> of her activist stance around dual language. It is also relevant that she goes about presenting facts about Ann Taylor by showing them her bio, as opposed to just bashing her based on her negative stance on dual language. (Field notes, 1/20/16)

Tatiana, Leo, Lydia, Karina, and Marisa waited nervously in the audience with their parents as they waited for the public comment portion of the monthly school board meeting. Michelle spoke first, as she graciously thanked the school board members for their hard work and their dedication and commitment to dual language. I provide insightful comments from each student, which is followed by an analysis using Ruíz's (1984) language-as-resource paradigm. Tatiana, a middle-class native English speaker went first:

> *Aprender español me ha ayudado a poder comunicarme con mis compañeros en Plainview que sólo hablan español. Cuando tuvimos un estudiante nuevo en tercer grado, y él vino de México, yo pude comunicarme con él porque los dos hablábamos en español. También hablo español para poderles ayudar a mis padres cuando salimos de viajes. Una vez, el verano pasado fuimos a España e yo tuve que traducirles todo a mis padres y a mi hermano mayor.* (School Board meeting, 2/1/16)
>
> Learning Spanish has helped me be able to communicate with my friends at Plainview who only speak Spanish. When we got a new student in third grade who came from Mexico I could talk with him because we both spoke Spanish. I also speak Spanish in order to help my parents when we are traveling. Last summer we went to Spain and I had to translate everything for my parents and my older brother. (School Board meeting, 2/1/16)

Leo, a Mexican-American from a working-class background spoke next:

> *Mi mami quería que yo fuera a una escuela donde podría aprender inglés y también español para que no se me olvide el español. Sabiendo español yo le puedo hablar a mi familia en Estados Unidos y México. La mayoría de mi familia hablan español. Cuando vamos a un lugar importante, como el banco, mi mami a veces no entiende muy bien el inglés e yo le puedo*

> *traducir. También, con mis abuelos cuando reciben correos importantes yo les puedo decir lo que dice la carta… Si yo no hablara español, no podría hablar con mis abuelos, mi mama, mi familia en México- casi toda mi familia.* (School Board Meeting, 2/1/16)
>
> My mom wanted me to go to a school where I could learn English and Spanish so that I wouldn't forget Spanish. By knowing Spanish I can speak to my family in the US and in Mexico. Most of my family speaks Spanish, and when we go somewhere important like the bank, at times my mom doesn't understand the language and I can translate for her. Also, when my grandparents get important mail I can tell them what it says. If I didn't speak Spanish I couldn't communicate with my grandparents, my mom, my family in Mexico- practically my entire family. (School Board Meeting, 2/1/16)

He was followed by Lydia, an upper-class student who defined herself as Latina:

> *Yo soy capaz de hablar dos idiomas y me siento muy agradecida. Mi mami no habla español, pero mi papi sí, así que en la casa hablamos los dos idiomas. Cuando voy a ver a mis abuelos por parte de mi papi, ellos hablan español, y es importante para mi y para ellos poder comunicarnos en su idioma. Cuando vamos de vacaciones siempre vamos a un lugar donde podemos practicar nuestro español. Este verano fuimos a Colombia e yo pude practicar y conversar con la gente sin problemas.* (School Board meeting, 2/1/16)
>
> I can speak two languages and I am very thankful. My mom can't speak Spanish, but my dad can, so at home we speak both. When I go to see my grandparents on my dad's side who speak Spanish, it's important to me and them that we can communicate in their language. When we go on vacation we always go to a place where we can practice our Spanish. This summer we went to Colombia and I was able to practice and communicate with the people without any problem. (School Board meeting, 2/1/16)

Karina, a Mexicana from a lower middle-class family continued with her "public comment:"

> *Es importante para mí y para mis padres hablar español porque mi papa habla puro español, mi mami habla inglés y español. Yo le ayudo a mi papi a traducir lo que me pregunta en español a inglés, e yo le ayudo a deletrear las palabras en inglés. Cuando voy a ver mis abuelos en Coahuila, México, es importante que yo pueda hablar con ellos porque ellos hablan sólo español. Si yo no estuviera en una escuela de lenguaje*

> *dual, se me haría más difícil poder platicar con mi papito y mis abuelos.* (School Board meeting, 2/1/16)
>
> It's important for me and my parents that I speak Spanish, because my dad only speaks Spanish. My mom speaks both. I help my dad translate what he asks me in Spanish into English, and I help him spell words in English. When I go to see my grandparents in Coahuila, México, it's important that I can speak with them because they only speak Spanish. If I wasn't in a dual language school it would be a lot more difficult for me to speak with my parents and grandparents. (School Board meeting, 2/1/16)

Marisa, who also identified as Mexicana and was from a working-class family, was the last to speak:

> *Me llamo Marisa Marquez e yo soy estudiante de quinto grado en Plainview Elementary. Yo he sido estudiante desde Pre-Kinder…Mi mami habla los dos idiomas, y mis hermanos hablan los dos idiomas, pero a mi papa nada más habla español. Cuando nosotros hacemos bromas en la casa tenemos que traducirlo para mi papa…El próximo año quiero ir a Lakeside Middle School y continuar mejorando mi español para que no me olivide de mi idioma y mi cultura. Gracias y buenas noches!* (School Board meeting, 2/1/16)
>
> My name is Marisa Marquez and I am a fifth-grade student at Plainview Elementary. I have been a student here since Pre-Kinder…My mom and siblings speak both languages, but my dad only speaks Spanish. When we tell jokes at home we have to translate them for him…Next year I want to go to Lakeside Middle School so that I can continue improving my Spanish so that I don't forget my language. (School Board meeting, 2/1/16)

At this point it is relevant at this point to complicate Richard Ruíz's language as a problem, right, and resource paradigm. In recent decades, advocates of language minority students have attempted to save bilingual education by relying on a conception of language-as-resource (Ruiz, 1984). This orientation in language planning highlights and promotes bilingual children's linguistic assets and positions bilingual education as an enrichment program. Framed by these ideas, dual language — a model of bilingual

education that integrates English-dominant and language minority children with the goal of bilingualism, biliteracy, high academic achievement, and intercultural competence for all has proliferated exponentially in schools across the country, especially with the growing interest of White middle and upper-middle class communities. Yet there is concern that this arguably superior model has led to the gentrification of bilingual education (Flores, 2015; Valdez et al., 2013, 2016) due to an uncritical embracement of language as a "resource" and a neoliberal ethos (Cervantes-Soon, 2014; Petrovic, 2005; Varghese & Park, 2010.). Due to the rapid explosion of TWI programs and their potential to be gentrified, it is pivotal that they take it a step further and promote the proposed fourth goal of TWI around students' development of critical consciousness.

This crucial facet of TWI means that the Spanish-as-resource phenomenon should not be sequestered by the dominant group for neoliberal aims (Faltis & Smith, 2016; Palmer et al., In Press; Valdez et al., 2014), which in turn calls for an extension of Ruíz's language orientation paradigm. It is important to emphasize that this extension was urgent due to the situation that was unfolding at Plainview, where the path of neoliberalism (Peck et al, 2009) had taken aim due to gentrification and the insatiable appetite of being bilingual by the dominant group. The parent community, as presented earlier, was advocating for the inclusion of more Spanish. Thus, the language-as-resource framing of Spanish in the context of Plainview was positioned as a "marketable skill with great potential for monetary rewards" (Faltis & Smith, 2016, p.127). This forcefully contradicts the original language-as-resource orientation advocated for by bilingual educators, who saw bilingualism as a vehicle for learning and fomenting a strong ethnic

identity and pride in one's culture (Ramsey, 2012). Michelle's embracement of Spanish as a "language of empowerment" is, in a sense, an extension of Ramsey's (2012) perspectives rooted in ethnic identity and pride in one's culture. Her students, both transnational bilinguals (historically marginalized group) and the dominant group, tapped into this language of empowerment when they spoke in front of the school board in Spanish. They enacted this language of empowerment around the same pillars that Michelle enacted in her embodiment of a critical TWI teacher; Spanish, love, and content, while also revealing a strong sense of ethnic identity and pride in one's culture (Ramsey, 2012). At the same time, it should not be overlooked that both Tatiana and Lydia positioned Spanish as a "valuable tool" for something like travel, which Ruíz realized would be the case as part of his description of language-as-resource (Ruíz, 2010). I argue that he would also "champion" a "language of empowerment" that extends the "resource" into more critical realms in order to align with students' development of critical consciousness, especially when considering the current neoliberal assault on TWI programs (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017).

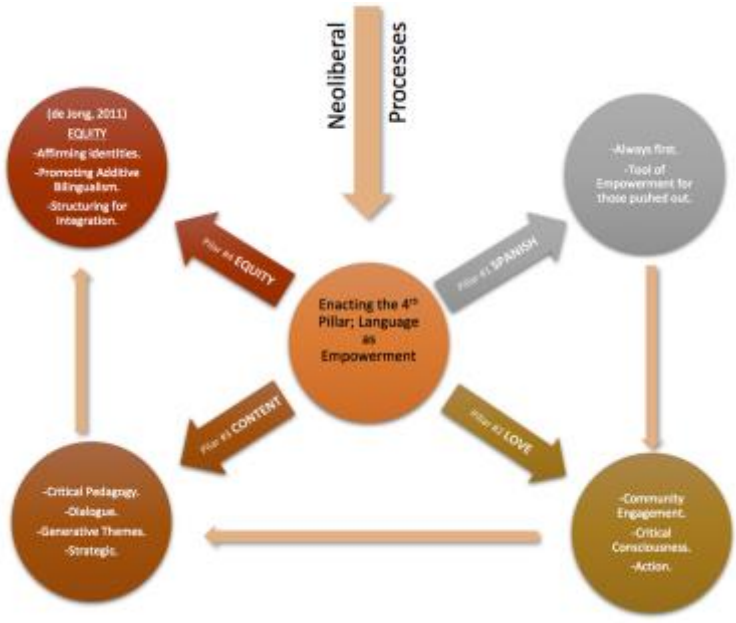
The five students who spoke in front of the school board demonstrated critical consciousness around the "generative theme" (Freire, 1997) of their local school board representative speaking negatively about dual language, which was the impetus for their powerful manifestation of Spanish as a "language of empowerment." As Michelle demonstrated in her teaching practice, the integration of the Spanish "pillar" was inherently linked to criticality around "content" and a radical "love" for her students and parents. Her students mirrored these qualities, as they were exposed to "content" in the

form of the current negative discourse around dual language, which was channeled into a manifestation of radical "love" for dual language. This love was enacted through the vehicle of "Spanish" speeches in front of the school board member who was the source of the negative discourse. Through these student displays, Spanish was used as a; (1) resource that indexed ethnic identity and cultural pride (Ramsey, 2012), as revealed by students' understanding of language as decisive in solidifying family ties, (2) a vehicle for social change and praxis through their decision to use Spanish to take a stance on a pressing social issue, and (3) as language of empowerment that brought together the language with criticality around "content" and radical "love" for dual language at Plainview Elementary. Finally, and specifically in relation to Marisa, Karina, and Leo, who were Latin@ immigrant students, their political engagement revealed the hopeful possibilities when teachers like Michelle engage these students in socially relevant curriculum. Callahan and Obenchain (2013, 2016) highlighted how Latino immigrant youth in social studies classrooms became critical agents through the use of their "informed voice" to participate in civic life. Michelle's critical curriculum fostered this "informed voice" and agency for those students who had the most to gain from Plainview's TWI program. I conclude this chapter by emphasizing the essential role that language-as-empowerment played in Michelle's classroom, as her personal pillars of "Spanish, love, and content" were the driving force of the critical discourse, action, and radical love that took place in her classroom. Most importantly, these critical facets of her pedagogy, curriculum, and powerful relationships were catalysts for the development of students' critical consciousness, which will be the focus of the next chapter.

**Language-as-Empowerment: TWI's Fourth Pillar Demands this Critical Stance**

The enactment of TWI's fourth pillar is a complex process, and the diagram below will serve as a guide in unpacking the interdependent facets of language-as-empowerment. It is imperative that Michelle's description of her critical work in the TWI classroom as being informed by "Spanish, love, content, not in that order" be conceptualized in this manner. Specifically, there is no "order" to this process, as all three of these pillars were mutually informing and revealed the challenges that TWI teachers face when the development of students' critical consciousness is one of the aims. Even though the diagram will be described as a sequence of key parts, this process should be conceptualized as non-linear due to the inherent complexities of TWI spaces. TWI, specifically how it played out in Michelle's classroom, was a messy and at times chaotic process due to linguistic, cultural, and social class barriers that are the hallmark of these programs (Palmer & Martínez, 2013). This messiness and chaos should be expected, and Michelle embodied this through her pedagogy, curriculum, and deep engagement with her students and parents. The language-as-empowerment diagram is best described:

**Table 2 Language as Empowerment Framework**




1. Michelle's classroom cannot be separated from the overarching TWI context at Plainview and the explosion of growth of these programs at the national level. These neoliberal processes are represented by the arrow coming down from the top, which permeates the diagram and as a result Michelle's classroom. This neoliberal "path" (Peck et al., 2009) that shows great potential to commodify, gentrify, and "Columbus" the original race radical aims of bilingual education calls for an equally explosive manifestation of critical pedagogy to move beyond TWI's laudable goals of academic and linguistic proficiency in two languages and multicultural competence to include students' development of critical consciousness. The classroom teacher and a classroom space of "love, imagination, and fury against the brutal rule and

inverted morality of neoliberalism itself" (De Lissovoy, 2015, p. 25) is a catalyst in the development of this critical consciousness.

2. At the center of the diagram is the enactment of TWI's fourth pillar, which is conceptualized as a critical counter "path" to the neoliberal processes impacting both Plainview and the TWI landscape. At a more micro level in the context of Michelle's classroom, this enactment centers on her personal TWI pillars of "Spanish, love, content, not in that order." The "generative theme" (Freire, 1997) of a gentrifying Plainview calls for language-as-empowerment. Michelle described Spanish as empowering language, culture, and the people who have been pushed out of the neighborhood, and it is this linguistic vehicle combined with other critical processes (see below) that lay the foundation for students' development of critical consciousness. The enactment of TWI's fourth pillar calls for a critical "stance" that Michelle embodied through language, content, and love.
3. (Pillar #1: Spanish) This is the most explicit manifestation of language-as-empowerment, as Michelle positioned Spanish as a "tool" of empowerment for Plainview's marginalized and displaced Latinx community. Ruíz was aware of the conceptualization of language as a tool for myriad purposes (Faltis & Smith, 2016), and I argue he would concur with positioning Spanish as language-as-empowerment, especially in the midst of the current neoliberal assault on TWI programs. She was intentional in fronting Spanish in all facets of her teaching practice, as she believed her role as a TWI teacher required her

to carry out this pillar in such a way. Michelle's deep understanding of the Plainview's sociopolitical context and bilingual education's original race radical vision (Flores, 2016) of centering the interests of transnational bilinguals contributed to her intentionality about always fronting the minority language. This was not the norm at Plainview, as was demonstrated when Ms. Schneider presented at Michelle's first house meeting in English with no translations. Undoubtedly, the consistent fronting of Spanish for instruction is essential in the language-as-empowerment framework, as the literature has revealed that many TWI programs in the upper elementary grades do not integrate Spanish for 50% of the classroom instruction (Torres-Guzman et al., 2005). Nonetheless the intentional integration and fronting of the Spanish language is only one-third of the language-as-empowerment paradigm, as it does not exist in a vacuum and as a result should be situated around Michelle's two remaining pillars of "love" and "content."

4. (Pillar # 2: Love) Cervantes-Soon (2017) emphasizes that radical love "requires an explicit critical pedagogy orientation, in which students are able to discuss openly and in-depth the issues that concern them and the societal structures and power dimensions that oppress them" (p. 165). Michelle demonstrated a critical pedagogy orientation that fomented dialogue "with" students (Freire, 1997), as was demonstrated in their open discussions about gender, immigration, the military, and national security. Michelle's radical love also involved students' families, as her house meetings were

manifestations of transgressing borders of power relations (Cervantes-Soon, 2017) that are inherent in the complex arena of TWI. Finally, this radical love promoted action with students and parents, as was revealed when Michelle went "with" students to speak in front of the school board in support of dual language and when she took the initiative to invite a bilingual middle school specialist to dialogue with parents about their concerns. As a key component of language-as-empowerment, Spanish was used as a vehicle for the enactment of radical love inside and outside the classroom. This explicit attention to critical pedagogy with students and parents in conjunction with our gentrification unit is centered in the next chapter.

5. (Pillar # 3: Content) Michelle's "content" pillar of TWI was crucial, as her intimate knowledge and strategic integration of state standards provided her the necessary agency to engage students around critically-infused curriculum and literature. Michelle had the option of applying the district's scripted bilingual curriculum, but her critically conscious awareness of curriculum and pedagogy were the impetus to adapt the standards to foment democratic dialogue with students (Freire, 1997). This focus on the integration of critical content and pedagogy in TWI classrooms has been limited (Alfaro, Durán, Hunt, & Aragón, 2014; Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017; Freire, 2014; Hadi-Tabassum, 2006), as there has been a more concerted focus on the integration of the minority language due to the tendency to overlook the goal of 50% of the instruction in that language (Tedick & Wesely, 2015). Once again Spanish

was used as a vehicle, mostly by Michelle, in engaging students around critical content.

Michelle's language-as-empowerment is a complex framework driven by a critical pedagogical orientation, which should be conceptualized as the vehicle that offers great potential for TWI classrooms to become sites of students' development of critical consciousness. The next chapter extends upon Michelle's TWI pillars and language-as-empowerment framework, and discusses a unit that we planned together around gentrification.

## Chapter 6- The Gentrification Unit: Teaching Against the Neoliberal Logic

As my key informant about the pulse of Plainview, Michelle and I talked extensively about the transformation and gentrification that was happening at the school and in the community. She was irritated by the exclusivity and inequity of the dual language tours that brought in prospective parents to get a first-hand look at TWI in action, and the administration's lack of attention to issues of equity around whose interests should be centered at Plainview. She was irritated by the vice-principal's deficit-laden discourse about how the Latinos needed to up their game to be an integral and contributing part of Plainview's new community. Michelle was irritated by a lot of the neoliberal havoc taking place, while at the same time full of love, respect, and commitment to all, especially "su gente;" the parents and students who she was hired to serve as a TWI teacher at Plainview. Centering the interests of these respective students and their families is key when striving for equitable and social justice-driven TWI programs (Palmer et al., In Press), especially as they become gentrified (Valdez et al., 2016) and possible sites that place a concerted emphasis on human capital acquisition (Cervantes-Soon, 2014; Petrovic, 2005; Varghese & Park, 2010). Michelle's critical orientation and commitment to equity, social justice, and community were embodied in her classroom through a vision of *TWI as a political vehicle*, and one of the defining moments of this commitment was our decision to design a unit about gentrification. We had dialogued extensively during the year about doing this, as this gentrification of the community and school was the impetus for this research. We conceptualized the

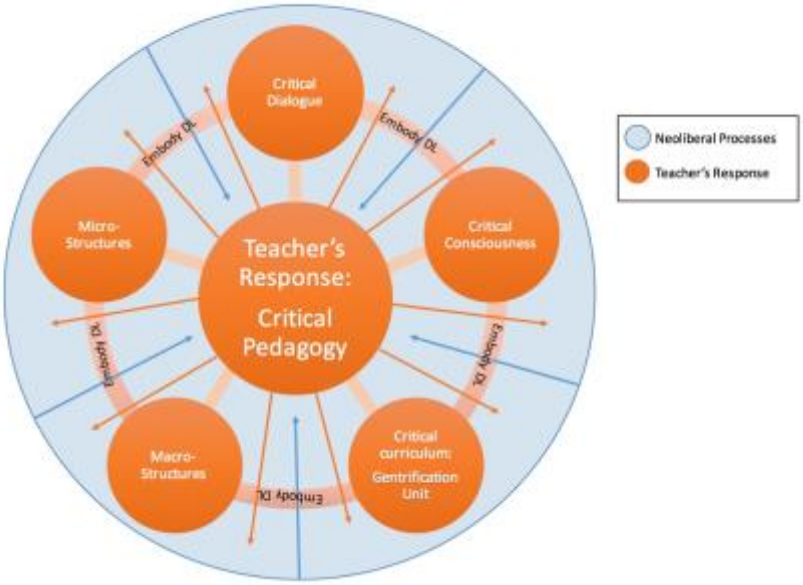
gentrification of the neighborhood and Plainview's TWI program as a kind of "generative theme" (Freire, 1997) that warranted a critical pedagogical project. In addition to addressing TWI's pillars around the integration of academic and linguistic rigor in both languages coupled with opportunities to "bridge the gap" through the fostering of cross-cultural dialogue (Feinauer & Howard, 2014), there was an intentional effort to promote opportunities for the development of critical consciousness (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017). We steadfastly agreed with the authors that TWI's laudable aims focused on academic and linguistic rigor in two languages and cross-cultural dialogue should be augmented with a critical pedagogy that challenges neoliberalism and has the potential to promote critical consciousness. Michelle directly addressed these four pillars when talking about how the unit came to fruition:

> So Dan and I sat down on Wednesday during Spring Break and we thought about the resources we were gonna use, the TEKS that it covered, the guiding questions that we were gonna have for our plan, and then our daily, what resources were we going to use to promote conversation and promote thought within the students about social justice in our community... Demographics of AISD schools, how dual language comes into play, personal stories of families at Plainview…and just to talk about what does gentrification look like in our city and who is affected. (Interview, 4/27/16)

Michelle's description of the thematic unit that we planned laid the groundwork for what would be another example of her "embodiment" of TWI, as she referenced the three traditional pillars of TWI, while also highlighting how the development of critical consciousness could take place. For example, the "TEKS" (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills) and "guiding resources" were the academic and linguistic areas to be covered (Pillars 1 and 2), the promotion "of conversation" was conceptualized as the spaces for

"cross-cultural dialogue" (Pillar 3), and finally the investigation and discussion around demographics and how gentrification was impacting their community offered the potential to develop students' critical consciousness (Proposed Pillar 4). In addition, Michelle's personal pillars of DL around Spanish, content, and love were also taken into consideration. This "embodiment" of fronting Spanish, offering critical curriculum, and demonstrating love was embedded into this gentrification unit, which is covered in this chapter. I use the diagram below to describe the interdependent processes that took place during the three-week unit. It builds off the diagram in the previous chapter about Michelle's embodiment of TWI, which was directly influenced by the previously mentioned pillars of Spanish, content, and love. The diagram should not be understood as a sequential process, but instead as an embodied dialectical one that contributed to nuanced understandings on behalf of Michelle and her students.

**Table 3 The Gentrification Unit Diagram**



Neoliberalism and its "path" (Peck et al., 2009) targeting TWI is the overarching hegemonic structure (Cervantes-Soon, 2014; Palmer et al., In Press; Varghese & Park, 2010). This neoliberal logic calls for a counter-path through critical pedagogy (De Lissovoy, 2015), with gentrification being the "generative theme" (Freire, 1997) and the standpoint for the critical curriculum on the diagram. Macro realities of gentrification, local city and community perspectives of this phenomenon, and relevant curricular material provided students with opportunities to grasp what gentrification "look[s] like in our city and who is affected." These "resources" were strategically selected to foment "conversation and promote thought within the students about social justice in our community," which in the diagram is represented by critical dialogue. Finally, there were manifestations (outcomes) of critical consciousness, which is key when striving for equitable TWI programs that center the interests of transnational bilinguals and their families (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017; Palmer et al., In Press). This counter-path as the embodiment of TWI around the gentrification unit is the focus of this chapter, and builds upon chapter five's findings about Michelle's critical consciousness, orientation, and pedagogy.

## My Positionality in This Process

As I mentioned in the methods section my researcher positionality spanned different terrains at Plainview, and my contribution to and position around the gentrification unit needs to be disclosed. My collaboration with Michelle in the form of a

research partnership should also be considered a critical counter-path to the neoliberal path that had targeted Plainview's TWI program. As a researcher, I was offered a unique and most importantly a hopeful vantage point by having the opportunity to work side by side with Michelle while also documenting her critical response to the neoliberal processes impacting Plainview. This collaboration was also beneficial for Michelle, as it was also an opportunity for her to validate and disseminate her activist work in academic circles. A month after having completed the gentrification unit, we presented some preliminary findings at a local bilingual education conference that was well attended by both academics and practitioners from the field. This space provided a forum for our collaborative resistance through the "generative theme" around gentrification, which does not usually come to fruition when teachers resist in isolation. Thus, the conference space was mutually beneficial; Michelle's critical pedagogy and curriculum could be taken to other TWI classrooms by those teachers in attendance and I was able to augment my data collection/analysis process through my "anthropological confidant's" (Foley & Valenzuela, 2005) presentation of preliminary findings. Cervantes-Soon et al. (2017) highlight how "humanizing methodologies" (Paris & Winn, 2014) that bring researchers and stakeholders together have potential to dismantle inequalities in TWI spaces, which revealed the importance of staking out positions of resistance as part of the gentrification unit.

## An Introduction to the Gentrification Curriculum

*Yo puedo presentar todo el currículo pero si ellos no lo alcanzan digerir, vale de nada. Entonces tuvimos conversaciones bastantes críticas como,*

> *estudiantes me dijeron well si no fuera Plainview dual language yo no vendría a este escuela, y tú estás aquí para enseñarme a mi español. Ummm, no yo estoy aquí para enseñarle a ellos su cultura (pointing to Karina, Leo, Anita, Marisa, hermano de Leo). Oh ustedes el español viene de más, pero mi trabajo, mi empleo fue basado en ellos (pointing again), entonces esas son conversaciones que no son siempre agradables tenerlas, pero fue difícil para mi evadir la realidad.* (Conference Presentation, 4/23/16)
>
> I can present all the curriculum, but if they aren't able to digest it, it means nothing. So, we had some really critical conversations like, some students told me well if it weren't for Plainview's dual language program I wouldn't come to this school. And you are here to teach me Spanish. Ummm, no I'm here to teach them their culture (pointing to Karina, Leo, Anita, Marisa, and Leo' brother). Oh, for you the Spanish is an extra, but my job, my employment was based on them (pointing again). So, these conversations are not always pleasant to have, but it was difficult for me to avoid the reality. (Conference Presentation, 4/23/16)

The curriculum she described above was "digested" in powerful nuanced ways, as there were many critical "uncomfortable" conversations that could not be "avoided" due to the variety of questions, materials, and invited guests that centered on gentrification issues both near and far. The nature of this "reality" of gentrification that had changed their school and community was the "generative theme" (Freire, 1997) that pushed students beyond bilingualism, the academic, and cross-cultural relationships. First I will present some of the overarching objectives and guiding questions of the unit, the curricular interventions that offered macro/micro issues that were impacting students' lives, how students responded to these issues in their dialogues and blogs, and our critical reflections about how the unit could be improved. It was an emotional three weeks of high student engagement, deep understanding, discomfort, hope, and tears. Michelle recalled it being "hard for me. The whole unit was really hard for me" (interview, 4/27/16). Freire, in a

sense, realized that critically-engaged teachers would go through these emotions when dialoguing "with" students around issues that directly affect their ontologies and lived experiences, while at the same time being open to the unknown (1997). This curriculum did not "deposit" information about gentrification into the students as if they were "empty vessels." Ofelia, a middle-class student who defined herself as half Uruguayan and half American and had been at Plainview since the inception of the TWI program, described it as such:

> I liked the gentrification unit because we were talking about the real world, not like things that were in the past or something, we're talking about the future and what will happen. She (Michelle) got parents who were looking at it and seeing it with a clear eye or who were facing it and that really helped us and our perspective. (Interview, 5/16/16)

**Objectives and Essential Questions of the Gentrification Unit**

Freire's (1998) conceptualization of critical pedagogy as "working in some given area, be it literacy, etc., and doing so as to awake the conscience of each group, in a constructive, critical manner, about the violence and extreme injustice of this concrete situation," (p. 75) provides a standpoint to highlight the overarching objectives and guiding questions we developed for the gentrification unit. The focus of the language arts, social studies, and math unit (the area) was on a concrete situation that was causing violence and injustice (gentrification), coupled with the aims of raising critical consciousness through constructive dialogue between each group (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017). Leistyna (2007) emphasizes that the development of critical consciousness should not be something that gets students to think in a specific way, rather it should be to

foment deeper thought about the issues and relations of power that impact them. Upon completion of the unit, we felt that these objectives and essential questions were catalysts in fomenting spaces for students to develop critical consciousness about this "concrete situation" of gentrification.

*Objectives:*

1. Students will be able to understand and define gentrification.
2. Students will be able to understand that gentrification is a political, social, and economic change to the community.
3. Students will be able to observe changes in population in their community.
4. Students will be able to identify some of the local factors that have contributed to this process in their own communities (for example, the dual language program/community at Plainview).

*Essential Questions:*

1. What is gentrification?
2. What does it look like in your school/living community?
3. Who benefits from it?
4. What do socio-economic status and communities have in common?
5. What role does race play in gentrification?
6. How has dual language possibly played a role in this process?
7. What is the role of Plainview in the changing community?
8. What are benefits of gentrification in a community?

**Critical Curriculum: Macro and Micro Perspectives of Gentrification**

During our initial planning around gentrification we did not deliberately "name" and want the students to be able to make connections between their school context and macro structures, but the unit unfolded in that fashion. Students gained macro perspectives of gentrification in urban contexts such as Columbia Heights in Washington DC, Boston, Portland, OR, and of course their home city of Austin. Even though it was not discussed at the time, the Austin context is similar to other urban sites being shaped by neoliberal processes and discourses of "rebirth" and "regeneration" (Lipman, 2011). This propensity for neoliberal restructuring projects to manifest in cities has been noted by researchers in the fields of human geography (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Peck et al., 2009; Smith, 2002), educational policy (Apple, 2006; Lipman, 2003, 2011), and through critical ethnography (Means, 2013). Most importantly, Means (2013) exhorts more researchers to carry out critically-framed work of how neoliberalism "plays out on the ground" in urban communities and schools. This gentrification unit addresses Means' call, and extends it to include a critical pedagogical response to how neoliberalism plays out in students' communities, schools, and lives (De Lissovoy & Cedillo, 2016; De Lissovoy, 2015). Means (2013) elaborates on the urgency of critical ethnographic research, with the gentrification unit acting as a critical byproduct of this work:

> Critical ethnography situates values and practices within the economic, cultural, and political forces that define and give them shape. This means that it is concerned with mapping wider social relationships and human experience from the local to the global and the universal to the particular. Rather than attempting to serve the status quo, critical ethnography seeks

> to interrogate and challenge existing forms of knowledge and social relations in the interest of promoting human freedom, dignity, and greater democracy in life. (pp. 50-51)

Our curriculum "situated" students in critical contexts and dialogues with local and global relevance, while at the same time "interrogated and challenged" dominant forms of "knowledge" for a deeper understanding of "democracy in life." The first day of the unit set the tone for the next three weeks, as it became clear that none of us were really sure what would transpire when focusing on an issue like gentrification. At the same time, Michelle framed this uncertainty and vulnerability with love, compassion, and validation of her students:

> *Tienes que validar los sentimientos, las emociones, las personas que tienes en tu salón. Entonces todo es con amor y validarla a ellos. Están pasando por un periodo difícil, que a los 35 años se me hace difícil saber exactamente quien soy, y a los 10 años me imagino que ellos ni tienen papa de idea. Entonces tiene que hacerlo entender que son amados, que están seguras, que son valorados, y en este valor como puede ser honesto contigo, y los muy chiquítos que son más honestos son contigo. Entonces tiene que entender que ellos tienen que saber que es un lugar seguro donde pueden expresar esas ideas, pero que tienen valor*. (Conference Presentation, 4/23/16)

> You have to validate the feelings and emotions of the people in your classroom. So, everything is done with love, and validating that to them. They are going through tough times, and for me at age 35 it's hard for me to know who I am, and at 10 I imagine they don't have any idea. They need to know that they are loved, safe, and valued. And when valued they are honest with you, and little ones are the ones who are most honest with you. So, they need to know they are in a safe place where they can express these ideas, but they are valued. (Conference Presentation, 4/23/16)

Michelle's openness to uncertainty and her emotions in conjunction with this unit revealed that there was a sense of "crisis" experienced by both her and the students as a

result of this anti-oppressive infused curriculum (Kumashiro, 2001). There are no "blueprints" for this kind of pedagogical exploration (De Lissovoy et al., 2015) that intentionally creates spaces where both students and the teacher can collaboratively work through a particular crisis like gentrification in a way that cannot be foreseen (Kumashiro, 2001). Michelle embodied this "difficult" pedagogical exploration with love, compassion, and a sense of hope through a collaboration with students of learning, production, and resistance against those barriers that hinder the "flowering of our joy" (Freire, 1998).

### Day 1: "I Think We're all Kind of Middle-Class"

Michelle started off the unit by introducing the six vocabulary words that would be key throughout; *gentrificación* (gentrification), *comunidad (*community), *impuestos de propiedad* (property taxes), *resistencia* (resistance), *desarrollo* (development), *and justicia social* (social justice). Michelle asked the class if they knew anything about gentrification, and as was to be expected there was silence in the classroom. She asked Sarah to look it up in the dictionary and she shared the following definition: "to renovate and improve, specifically a house, so that it conforms to middle-class tastes" (field notes, 4/4/16). As was the norm in Michelle's class she directed them to "*hablen con su mesa"* (talk to your table) about the terms renovate and improve and middle-class tastes. This led into a dialogue about a renovated and improved district in The *Hunger Games*, and then a more complicated discussion of their perspectives about social class:

> **Lorena**: I think middle-class is like you're not super rich but you're not poor.

> **Ofelia**: I think middle-class is like you can get what you want, I mean you can get what you need and a little bit of what you want.
> **Michelle**: Ummmmm (there is a lot of overlapping conversation here)
> **Ofelia**: It's better than being in the way way back, but it's not
> **Michelle**: Zuleima
> **Zuleima**: On the Titanic there's 1st class, 2nd class, 3rd class, and so 2nd class is kind of like middle class.
> **Michelle:** *Me gusta la definición que dio Ofelia que middle-class es cuando tienes lo que necesitas y más, right, yo tengo lo que necesito, zapatos regulares, pero también puedo comprarme Jordans, pero también puedo tener un perro*. (overlapping conversation again here)
> **Michelle**: (I like Ofelia's definition of middle-class as being when you have what you need and more, right. I have what I need, normal shoes, but I can also buy Jordans, but I can also have a dog.)
> **Michelle**: *Ese es un buen punto dilo otra vez E*. (That's a good point say it again E.)
> **Zuleima**: I think we're all kind of 2nd class or middle class, but there's like higher middle-class and lower middle class.
> (Audiorecording, 4/4/16)

As I have mentioned previously in my description of Michelle's embodiment of a critical TWI pedagogy, she was consistent in refraining from her opinions and opted for letting students grapple with the content. Her decision to not challenge Zuleima's comment about social class was not a position of neutrality, as there were many instances during my year-long study in which she took a similar position. In fact, this incident weighed on Michelle when reflecting on the unit:

> The very first day the comment was well I think let's be real, I think everyone in this school, everyone in the classroom is middle-class if not upper-class. And I did not call anybody out. But she was, the girl who said that was sitting next to a kid who was homeless. So I'm like no, no. And that was part of my reflection towards that unit after Dan and I sat down and talked about it. Is that there were voices that were drowned out out of maybe embarrassment or anxiousness, frustration that that was their situation, and knowing that their partner has a different home life. And so I don't think I handled everyone's heart the way I would've wanted. (Interview, 4/27/16)

During the rest of this first day Michelle showed pictures of what Austin's urban core looked like twenty years earlier compared with its current state, as students were amazed by the city's myriad new skyscrapers. They also talked about the kinds of necessities they thought were necessary in a community, and finally wrapped up the day with their first blog entry: *A dónde vives y por qué?* (Where do you live and why?). Students excitedly grabbed their computers and started writing away. It is important to highlight that the structure of the blogs allowed students to view their classmates' entries, offer anonymous comments, and we also encouraged them to share them with their parents. I share the following blogs from Lydia and Nestor to highlight the social class differences and how gentrification was affecting many of the students:

> *Yo vive en la comunidad llamado Houston Park. A mí me gusta la comunidad mucho. Hay restaurantes en todos lugares, tiendas de comestibles, y siempre hay personas afuera jugando y haciendo ejercicio. Puedo caminar a lugares alrededor de mi comunidad. Hay parques donde puedo jugar con mi familia y amigos. Vivo en Houston Park por algunas razones. Antes de que vivio en Houston Park, vive in Martin. En Martin no hay tantos arboles y plantas que dan sombra a la comunidad. En Houston Park, mi casa es muy cerca a mi escuela. Puedo caminar y montar a bicicleta para llegar a mi escuela. En general pienso que Houston Park es un bien comunidad para familia y personas que gustan caminando a lugares.* (Lydia's blog, 4/4/16)

> I live in the Houston Park Community and I like it a lot. There are restaurants everywhere, many of places to buy food, and there are always people outside playing and exercising. I can walk to places in my community. There are parks where I can play with my friends and family. I live here for various reasons. Before living here I lived in Martin, but there aren't many trees and plants that provide shade. Houston Park is near my school, so I can walk and ride my bike there. Overall I think Houston Park is a great community for families and people who like to walk places. (Lydia's blog, 4/4/16)

> *Yo vivo en una traila de Beechwood Crest que esta serca de Manor. Yo vivo alli porque mas para aca en Austin estan mas caras las casas y los apartamentos que alla cerca de Manor. Yo tambien vivo alla porque hay muchas tiendas sercas. Antes viviamos en unos apartamentos llamados El Morelia pero luego nos movimos a otros apartamentos porque ivan a remodelarlos so nos movimos a otros apartmentos llamados The Gaviota. Pero luego nos tuvimos que mover porque los apartamentos estaban muy caros so luego nos movimos a una traila de Beechwood Crest en el principio de 2016. Primero necesitaba compartir mi cuarto con Ricardo (mi hermano) y tambien con Brianna (mi hermana) pero ya no so esta muy bien en la traila de nosotros.* (Nestor's blog, 4/4/16)
>
> I live in a trailer in Beechwood Crest that's near Manor. I live there because here in Austin the houses are more expensive than the apartments over near Manor. I also live there because there are many stores nearby. Before I lived in the Morelia apartments but we had to move because they were going to be refurbished, so we moved to the Gaviota apartments. Then we had to move because those were too expensive, so we moved to the trailer in Beechwood Crest at the beginning of 2016. At first I had to share my bedroom with Ricardo (my brother) and Brianna (my sister), but not anymore so the trailer is good for us. (Nestor's blog, 4/4/16)

Lydia, an upper-middle class Latina, vividly described the leafy Houston Park neighborhood that surrounds Plainview Elementary. Real estate had skyrocketed in this area over the last ten years, as there are houses now selling for over one million dollars. Nestor, who comes from a working-class Latinx household, also poignantly captured what has happened to many similar households who can no longer afford to live in the "thriving, rapidly growing, segregated technopolis" (Auyero, 2015). As choice plans in the mold of Plainview's TWI program that attract transfer students from the dominant group coalesces with urban gentrification of inner-city spaces (De Lissovoy, 2008; Lipman, 2011), families like Nestor's are pushed to the margins. Lipman emphasizes "absent in these 'choices' is the 'right to stay put' in regenerated communities and schools, by and for the people who live there" (p. 99). Luckily for Nestor and his little

sister, even though they were not able to "stay put" in the neighborhood, they still found a way to "stay put" at Plainview by driving each morning from their new home. They were the exception, as most transnational bilinguals and their families were deemed disposable and dispossessed from their histories of place and community (De Lissovoy, 2008; Giroux, 2009), as this neoliberal "path" (Peck et al., 2009) targeted Plainview's TWI program. Most importantly the strikingly diverging blog entries from Nestor and Lydia and the "we're all middle-class comment" revealed the urgency of a critical counter path through critical pedagogy. It is through the creation of these critical spaces in TWI where the development of critical consciousness has generative potential to take root (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017).

### Day 3: "That Seems Helpful, but that also Seems like Cheating to me!"

As was the norm during my research, I accompanied Michelle and her students back from their "specials" class that took place first thing in the morning. As we walked she mentioned feeling very unsettled from the previous day's conversation about certain minority neighborhoods with apartments being unsafe and more prone to robberies. One student even mentioned that her grandparents were "robbed like a bunch" (field notes, 4/5/16) in this particular neighborhood. She revealed that as a result of the deficit-laden discourse she took her Latino kids out of the class and told them they needed to raise their voices, if not out loud then in their blogs. She described the event:

> I had to pull out my Latino kids and pull them into that room (points to classroom next door) while this class was doing something else and say, "I want you to understand that I'm here for you, that I have been legally hired by the district to teach you. And yes, it's everybody's right to learn

> my language, but this is our language, we are together in our language and our culture, and you and I are family. And that doesn't mean that someone else is in a family that doesn't speak my language, but I want you to know that I am here for you, and that your voice, your thoughts, your heart matters. (Interview, 4/27/16)

Michelle's embodiment of TWI powerfully resonated here, as she enacted and spoke to two of her pillars, Spanish and love, and most importantly centered the transnational bilingual students' experience in this process (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017; Palmer et al., In Press). Even though she intentionally fronted the interests of her Latinx students, and as the last chapter documented, this love was directed towards all students. Three of the students she pulled out of class that day discussed this pillar of "love" with me during an interview after the gentrification unit. Specifically, we were talking about why they still wanted to come to Plainview even though they lived outside of the neighborhood and were zoned to another school and/or district:

> **Me**: Why do you still come here? What makes this place so great?
> **Karina**: Michelle.
> **Nestor**: Our teachers.
> **Me**: OK tell me, she's the one that makes it so great. What has she done for you?
> **Marisa**: She helps us and our parents.
> **Karina:** Yeah.
> **Marisa**: Like with the transfers.
> **Me**: OK.
> **Karina**: She doesn't give up on something if she, if it doesn't go her way than she always tries to get it to go her way.
> **Me:** Nestor, any ideas?
> **Nestor**: Nos apoya. (*She supports us)*
> **Me:** ¿Cómo te apoya? *(How does she support you?)*
> **Marisa**: If we don't get something she helps us.
> **Nestor**: Yeah.
> **Marisa**: When we don't like something.

> **Karina**: If we don't understand something she'll like pull us outside and be like OK what do you not understand, what do you want me to help you with?
> **Me**: Sometimes I've seen her pull you all aside, what does she tell you?
> **Karina**: That our voice matters and that not just because we're there does it mean that we're not human beings in class. Our voice needs to be heard.
> **Me**: What does that mean your voice needs to be heard?
> **Karina**: We shouldn't be quiet.
> **Marisa:** Don't be shy anymore.
> **Karina**: For example, somebody said that their friends are always getting break into apartments, that doesn't happen a lot so it doesn't always, and she told us that we need to say, cuz some of us do live in apartments or trailers or any house. (Student interview, 5/13/16)

As a counter to the deficit discourse around neighborhoods where one could be "robbed a bunch," Michelle provided a "collective third space" (Gutierrez, 2008) through the blog work as an avenue to disrupt the dangerous neighborhood discourse and offer agentic opportunities for her Latino students. The author describes this as a space where "students begin to reconceive who they are and what they might be able to accomplish academically and beyond" (p. 148). Michelle took note of this "reconception" in their blog posts:

> And after that I saw a change in their blog. Cause initially they were a little, they had some trepidation with expressing their thoughts about where they live or why they come to Plainview. But after that I didn't see participation in the classroom in conversation, but I saw some very thought-provoking blogs. (Interview, 4/27/16)

Based on my intimate vantage point in Michelle's classroom, this lack of participation from her Latino students did not reflect her belief that they were raised to be quiet and submissive, as was documented at a TWI school in North Carolina (Cervantes-Soon & Turner, 2017). As I highlighted in the previous chapter, the fostering of intercultural relationships through dialogue that has received a paucity of attention (Feinauer &

Howard, 2014; Palmer et al., In Press) was a hallmark of her classroom context with students *and* parents. It is important to keep in mind how Michelle talked about how families were going through "a difficult time" as a result of gentrification, and how the gentrification *unit* was "really hard on her." By creating a "collective third space" through the blog work, she validated the knowledges and experiences of "su gente" and offered a safer outlet for them to make sense of the complexities of gentrification processes that was a topic of study *and* their lived experience. This lived experience with gentrification *was not* part of all students' lives.

The focus of day three was property taxes in East Austin, the historically Black and Brown part of the city where gentrification has wreaked the most havoc by pushing those populations to the periphery. Michelle invited Susan's mother Celeste, a white middle-class university professor and consultant, to talk about her experience of buying a home in East Austin fourteen years ago and the current housing market. Celeste bought a 900-square foot house in 2003 for $105,000 and it was now worth $400,000, which prompted an "oh my gosh!" from Nate (field notes, 4/6/16). She talked with students about how the city's explosive population growth, hipsters moving from California, the concept of how houses appreciate and increase the property taxes, and the urgency to live and work in a "hip" part of a city that has gone through a "rebirth" by displacing many of its original inhabitants (Auyero, 2015; Lipman, 2011). After Celeste's insightful observations about the real estate context of East Austin, Michelle posed the following:

> So let me ask you a question, how do you think we could solve this issue of houses getting really expensive because people who are teachers or people who are police officers or firefighters, if people who are giving to

> our community can't live in our community, how can we solve this problem of appreciation? Like how could we solve this issue of appreciating houses, to people who live in our community? (Field notes, 4/6/16)

Among the responses from students were an out of towner tax for those that have not been established in the city for more than ten years, a cap on the cost of houses, and "digging up grassy areas and putting up houses" (Field notes, 4/6/16). After students offered opinions, Michelle informed them about an association in the city that offers financial assistance for prospective home buyers who qualify based on their yearly income. As a teacher, she was eligible to apply and the following conversation ensued:

> **Michelle**: My house is one of those houses, so I bought a house here on just my salary when Steve (her husband) wasn't working, when Steve wasn't going to school yet. And I was like I want to buy a house so that I can be like Celeste and have a tool so that I can save money and I can maybe sell it. And so I applied to this association and they said hey Michelle let me help you buy a house. And so my house is really worth a lot more, but they put a cap on my house so that I only had to pay a little bit.
> **Anita**: But you don't have to pay them every month?
> **Michelle**: I have to pay my mortgage anyways every month, but I don't pay the mortgage on $400,000 I pay a mortgage on $160,000, cuz that was the cap put on by the city.
> **Student**: Wow!
> **Shawn**: That seems really helpful.
> **Anita**: That seems helpful but that also feels like cheating to me (giggles).
> **Student**: There's no such thing in cheating.
> **Michelle**: I would not have been able to live, work in Austin had the city not done that.
> **Anita**: Yeah I know but like
> **Michelle:** And my neighbors, my neighbors who are like, they both have houses that are worth $400,000, and they pay their mortgage on $400,000 but I don't.
> **Anita**: It just seems kind of (inaudible) to have extra, like I can see why you would need benefits and stuff, like it seems everyone should be able to have that! (Audiorecording, 4/6/16)

Michelle was fortunate to get this "benefit," as she was the only teacher at Plainview who could afford to live close to the school. Most teachers lived on the periphery of the district or in other districts, similar to Latino students like Nestor who had been pushed out of the neighborhood. Gentrification, as a manifestation of neoliberalism, was recomposing students and teachers' public lives (De Lissovoy, 2012; Giroux, 2009) through long commutes from far reaches of the city. As gentrification took over Plainview and the surrounding community, a TWI "market" was essentially created (Harvey, 2005). This creation involved a suturing of market-driven economic growth through refurbishing what were once low-income apartment complexes and "elite consumption practices" in the form of a competitive and successful TWI school like Plainview (Brenner & Theodore, 2002). Upon completion of the gentrification unit, Michelle commented on Alina's observation:

> So right now when we talk about gentrification, her (Alina) thoughts would often go towards the thoughts of people who are pro-gentrification, which is understandable because of how she's grown up. And for people of privilege, equality just seems like oppression. And she's a person of privilege. And so when we had that talk about affordable housing and I said "I live in an affordable house. My neighbor pays a mortgage on $400,000 and I pay a mortgage on $160,000." And -she called me out. She said, "well you're cheating the system, that's cheating Ms. Michelle." And I don't know how I did not rip her eyeballs out of her head and be like "where do you want me to live?" But this is supposed to be, and it is, a safe room where they can express their thoughts without like being dogged on. And I hope I did that. (Interview, 4/27/16)

This was another example of why the unit was "so hard" on Michelle, as Alina's comment was obviously distressing for her. At the same time, it was a critical pedagogical stance, as Freire (1998) posits that the role of a teacher "is to assent to

students' right to compare, choose, to rupture, to decide" (p. 68). Freire (1998) also highlights that at the same time this "respect" for students does not imply that a teacher should hide her political stance through a stance of neutrality. Michelle did not take a neutral position by not challenging Alina's comment, as her embodiment of criticality and love throughout the year was a staple in the classroom. It is better described as a stance of a committed critical pedagogue who shunned the dogmatic indoctrination of her students. We all knew her "political stance" that was embodied through centering the interests and language of transnational bilinguals, critical content, and love for all students. And I also knew that Alina appreciated the Spanish, content, and the love from Michelle!

### Day 5: "So is Gentrification Good or Bad?"

I walked in late on day five of the unit and was immediately met by Michelle at the door, who whispered "it's pretty heavy in there" (Field notes, 4/9/16). Michelle invited Marisa's mother, Mónica, to come to the class and talk about her challenges with housing after being pushed out of the Plainview community and school district after seventeen years. Mónica has four children, all of whom attended or were attending Plainview at the time. I was only able to capture the last few minutes, as she was describing a harrowing experience trying to get her children to school on time, as she drove with her four-year old between her legs. Mónica had *confianza* with me, as we had developed a relationship during the year because her daughter was on my basketball

team. Thus, we discussed her visit to the class about a month after her talk with the students:

> **Mónica**: *Y todavía es fuerte, me estoy aguantando con usted. Tengo un nudo aquí en mi garganta porque es difícil* (crying, 8 second silence). *Nosotros hemos pasado por muchas cosas. Yo sentí feo llorar delante de los niños, pero, es difícil, es muy difícil. Pero Dios es muy grande, y nunca me ha abandonado. Yo pues soy bien llorona también* (I laugh), *verdad, pero porque a mi edad que yo tengo yo he pasado por muchas cosas, bastantes fuertes con mis hijas. Entonces esta escuela yo la veo como mi casa, porque me quedo platicar con la maestra, me meto a la oficina.*
> **Mónica:** And it's still tough, I have to hold it back with you. I have a lump in my throat beause it's hard (crying, 8 second silence). We have gone through many things. I felt bad crying in front of the students, but it's hard, really hard. But God is so great, and he has never left my side. And I cry about everything (I laugh) right, but at my age I have gone through so many heavy things with my children. So, this school I see it like my home, because I hang out and talk with the teacher and I stick my head into the office.
> **Me**: *Usted puede comentar si antes vivían en la vecindad y cuándo, por ejemplo, tuvieron que ir y me acuerdo que usted vino y mencionó que creo que viven en Manor, pero me puede comentar como qué año fue, ¿qué sucedió?*
> **Me:** Could you comment on if you used to live in the neighborhood and when you had to move; I remember when you came you mentioned that I think you live in Manor. Could you tell what year this happened and what happened?
> **Mónica:** *Pues yo, esos apartamentos están cerca de que era Highland Mall. Ahora ya lo volvieron ACC* (Austin Community College). *A causa de la ACC nos subieron la renta. Yo, esos apartamentos llegué me parece en el 2000. Llegué a esos apartamentos y debido de que hicieron ACC yo tuve que, nos tuvimos que mudar porque nos subieron mucho mucho mucho la renta. Y era un apartamento pequeño de dos recámaras y un baño, y entonces para nosotros era difícil verdad. Pero estábamos contentos, mi familia estaba contenta y ahí donde vivíamos, era nuestro hogar. Era nuestro hogar ahí so entonces decidimos un lugar igual de precio a lo mejor verdad porque en estos tiempos pues ya no vamos a encontrar un apartamento o en una casa de renta por 600 dólares verdad. Encontramos este lugar en Manor que son un complejo de tráileres.* (Interview, 5/19/16)
> **Mónica**: Well those apartments are near the Highland Mall. Now it's ACC (Austin Community College). Because of ACC they increased the rent.

> And I think we arrived there in 2000. I got to those apartments and due to the opening of ACC we had to move because the raised the rent a lot. It was a small apartment with two bedrooms and a bathroom, and for us it was hard you know. But we were happy living there, it was our home. We decided we wanted a place that cost the same or
> a house for six hundred dollars, right. We found a trailer park in Manor. (Interview, 5/19/16)

Michelle commented on Mónica's visit a few weeks later during a presentation we did at a local bilingual education conference:

> *La mamá de Marisa la señora Zarate llegó y eso fue uno de los momentos que me impactó más, porque se paró, se acuerdan* (pointing to students we brought to the presentation), *se paró y empezó a llorar. Sin nadie, nadie le preguntó nada, nada le hizo ningún comentario, pero sabía de lo que se iba a tratar, y empezó a llorar. Porque sabía que su comunidad estaba cambiando, sabía el esfuerzo que tenía que hacer con sus hijos y eso fue un impacto más grande que quizás Pedro and Natalia* (school board member and community organizer who were also invited guests) *porque es una voz de alguien que pertenece a mi comunidad.* (Conference presentation, 4/23/16)
>
> Marisa's mother Ms. Zarate came to our class and this was one of the things that impacted me the most because she stood up, do you all remember (pointing to students we brought to the presentation), she stood up and started to cry. Without anybody asking her anything, nobody made a comment, but she knew what this was going to be about and she started to cry. Because she knew that her community was changing, she was aware of the effort that she had to make to for her kids and this made more of an impact than Pedro or Natalia (school board member and community organizer who were also invited guests) because it was a voice that was part of my community. (Conference presentation, 4/23/16)

Her visit also impacted students' perspectives of gentrification, as in an interview with two students they revealed a deeper level of critical consciousness around this generative theme:

> **Holly:** Well like when Marisa's mother came it really helped me understand how it was driving people who lived in Austin out of Austin, and how it was bad because…

> **Anita**: Manor
> **Holly**: Like the houses how they're getting so expensive cuz even apartments are, the prices of what houses used to be, ten years ago, it's just crazy how fast it's all just like gentrifying I guess.
> (Interview, 5/13/16)

Day five was an emotional, powerful, and insightful day for all of us in the classroom. During Natalia's presentation about the community organizing that her Faith Alliance group does around issues affecting families such as gentrification, the principal, Mr. González, was present and offered some poignant observations. As I mentioned in a previous chapter, I have a deep respect for him and as a parent had told me on multiple occasions "he does right by kids." Nonetheless, there were many instances that he provided lip service to pressing issues that were affecting the original families of Plainview, as the gentrification of the neighborhood and the TWI program seemed to be "colonizing his imagination" (De Lissovoy, 2015). Natalia was explaining to students the situation at another TWI school in the city that was able to mitigate some of the effects of gentrification due to federal housing projects in the neighborhood. Natalia and Mr. González were former colleagues, as they had collaborated on community organizing projects at Plainview prior to it becoming a TWI school in 2010. She put him on the spot:

> **Natalia**: *Algo más* (Anything else), any questions or reactions, you've been around (to Mr. González) a couple of years here!
> **Mr. G**.: I see what Shady Oak is going through, we've gone through it basically, um, it's not necessarily a bad thing but it also could be different and that's why we're working on recruiting, helping other families come back to Plainview, cuz we realize if we keep the diversity.
> **Natalia:** *Quiero diferenciar entre Shady Oak y Plainview, es que todos los apartamentos que están son privados. Y no creo, no estoy segura pero estoy casi segura que no tiene programas federales, con asistencia federal. Entonces, si es un apartamento privado, es más difícil*

> *convencerlos a ellos que mantengan, que sean como uno quiere, que es privado*
> **Natalia**: I want to talk about the differences between Shady Oak and Plainview, because all the apartments here are privately owned. I don't think, I'm not sure though, that there are any federal programs with financial assistance. So, if an apartment is privately owned, it's a lot harder to convince them to keep them the same as the folks would like if they're private.
> **Mr. G.:** *Exactamente* (Exactly) (Audiorecording, 4/9/16)

As Natalia pointed out and Mr. González confirmed, the apartment complexes in the Plainview community were privately owned, which contributed to families being displaced in larger numbers. This exchange between Natalia and Mr. González was relevant twofold, as he did not feel that the gentrification of the program was "necessarily bad" while also emphasizing the need to "recruit." As was described in previous chapters, there was a group of activist parents, myself, and Michelle, who believed that one of the solutions to the rapidly transforming demographics was to recruit Latinx families from schools that were using a subtractive bilingual education model. The dual language tours for prospective families had become staging grounds for the dominant English speaking population, who knew how to navigate systems of power like the lottery system at Plainview. Michelle offered her take on Mr. González's view of the changes affecting the school and community:

> Mr. González knows, and what he knows will go. And like there are very affluent people in their circles, in their bank account that come to Plainview and love Plainview and speak so highly of Plainview, and he doesn't want to lose them. He doesn't want to lose them or upset them or, and so there's a politic there too you know. There's like, I get it. They're really valuable contributors to our community. But this program is not for them, so (laughs) so get me some Latinos. And they can learn Spanish with us, that's awesome, and they can learn our culture with us, cool. And we can also learn from them, yes. But we can't learn from eight students

> out of thirty, cause it's not how the program's supposed to work. So that worries me, like that's what keeps me up at night. Like how is the program really serving the people it's supposed to serve? (Interview, 4/27/16)

The sense of urgency with which Michelle viewed the situation was not matched by Mr. González. Her race radical view of bilingual education (Flores, 2016) that set out to intentionally center the realities of transnational bilinguals (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017; Palmer et al., In Press) was not an urgent matter for administration. The TWI program was becoming "Columbused" (Flores, 2015) by the dominant group, as Mr. Gonzalez's "not necessarily a bad thing" stance about gentrification was a resignation to the neoliberal "common sense" that invades the consciousness (Apple, 2006; De Lissovoy et al, 2015; Harvey, 2005). Harvey frames gentrification, a "path" of neoliberalism, as that which "has pervasive effects on ways of thought to the point where it has become incorporated into the common-sense way many interpret, live in, and understand the world" (p. 3). Michelle was challenging this common-sense orientation with a counter-path through a critical pedagogical project that De Lissovoy (2015) posits is "not found within the narrow limits of so-called best practice. Rather, it is a method of love, imagination, and FURY (emphasis mine) against the brutal rule and inverted morality of neoliberalism itself" (p. 25). Michelle consistently demonstrated love for all students, an imagination to challenge students to think in nuanced ways, and fury against hegemonic processes that was impacting the lives of her students.

After the talks by Mónica and Natalia, and as was the norm, Michelle engaged students in a debrief session. She began by saying "whew, heavy heavy," and then asked students how they were impacted by the two visitors. Students were moved by the

perspectives of both women, as this class was a turning point as far as students gaining a deeper, albeit more nuanced, understanding of gentrification. There was a particularly poignant moment when one student cried when they were talking about the five students who were no longer in their class as a result of being pushed out. Emotions were running high, right up to the end of the lesson:

> **Shawn**: So, is gentrification good or bad?
> **Michelle**: *Oh, ese es la pregunta del año! Dilo otra vez.* (That's the question of the year, say it again)
> **Shawn**: Is gentrification good or bad?
> **Anita**: Good for some people, bad for some people.
> **Michelle**: Well good *para quién* (for whom)*?*
> **Anita**: Good for those who can afford it and are not having
> (Lots of overlapping conversation)
> **Holly**: Good for the Californians!
> **Nate**: Oh my god this is so
> **Tatiana**: I don't get gentrification!
> **Michelle**: You do get it! *Alright ese va a ser nuestro blog hoy! Alguien puede recordar a Tatiana qué es gentrification? ¿Cuál es la definición que vimos Lorena?* (This is going to be today's blog! Can somebody remind Tatiana what is gentrification? What is the definition that we saw Lorena?
> **Lorena:** Upgrading a house to middle-class tastes.
> **Student**: That's not bad!
> **Alina**: But Tatiana it could be bad for
> **Anita**: It be good to some people and bad to some people. It depends on where you see it (overlapping conversation). It depends from what perspective you have. (Audiorecording, 4/9/16)

It is important to revisit Leistyna's (2007) conceptualization of critical consciousness and Freire's (1998) perspective of critical teaching. Michelle's decision to take on the gentrification unit was not to get students to think "in a certain way," but to challenge them to think in deeper more nuanced ways about those "issues and relations of power that affect them" (Leistyna, 2007). At the same time, students were beginning to grasp

the “extreme injustice” of gentrification, as there was a “breakthrough” as a “collective experience” through dialogue, emotion, and new understandings (Freire, 1998). Michelle felt day five was a crucial turning point for many students:

> I know that listening to Marthita's housing struggle- particularly, the struggle that she and her girls go through to get them to school was a point of amazement for Nate and Tyrone and Amanda and Zuleima. Her story made it real for them. Whereas Celeste's story made it real for Anita and Aaron. I remember those kids comments afterward- something along the lines of “it's happening to all of us.” (Member check, 9/30/16))

The “trepidation” that Michelle used to describe the participation of her Latinx students at the beginning of the unit appeared to be a thing of the past, as there were many examples of “thought provoking” blogs around what they were learning about gentrification. Karina, a Latinx student who no longer lived in the community, offered her thoughts:

> *Yo pienso que el gentrification es malo porque ya unas personas ya no pueden vivir en donde antes vivian porque ya cuesta mucho dinero y ya no pueden vivir en otro lugar y aveses unas personas no regresan a donde estaban antes.* (Blog, 4/9/16)

> I think gentrification is bad because people can’t live where they used to live because it costs a lot of money and they can’t live somewhere else and sometimes they can’t go back to where they were before.

Leo, another Latinx student who had been displaced, described gentrification as such:

> I think that gentrification is bad because if people are raising the rent for houses or apartments you are losing money because the rent. Another reason why it’s bad is because some people’s annual salary isn’t too high so they need to move from house to house. I think that gentrification is discriminating because they might be working really hard and being good citizens, but still can’t afford to live in their neighborhood. That’s all I can think of. (Blog, 4/9/16)

Even though Karina and Leo did not speak up during class when prompted to comment about how the speakers impacted them, they chose to speak up through the "collective third space" (Gutiérrez, 2008) that the blog provided. Michelle's classroom as a "safe space" should also be questioned as a "safe space" for whom, and when what kind of content is under study. The nature of the "generative theme" (Freire, 1997) did not provide a safe space for all students, and Michelle recognized this by fomenting the blog as an alternative "code" for students to express their perspectives on gentrification *and* as one of the "means to productive learning" (Gutiérrez, Baquedano, & Tejada, 1999), which aligned succinctly with *all four* of TWI's goals. The creation of these "collective third spaces" in TWI spaces could be transformational, as at the level of classroom discourse studies have shown that English-dominant students tend to exert more control (Fitts, 2009; Palmer, 2008, 2009). The development of critical consciousness in TWI spaces should be a focal point of a teacher's curriculum (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017), while also keeping in mind that it may play out differently with the diverging student backgrounds that tend to populate these classrooms. Michelle's classroom made me realize that the development of critical consciousness may manifest at the classroom discourse level and/or through a more reflective space like the blog. Zuleima, the student who made the comment about all students being "middle class," revealed a different stance since that first day of the unit:

> The question is an ongoing question we have been asking ourselves for years and still we do not know, this is my perspective on it. OK first we should understand I am a eleven year old child so I may not be the best person to talk about gentrification but here I go. Gentrification is an interesting thing it could be terrible for one class of people and it could be

> great for others. It is not simple enough to say that it is good or bad. I think that for higher class gentrification can be good for many reasons because they get bigger houses that may be affordable for them but for lower class it could send them into debt. When they raise rent they may have to move out of a neighborhood they have known for a long time. I agree that gentrification is great in moving us along into modern times, but if gentrification keeps happening are we going to keep moving along until there is no diversity. This is what I think. (Blog, 4/9/16).

Anita, who called out Michelle for being a "cheater" on the third day of the unit, also revealed a more nuanced understanding:

> I think that gentrification is good and bad. In some ways it's good because neighborhoods can become safer, people can make money by remodeling, and people might want the city to look like it's been upgraded. Also, gentrification can be bad because it causes people who don't have a lot of money to move out of their houses and have a long commute to work or to drop their kids off at school or work. I think that there are both bad and good things about gentrification. (Blog, 4/9/16)

Zuleima and Anita were not being directly affected by gentrification, which was the biggest difference between them and Leo and Karina. Zuleima and Anita had been "pushed into" the program from outside the neighborhood by parents who had the necessary cultural capital to find a way to get their daughters in, while Leo and Karina had been "pushed out" of the neighborhood. Michelle distinguished between the two groups in this way:

> *Varias de nuestras familias de Plainview son Latinas, que esencialmente el programa de lenguaje dual es para ellos. Ya no pueden vivir en esa área porque Houston Park, no sé si se conocen Houston Park, pero se ha hecho extremadamente caro vivir ahí. Entonces nuestras familias han ido a Pflugerville a Manor a Del Valley y aun así transportan a sus hijos todas las mañanas, vienen a recoger a sus hijos todas las tardes a tiempo. Y las familias que quieren que sus hijos aprendan español, bueno ellos hacen los transfers necesarios para que sus hijos pueden estar en esa escuela. Y son gente o sea que saben como manejar el sistema, gente que*

> *saben lo que tienen que hacer para que sus hijos puedan estar en esa escuela.* (Interview, 3/25/16)
>
> Some of our Plainview families are Latino, and essentially the dual language program is designed for them. They can no longer live in the neighborhood because Houston Park, not sure if you know, but it has become really expensive to live there. So, our families have moved to the periphery and even then, still bring their kids in the morning and pick them up in the afternoon. And the families who want their kids to learn Spanish, well they do the required transfer paperwork so they can be in the school. And these are folks who know how to work the system, they know what to do to get their kids into the school. (Interview, 3/25/16)

Zuleima and Anita were offered the "choice" to reap the benefits of Plainview's TWI program, while Leo and Karina were offered no choice to "stay put" in the "regenerated community" (Lipman, 2011). The lived experiences of both "pushed out" and "pushed in" students may have contributed to their diverging understanding of gentrification, as the latter believed there were both good and bad elements. In spite of these differences, the narratives of both guests, particularly Mónica, created a space where the assumption that there existed a common class background and standpoint was disrupted (hooks, 1994). Zuleima's blog entry revealed that she grasped that everybody was not "middle class" as she originally stated, while also pointing out how gentrification can be good for certain people. At the same time, Anita's response centered on "remodeling," safety, and "upgrading," coupled with an understanding that there were negative consequences, revealed that even though "they may be open to the idea they do not all come from a common class background, they may still expect that the values of materially privileged groups will be the class's norm" (hooks, 1994, p. 186). Zuleima and Anita *did* offer more nuanced understandings of this "generative theme," as they were challenged to reflect

more deeply about a complex issue around power structures that affected them (Leistyna, 2007) as students in a gentrifying TWI community. Michelle did not engage students in this "exercise" to get them to think in a "certain way," but was successful in getting students to reflect about a critical issue at the city, community, and school level. It was this dialogue and reflection around a critical issue such as gentrification that made this "generative theme" much more than a thematic unit, as the connection to students' lives, realities, and communities went beyond the teaching of content and language to include the development of critical consciousness through critical dialogical cross-cultural interactions and entanglements. Karina, Leo, Zuleima, and Anita developed this sense of critical consciousness about the effects of gentrification, albeit at varying levels.

### Day 8: "They Have to Move!"

We were once again fortunate to have another guest come and talk to the class about gentrification! We invited a Latinx member of the local school board, Pedro Salazar, to provide a historical perspective of East Austin and how the school district was being impacted by gentrification. The five students who had spoken to the school board a few months back in support of dual language immediately recognized him, and upon hearing that news from Michelle he commented "I like the civic engagement" (Field notes, 4/13/16). He commenced by providing context about his relationship to East Austin, as his parents bought a home there in 1968 for $5600. In 2002, the same house sold for over $300,000, and the following conversation took place:

> **Paul**: And guess what? The house I grew up in is no longer there. They tore it down, and guess what's there now?

**Anita**: A giant
**Tatiana**: Apartment
**Paul**: Condos, 2 condos, on there. And so everybody across the district, across the city have experienced increase in property taxes. When your parents are paying the property taxes bill, it has continued to go up and up and up. But families east of I-35, that have historically been the black and brown communities, their property taxes have increased, on average the last 10 or 15 years, probably 400 to 600% and in some cases even more. So what happens is the people who have been in East Austin for a long time can no longer afford to live there, largely in part because they can't afford to pay the property taxes anymore because of all the redevelopment that's occurring there. And the other issue is that historically that is where most of our people who are considered economically disadvantaged also live. And so, as an example senior citizens, think of a grandmother or great grandmother who's lived there for sixty seventy years who's on a limited income, can't afford to pay that property tax, those property taxes, so guess what?
**Ernesto**: They have to move! (Audiorecording, 4/13/16)

He described how neoliberalism was impacting East Austin, a process that is being dominated by the power of economic elites (Harvey, 2005) and the shunning of communal responsibility in the name of individual benefit and elite consumption practices (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Giroux, 2009). This "path" of neoliberalism (Peck et al., 2009) in the form gentrification that was targeting Brown and Black communities and histories should be "read as a verb, and understood in a processual, unfolding, and action oriented sense" (Springer, 2015, p. 7). Mr. Salazar talked about how this "process" was "unfolding" at the school district level:

> And so the correlation there to our school district now is that many of the families that we serve, so we have a little less than 84,000 kids, and sadly over the last 3 years on average every year we're losing 1,000 students per year. 1,000, and so we've lost 3,000 kids, so the negative economic impact to our school district is, that's $50,000,000 less that we have to use to bring resources to the classroom…And the main issue that we hear from folks is the fact that Austin is no longer affordable, affordability issues, and so we're losing families. And they're moving to Kyle, to Buda, to

> Pflugerville, to Manor, to Del Valle and other places. And so that's a big challenge we're seeing…So that just means we need to work harder, and smarter, but this issue that you guys are talking about, gentrification, is it's a real challenge and I know that. (Audiorecording, 4/13/16)

Mr. Salazar's comment about the need for the district to "work harder" and "smarter" as a school district due to the city becoming a highly-contested space (Lipman, 2011), was also an issue that Michelle had talked about throughout the year with regards to Plainview. She felt that the administration needed to do exactly what Mr. Salazar was referring to, as her race radical perspective of bilingual education that centered the interests of transnational bilinguals (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017; Flores, 2016; Palmer et al., In Press) was "losing steam" in the Plainview community:

> So I know our administration means well and our administration can sometimes be real agents of change in our community, but I feel like they're losing steam, cause it's hard to always be social justice conscious. And so I feel like they're losing steam. Or maybe Plainview isn't getting all these Latinos into our dual language program because we're not going the extra mile to set the example to like bring them in, because they are valued, because you are important, because the program was designed with Spanish speakers in mind, so we need you. And so I feel like we're losing our way, and I really wish that it didn't, because they're really great teachers that have really awesome brains, who have something to teach kids, but the right ones. (Interview, 4/27/16)

Previous studies in TWI contexts have exposed inequalities that; prevented African-Americans from being admitted and enrolled (Palmer, 2010), revealed how limited effort was made to attract and offer education to Spanish-speaking families about the TWI program (Dorner, 2011), and placed transnational bilinguals in the program by default while English speakers were administered screening tests to mitigate an extensive waitlist. (Pimental et al., 2008). In all of these TWI contexts, the only reason that there

was even consideration of including the minoritized group was due to interest convergence (Bell, 1980) of whites and minoritized groups, specifically the perception that whites would benefit from a program originally designed for the minoritized group. Plainview's situation was unique and adds an extra layer to those studies, as interest convergence was *converging with* gentrification in transforming the neighborhood school into a "boutique school" (Lipman, 2011). Michelle reflected on the changes she was witnessing a few months before the gentrification unit, which were highlighted in a previous chapter and are essential here because they provide important context to the generative theme:

> Because even though I don't go on the tours (for interested parents) and I try not to dip my toe in that, I'm there during planning time when people are checking in and I see the people who are coming in. And they're not the people I have in my classroom. So I think it's like a free McMillan (elite dual language private school in the city). (Interview, 2/24/16)

Michelle's description of how Plainview was turning into a "boutique [public] school" was another "generative theme" (Freire, 1997) that motivated her to expose students to the changes taking place at the macro and micro levels. It was this "generative theme" that invoked "fury," and as a result the necessity of a critical pedagogical project (De Lissovoy, 2015) like the gentrification unit. Students gained insight into Austin's systematic displacement of Latinx and African American populations, as Mr. Salazar described the 1928 Master Plan that pushed them from the city center to east of I-35 due to the growth of businesses in the area. This prompted Michelle to think out loud:

> So now that we don't have, like Austin doesn't have a master plan, I don't know if they do or they don't, but when people move in to say Houston

> Park and people, and people, apartments get torn down, where do our families go, like where do we send them? (Audiorecording, 4/13/16)

This was the focal question that drove the debriefing dialogue after Mr. Salazar departed, as Michelle wanted students to be able to contextualize the 1928 "Master Plan" into the current historical moment at the level of the surrounding Plainview community. The change in the area of the last five years had been dramatic, as Michelle and her students noted:

> **Michelle**: Like Morelia Cerro (apartment complex)! It just closed down and now people who used to live in Morelia, like KK's grandma
> **Ernesto**: Nestor
> **Michelle**: Or Nestor, they don't live there anymore! Do you anybody who still lives in Morelia?
> **Nestor**: Nobody.
> **Michelle**: Nobody, like those apartments next to Kelly's (popular snow cone place in the community).
> **Ernesto**: They shut down.
> **Michelle**: They shut down, and no one lives there anymore.
> **Ernesto**: Wait, they're getting worked on.
> **Michelle**: They're making new ones.
> **Anita**: But they're gonna make it more expensive and for student living.
> **Nestor:** They changed the model.
> **Michelle**: So who's moving to Austin to buy this?
> **Anita:** Californians!
> **Ernesto:** Rich people!
> **Michelle:** Not just Californians, people that have money. So what's going to happen when people who can't afford to live in Austin don't live in Austin?
> **Tatiana:** It's just gonna become a very rich city!
> (Audiorecording, 4/13/16)

With only a few days remaining of the gentrification unit students were demonstrating a deeper more nuanced understanding of how these processes were impacting their macro and micro contexts at the city, community, and the Plainview level. There was also a realization of how the "generative theme" of gentrification had transformed their

classroom since the inception of the TWI program. This description of how the neoliberal path made its mark on their experience at Plainview:

> **Ofelia**: In Kinder we had a class of like thirty, somewhere, like we had a big class
> **Larry**: But now our whole grade is thirty
> **Ofelia**: We've just, Larry and I have just been watching kids come and go come and go
> **Larry**: Yeah
> **Ofelia**: Except for Amanda
> **Larry**: It keeps getting smaller every year
> **Ofelia**: Until we only have one teacher for our grade
> **Larry**: Not many people in Pre-K
> **Me**: Why is that happening you think?
> **Larry**: Maybe because
> **Tyrone**: (Whispers) Gentrification, probably cuz of gentrification
> **Larry**: Yeah like if the people have to go all the way to Plainview then they'd have to stay in the same house probably for all of that. So if it keeps getting expensive then they might have to move and go to a different school
> **Ofelia**: The thing is the only people who really came to our classroom and left, came and left, last year were Latinos and African Americans
> **Tyrone**: Also that
> **Me**: So what does that mean you think?
> **Ofelia**: That means that like people or people from the US are like Europe, are getting treated, like it's kind of like segregation all over again because all the Latinos and the African Americans are having to move out of the city and it's gonna turn out just like a white city
> **Me**: How does that make you feel?
> **Tyrone**: Pretty sad, so that a lot of the kids that were coming and leaving they stopped doing it now in fifth-grade, there hasn't been very many new students in fifth grade (Interview, 5/16/16)

This conversation revealed that students had made succinct connections to their macro realities, and how this had impacted their understanding of a gentrifying TWI program at Plainview that was pushing Latinos and African Americans to the margins. The "generative theme" had offered students powerful opportunities to contextualize gentrification around their communities, school, and the classroom.

## Conclusion

Unfortunately, the praxis that was described in the last chapter when five of Michelle's students gave impassioned speeches in front of the school board in support of dual language, did not come to complete fruition in conjunction with the gentrification unit. We did take five students to the previously mentioned conference presentation of the unit, where they presented the artwork they did about gentrification. Her call to "stand up" with her and "use [their} voice with conviction" was not taken into the public sphere at a deeper level due to the upcoming standardized tests that students were required to take. We were extremely proud of the students for taking on the unit with courage and being open to the new and unknown, but through reflection realized we should have taken it further. Duncan Andrade and Morrell's (2008) three goals of critical pedagogy; academic achievement, empowered identity development, and action for social change were only partially realized and we openly acknowledged that the action component should have been extended. Michelle commented on how the unit came up short:

> *Dan e yo nos sentamos a reflexionar como hubiera podido hacer esto mejor, porque siempre se puede hacer mejor. Extender la escritura hacerla como más pesadita, darles a ellos un llamado para actuar, ir a presentar a la mesa directiva el lunes en la noche, ir a presentar a la ciudad de Austin, ir a presentar lo que ellos habían encontrado.* (Conference Presentation, 4/23/16)

> Dan and I reflected on what we could have done better, because it's always possible to do it better. Make the writing more rigorous, give students a call to action, like going to the school board on Monday evenings. Go and present to the city of Austin and show them what they had discovered. (Conference Presentation, 4/23/16)

Even though the unit came up short, it is important to highlight that Michelle's modeling of the thought processes necessary to understand how gentrification affected students' lives revealed how she acted as a civic role model (Callahan & Obenchain, 2016). Her work in this unit, and her ongoing discussion of students' roles in their communities provided a civic template for her students, especially the children of immigrant parents, to follow as they move into early adolescence and later young adulthood. Teachers of immigrant youth have been found to be particularly salient in the civic development of their charges, and Michelle's work in the gentrification unit exemplifies how teachers can actively connect their students through a sense of responsibility to one's larger community.

Michelle showed her students the presentation a few days before we presented about the unit, and she talked about their perspective:

> *Cuando yo les enseñé esa presentación a ellos el viernes les dije great, como más hubieramos podido hacer esto mejor. Varios alumnos me dijeron que hubiera sido beneficioso para ellos entender de alguien que se benefició de la gentrificación. Es verdad o sea no presentamos* (laughing) *este punto de vista para nada porque es difícil encontrar a alguien que se haya beneficiado de la gentrificación sin tomar poder, y no presentamos ese punto de vista...Y estas reflexiones es importante tenerlo nosotros como escritores de currículo y ellos como consumidores de este currículo. Entonces por eso se lo di a ellos alright cómo hubiéramos podido arreglar esto, qué más hubiéramos podido tener, y ellos agregaron conversaciones. ¿Ellos hubieran querido tener un work session con la mesa directiva de AISD decirle what's up? Qué like háblame por qué estamos pasando por esto.* (Conference Presentation, 4/23/16)
>
> When I showed the presentation to my students on Friday I said great, how could we have made this better. A few students told me that it would have been beneficial to hear about somebody who benefited from gentrification. It's true that we didn't present (laughing) this point of view because it's hard to find somebody who has benefited from gentrification without

> using their power, so we didn't present that point of view. And these reflections are important for us who write curriculum and for those who receive the curriculum. It was for that reason that I said alright, how could we fix that, what more could we have done, and they mentioned more conversations. They would have liked a work session with the district's schoolboard, and be like what's up? Like, why are we going through this? (Conference Presentation, 4/23/16)

Anita, the same student who called Michelle a "cheater," offered the following critique of the unit when I interviewed her with Nate after we finished the gentrification unit:

> **Me**: How did Michelle integrate community and parents into the class?
> **Anita**: I think yeah, she has done a lot with the community and gotten speakers and I really like that. We did a gentrification project and she got speakers and they all seemed, I think we saw one side of it but we didn't really see like the good side of it I guess. There wasn't someone that came and was like I really like gentrification it's great! So I think maybe saying like (laughing) both sides of that would have been helpful. (Interview, 5/12/16)

As I mentioned in a previous chapter, Michelle played a key role in making sense of the data I had collected in her classroom and schoolwide. She was such an integral change agent in both spaces and warranted such an active role, and most importantly participant involvement in data analysis is a key pillar of critical ethnography (Barton, 2001; Carspecken, 1996; Madison, 2012). We agreed that she would read over the corpus of data, in this instance my interviews with students, and we would talk about the data. I also recorded these conversations and transcribed them, as captured here in an exchange we had about Anita's comment about the unit being overly one-sided. It then led into other facets of her teaching, specifically her intentionality about fronting the interests of her Latinx students:

> **Michelle**: She's little so there's hope that she can see outside of her realm, you know that's how I feel. OK so there's some things that it's tough to

understand, you know the whole gentrification unit how I was really one-sided according to her, how we didn't do a lot of science projects. You know she sees it and I can take it and I wrote in my notes I wish she would've told me those things before!
**Me**: Do you feel that it was really one-sided?
**Michelle:** I don't, you know I brought Celeste Smith in for a very specific reason. Like this isn't just affecting our Latino community or people of color community.
**Me**: Right, right, right.
**Michelle**: I did that for a reason, I was like Ms. Smith I think you are pivotal in this because we have Pedro we have Natalia, both Latinos. We need someone who's white who's struggling with the same thing. I didn't say that to her.
**Me**: You mentioned many times about this idea of the reason you're at the school is for the Latino kids. How do you think the other kids responded to that? Did they take it well or did they, cuz it seemed like in the interviews, they didn't mention it but I think they knew, they felt OK with that.
**Michelle**: I think they felt OK with that, yeah, they know I'm Latina (laughing).
**Me**: Cuz I asked Karina, Marisa, Nestor about this idea of voice, cuz I asked them, I noticed a few times that she took you guys out of the classroom, why, you know this idea of that we have a voice. Do you think that they felt that they had a voice?
**Michelle**: Yeah!
**Me**: The whole time? Their voices mattered and that they felt important?
**Michelle**: Yeah!
**Me**: Cuz you have here (in her reflections on student interviews) my kids have a voice, straight up raza!
**Michelle**: I do, I just read that. Those kids are, those kids are the reason that I'm employed at Plainview, so that's just very clear. (Member check, 7/8/16)

The unit had been an emotional exploration of new concepts about a concrete situation that was not affecting everybody in the same way, while at the same time provoking a deeper understanding of a pressing macro/micro social issue. The realities of TWI classrooms are unique *and* challenging spaces to take on an issue like gentrification, as students come together from diverging linguistic, cultural, and social class backgrounds. Michelle was also unique, as I documented throughout the year, in the way that she

challenged students to dialogue across their different backgrounds in fluid ways. Her dialogical critical pedagogy that was driven by her personal pillars of love, content, and Spanish had already set in motion the students' development of critical consciousness, and was augmented with the courageous work they did with the gentrification unit. The neoliberal processes that were specifically targeting the TWI "path" and students Michelle was hired to serve (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017; Cervantes-Soon, 2014; Varghese & Park, 2010) was the "generative theme" (Freire, 1997) for a critical pedagogical "counter-path" in the form of the gentrification unit. There was a deliberate attempt to address the call for the development of critical consciousness in the TWI classroom (Cervantes-Soon et al., In Press), as the laudable goals of academic achievement, bilingualism, and the fostering of cross-cultural relationships need to be extended through the integration of critical curricular explorations that challenge the neoliberal expansion of TWI programs.

## Chapter 7- Conclusions and Implications

This critical ethnographic research documented how a dual gentrification process (Valdez et al., 2013, 2016) impacted an urban TWI community/school, how the school responded to these processes, and how a critical fifth-grade teacher integrated a language-as-empowerment framework through critical pedagogy to talk back to this neoliberal logic. My decision to apply neoliberalism as a theoretical framework in a rapidly gentrifying urban community in the southwest emerged due to a 21st century reissuing of Guadalupe Valdés' (1997) "cautionary note" about the dangerous potential of TWI programs being commodified by the dominant group (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017; Cervantes-Soon, 2014; Martínez, 2017; Morales & Rao, 2015; Varghese & Park, 2010), which goes against the original race radical vision of bilingual education (Flores, 2016). Flores and Bale (2016) also exhort researchers who take up neoliberalism as a theoretical framework in bilingual education to be specific about how they are applying this concept. My decision to focus on how neoliberal processes played out in Plainview revealed the necessity of moving from "classic" neoliberalism as an overarching ideology to a process based conceptualization of neoliberal "paths" (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Peck et al., 2009) that augment one's human capital (Foucault, 2008; Harvey, 2005), promote a reigning common sense (Apple, 2006; Harvey, 2005), and operate in intricate ontological and epistemological ways in our public lives, identities, and relationships (Giroux, 2009). Specifically, these two neoliberal paths, which tend to manifest in urban contexts (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Peck et al., 2009), targeted a TWI community/school at the

levels of urban real estate (path # 1) and the popularity and gentrification of TWI (path #2,).

Previous critical research in TWI contexts has revealed other types of "paths" of inequality at the sociopolitical level (Dorner, 2011; Muro, 2016; Palmer, 2010), teacher backgrounds (Amrein & Peña, 2000; Cervantes-Soon & Turner, 2017; Palmer, 2009), and in classroom dynamics (Fitts, 2009; Palmer, 2010). This study added to this critical line of inquiry by documenting how two neoliberal "paths" impacted a highly sought after TWI program in a rapidly gentrifying community, at a time when TWI has been growing at exponential rates mainly due to their touted "promise" as far as student achievement (Thomas & Collier, 2002) and recent "discovery" (Flores, 2015) by White English-dominant families (Milton; 2004; Palmer et al., In Press; Wilson, 2011; Valdez et al., 2016). These inequalities in TWI have continued to exacerbate the opportunities and agency for transnational bilinguals in comparison with their English-dominant classmates (Boyle, August, Tabaku, Cole, & Simpson-Baird, 2015; Christian, 2016; de Jong, 2016). As a result there has been a recent call to extend TWI's laudable three "traditional" pillars around academic rigor and linguistic proficiency in two languages coupled with multicultural competence to include the development of students' critical consciousness (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017). The authors call for the integration of critical pedagogy and more humanizing research methodologies (Paris & Winn, 2014) to push the field beyond a focus on student outcomes, bilingualism, and biculturalism to include critical dialogue about macro and micro inequalities impacting students' lived realities. Their call for a critical "counter-path" to the myriad paths of inequality that have been documented

was not anticipated in my research, as I had originally only envisioned documenting how gentrification was impacting Plainview and the community's response to these processes. In summary, this research positioned the "rich promise" of TWI as another manifestation of Valdés' (1997) "cautionary note," as this "promise" documented at Plainview has once again reaped benefits for the dominant group. At the same time Michelle's sense of urgency around the gentrification of this "rich promise" motif offered me a hopeful vantage point about the potential of critically imbued TWI spaces.

Fortunately, I worked with and documented Michelle's enactment of TWI's proposed fourth pillar, as her personal TWI pillars of "Spanish, love, content, not in that order" were vehicles in developing students' critical consciousness. De Lissovoy (2015) challenges teachers to augment best practices in the current neoliberal havoc of standards-based education and take up a method of "love, imagination, and fury against the brutal rule of neoliberalism." Michelle revealed this "fury" by positioning the "path" of gentrification as a generative theme (Freire, 1997), as this current historical moment provided opportunities for academic and linguistic rigor, dialogue, vulnerability, and entanglement, covering all *four* of TWI's ambitious goals. Michelle's "stance" in the TWI classroom revealed the "rich promise" of TWI spaces, during a time of urgency.

From a methodological standpoint, there has been critically-engaged work that has researched the relationship between neoliberalism and education policy (Anyon, 2005; Apple, 2006; Cucchiara, 2013; Lipman, 2011), but scant work that has documented how neoliberalism plays out "on the ground" in urban contexts (Means, 2013). As a researcher, I was offered a unique vantage point during this year-long study at the school.

I documented Michelle's sense of urgency and integration of critical pedagogy and her students' development of critical consciousness, while also working in collaboration with her in the research process. She was an "anthropological confidant" (Foley & Valenzuela, 2005) who, due to her intimate knowledge of the Plainview community and her classroom context, provided invaluable insight and analysis about the events and relationships that took place at the school. This intimate collaborative relationship of *cariño* (Duncan-Andrade, 2006) throughout the research process was key in our ongoing dialogues about the gentrification of Plainview, and provided the impetus to take up this phenomenon as a generative theme of study in the classroom. This relationship offered powerful perspectives of how neoliberalism was playing out "on the ground," while most importantly revealing a critical educator's response to neoliberalism in the TWI classroom.

As TWI spaces look to move beyond the "rich promise" of academic, linguistic, and cross-cultural goals to include the development of students' critical consciousness, our work as critical researchers should include "humanizing methodologies" (Paris & Winn, 2014) that intentionally engage with teachers and other stakeholders in the research process. This critically-engaged methodological work has been carried out with TWI teachers (J. Freire, 2014) and in the TWI classroom (Hadi-Tabassum, 2006), and my study adds to this work and specifically addressed the call to document how neoliberal processes played out "on the ground" (Means, 2013) and the proposed fourth pillar of TWI around the development of critical consciousness. In the following sections I will discuss the implications of this work in the areas of policy, classroom practice, research,

and both bilingual and generalist teacher preparation programs. As the "gentrification" of TWI is most likely to proliferate (Valdez et al., 2016), especially considering the recent passage of California's Proposition 58 (Martínez, 2017), these implications could be generative in conceptualizing how these programs can foment and enact a "race radical" vision (Flores, 2016) of bilingual education that focuses on equity, social justice, and centering the interests and realities of transnational bilinguals (Cervantes-Soon, 2017; Martínez, 2017; Palmer et al., In Press). Coupled with the current hostile political climate, another hegemonic "path" targeting TWI communities and schools, there are myriad challenges that demand interdisciplinary responses that unite bilingual education with other fields with similar neoliberal challenges.

### Collaboration Between City Government and School Districts

As this research revealed, the processes of geographical gentrification of urban spaces and gentrification of TWI will continue to propagate at unrelenting speed, which calls for creative collaboration between city governments and school districts. When a public school like Plainview in a rapidly gentrifying community is converted into an urban amenity (Apple; 2006; Cucchiara, 2013; Lipman, 2011; De Lissovoy, 2015) for the economic elite due to a radical reform that was originally designed to benefit minoritized populations (De Lissovoy et al., 2015), this kind of partnership is essential in offering hope that the original (Latinx) residents have the right to "stay put" (Lipman, 2011) *and* to a quality bilingual program. The unfortunate and unrelenting combination of unleashed real estate price increases and insatiable appetite for and access to TWI on behalf of

dominant English speaking parents with the necessary "capitals" to advocate for their children spelled doom for Plainview's TWI program. Could Plainview's conversion into a "boutique public school" (Lipman, 2011) have been prevented, or was this just another unavoidable neoliberal outcome? The incidents and perspectives presented in this study revealed that there were diverging perspectives around this question. Karina, the assistant director of the dual language department in the district was forthright about not being able to "solve gentrification," while also talking about how the district was engaging in positive conversations about how to promote equity in the six campuses that were experiencing similar gentrification issues. Ms. Schneider, the veteran bilingual vice principal, took a more commonsensical position about the changes, stating that Plainview would never be like it was and thus should be rebranded into a Spanish Language Academy. Michelle, my focal participant, came at this issue from an activist perspective by engaging students in a unit about these community changes and inviting community activists into class to dialogue with students about these issues. Mónica, a working-class Mexicana who had been pushed out of the community, did not note any changes and loved Plainview and talked about it as "mi casa." Our activist dual language group believed we could work towards more equity and social justice with the help of a local Faith Alliance group, but we lacked support from the administration. These nuanced perspectives shed light on the complexities, emotions, and diverging realities that contributed to my understanding of Plainview's transformation over the span of the 2015-2016 school year. The most salient finding from these perspectives is that this dual gentrification impacted and displaced working-class minoritized Latinx populations,

which demands more equitable affordable housing options and access to quality (bilingual) education options for this vulnerable population. As the gentrification of cities and TWI continues to expand, city governments and school districts will need to combine forces to halt the dual gentrifications of urban frontiers and additive bilingual education programs like TWI (Cervantes-Soon, 2014; Kao & Morales, 2015; Petrovic, 2005; Valdez et al., 2016; Varghese & Park, 2010). This research shed light on the consequences of these commodification processes on the Plainview community, as it became a highly sought out TWI program colonized by the dominant group.

## School District

In addition to the combination of city government and school districts in ensuring that TWI programs are focused on issues of equity and social justice, it is imperative to go into more depth about the specific role that school districts can enact in preventing the gentrification of TWI. My activist work around TWI was not only confined to the Plainview campus, as I was also an active participant in a parent-led dual language community group. Our work centered on engaging parents around issues of equity in dual language, being a consistent presence at school district events focused on these programs, and most importantly meeting monthly with high-level district employees including the superintendent. Our knowledge base about dual language was comprehensive, and our perspectives were respected and taken into consideration. Our advocacy was not just driven by interest in our children's respective campuses, but through a stance that working-class Latinx populations who had the most to benefit from dual language should

have access to these programs. During these meetings with district employees I focused on Valdes' "cautionary note" (1997) and specifically on what I was documenting in my research at Plainview. They were aware of the changing dynamics and the inequitable processes that were playing out at the school, and relayed to us that they were looking into creative ways to provide transportation for Spanish speaking students at schools that had no access to a dual language program. This transportation issue was a challenge, as the district had lost out on millions of dollars of state funding due to the recapturing policy mentioned previously. This policy redirects funding from property-rich districts such as AISD to poorer districts, in spite of AISD's high number of students (60%) who receive free and reduced lunch. Besides the recapturing dilemma, many opined it was unfair to bus minoritized populations into a school like Plainview, as this would perpetuate an unjust system that has historically displaced brown and black bodies from their neighborhoods into "better" schools. There were also conversations about redrawing district boundaries, but none of these proposals would be taken up by the district the year after my data collection (2016-2017). Mr. González affirmed this at a CAC meeting in the Spring of 2016, as 90% of the following year's incoming Kindergarten population were English-dominant students, many of them coming from the elite Spanish immersion daycare, Escondido, that had become a pipeline to Plainview. These findings reveal that even though the district was aware of and concerned about the dual gentrification of Plainview's TWI program, they were not able to prevent the school from becoming a boutique public (TWI) school.

## Administrators

As I previously mentioned, I held Mr. González in high esteem, as he generally cared and did good by the students at Plainview, promoted a welcoming environment at the school, and was supportive of our advocacy around maintaining the true essence of an equitable and social justice-driven TWI program. Nonetheless, this "support" amounted to, as I demonstrated previously, lip service on the administration's behalf. The sense of urgency of being a Title one school with myriad challenges *before* the inception and early stages of the TWI program was no longer on the radar at the school, even though the school remained 27% ELL and 35% low SES, respectively. Undoubtedly, Mr. González's visionary decision to embark on the TWI experiment in 2010 saved the school from closure, but it is important to pose the question "for whom was the school really saved?" Plainview's reputation as a district trendsetter and leader in TWI and promotion of their program through school tours attracted families from all over the city. The only "requirement" was to call the school and make an appointment, and as Mr. González mentioned in his interview there were interested parents who came from as far as New York and California to catch a glimpse of TWI in action. The only outreach that was enacted was with local private Spanish immersion daycare centers, which were mostly populated by English-dominant families from middle and upper class backgrounds. My participation in two of these tours confirmed that this was the targeted population, and Michelle poignantly pointed out that the tour takers didn't look like the students she had in her fifth-grade class. Hence, the parents who were now strategically positioned to participate in the lottery for the following year's Kindergarten slots, were

mostly from the dominant group. Mr. González's claim that was documented previously about how the district's central office was in charge of the lottery process was undoubtedly true, whereas those who had *access* to the lottery process mostly via the participation in one of the many tours made this lottery process a covertly inequitable one. The findings in this research demonstrated that in numerous instances Mr. González voiced the need to attract more ELLs and their families to Plainview, while implicitly delegating that responsibility to a group of activist parents who unfortunately were not able to bring this to fruition. Viviana voiced her frustration around this, as she implored Mr. González to take a stronger position and leadership role in attracting the families who *should* be the priority in any model of bilingual education. Based on the agency the district offered him as far as how Plainview could conceptualize and enact their TWI program, he could have taken up an agentic position around the recruitment of ELLs and their families as to ensure the true essence of a TWI program. As Reyes and Villone (2007) put forth, the "stance" of advocacy and social justice that Michelle put into practice with her families was a personal decision, as was the "stance" of Mr. González's around the urgency of maintaining an equitable TWI program at Plainview. A "stance" that only offers "lip service" to issues of "structuring for integration" (de Jong, 2011), will not be enough to tide the explosion of popularity and gentrification of TWI programs such as Plainview. As these neoliberal processes permeated the school's imagination, there was a commonsensical acceptance that nothing could be done to thwart this rapid transformation. Ms. Schneider, the vice-principal, summed it up poignantly during a CAC meeting when she nonchalantly commented that "the school would never look like

it used to," and in turn Plainview should move on accordingly. This colonization process that took over the pathways of access to Plainview was aided by administration's neutral "stance," which revealed that there should be protocols in place (for example in the CIP, Campus Improvement Plan) to prevent this colonization. These protocols should be conceptualized and enacted in thoughtful and creative ways to ensure the original "race radical" vision (Flores, 2016) of bilingual education. Parent advocates are essential in this process of aligning a school's vision around an equity/heritage framework (Valdez et al., 2014), but without the support and advocacy of school administration parent efforts will not be enough to overcome the neoliberal assault of TWI.

The findings from Michelle's classroom revealed that the proposed fourth pillar of TWI around the development of critical consciousness should not only focus on students, as their families were also invited to participate and dialogue across social class, race, and cultural background. The third "official" pillar of TWI of promoting cross-cultural relationships and multicultural competences demands much more than just placing two groups side by side (Palmer et al., In Press), as was documented by the critical dialogical pedagogy that spurred her students to grapple across those respective barriers. Michelle extended TWI's third pillar by including monthly house meetings, as the findings revealed that parents were placed together *and* expected to dialogue about pressing issues in the classroom and in the Plainview community. This "stance" by Michelle was not reciprocated campus-wide nor was it a requirement, nonetheless, when TWI programs are focused on enacting the fourth pillar this is an essential facet of the program. Her "stance" to move beyond a "symbolic integration" that at best engender

nice comfortable interactions (Muro, 2016) to an "intentional integration" that centered the linguistic and cultural realities of transnational bilinguals and their families, is essential when working from an equity/heritage framework (Valdez et al., 2014). The "work" students are asked to do in complex and inherently diverse TWI classrooms (Palmer & Martínez, 2013) can be augmented by creating relationships of "love" (one of Michelle's TWI pillars) with families. This has implications for administrators, as Viviana highlighted on multiple occasions that Plainview did not do an effective job of educating parents into what it meant to be a parent at the school. The only authentic commitment from parents was to sign a statement of oath to the program, which did not ask parents to commit to anything around becoming aware of the TWI program and its components. Michelle's observation about Plainview turning into an elite private dual language campus, albeit for free, did not require a commitment from parents. As TWI programs are "discovered" (Flores, 2015) due to the explosion of interest from the dominant group (de Jong & Christian, 2016; Palmer et al., In Press, Wilson, 2011), an intentional stance on behalf of administration to educate, dialogue with, and promote critical consciousness is necessary in the pursuit of a "race radical" vision of bilingual education (Flores, 2016). A key element to position TWI programs as having a more holistically driven "rich promise" that spans the academic, the linguistic, and cross-cultural relationships to include this development of critical consciousness for students and families, would require a structured critical orientation and ongoing educational opportunities. This orientation should offer historical, pedagogical, linguistic, and philosophical perspectives of TWI, which could be presented by experts in the field,

administration, teachers, and through *testamonios* of current and former parents and students. During my data collection process the district offered "ongoing educational opportunities" to learn about and dialogue about current issues in dual language education, which were mostly attended by Plainview's advocate parents. Plainview did not provide these "ongoing educational opportunities," as they only encouraged parents to attend the district's events. Viviana's observation about Plainview's lack of parent education and sustained community engagement contributed to its framing of TWI as a nice thing, as opposed to an essential thing that incorporated bilingualism, biculturalism, and social justice into the fabric of the school's identity. If Michelle's urgency around the state of Plainview and TWI had been taken seriously at the community level, this "generative theme" could have spurred more parents to advocate for a program that was becoming a privileged "path" for the dominant group. As was documented previously, the urgency of a few activist parents could not deter a general ethos that yearned for the Spanish language, while at the same time dismissed the histories and realities of the minoritized populations who spoke the language in their homes (Cervantes-Soon, 2014). As the Plainview case revealed, the inherent complexities and diversity of TWI place myriad challenges on teachers *and* administrators. If the "rich promise" is to come to fruition and most importantly center the interests of transnational bilinguals and their families, Michelle's pillar of radical love with students and families is essential in creating TWI spaces of high academic achievement, linguistic proficiency in two languages, multicultural competence, and critical consciousness for *all stakeholders*. This is an ambitious and at the same time hopeful agenda, nonetheless, the urgency around the

current neoliberal assault on TWI programs coupled with the current political hostility that targets the Latinx population calls for ambitious and hopeful policy in TWI spaces. The urgency that was captured in Michelle's classroom as a result of her centering of TWI's fourth pillar revealed hopeful possibilities at the classroom level, while demonstrating the need for administrator's to also center this pillar school wide in order to prevent the continued gentrification of TWI. The "reissuing" of the "cautionary note" and this potential gentrification demands that administrators go beyond doing good by children and a humanitarian focus to include "political clarity" (Bartolomé, 1994) around the development of critical consciousness for all stakeholders (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017). Mr. González and Ms. Schneider, as the most powerful stakeholders at Plainview, did not embody this clarity or enact Michelle's race radical vision of TWI (Flores, 2016), which contributed to the gentrification of Plainview's TWI program. Administrative manifestations of this "political clarity," in spite of the dual gentrifications impacting the school, would have embedded into school policy a structured educational, political, and historical perspective of TWI for the new (White English dominant) population thirsting for bilingualism. This lack of "clarity" paved the way for the colonization and gentrification of TWI at Plainview.

## Classroom Implications

This research addressed the call to extend TWI's original pillars to include student's development of critical consciousness (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017), which revealed an alternative manifestation of the "rich promise" of TWI spaces. Specifically,

these spaces of critical pedagogy and dialogue offered an expansion of the original pillars around academic rigor, linguistic proficiency in two languages, and multicultural competence to include students grappling with complex issues such as immigration and gentrification. As TWI programs expand rapidly and become susceptible to neoliberal processes (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017; Cervantes-Soon, 2014; Petrovic, 2005; Varghese & Park, 2010), this expansion and potential commodification demands a critical pedagogy that seeks to provide spaces to unpack macro/micro hegemonic processes impacting students and their families' lived realities. A facet of this study documented how two groups came together to work in the areas of language arts, math, and social studies around a violent situation of extreme injustice (Freire, 1998) in a fifth-grade TWI classroom. Our decision to tackle a violent situation in the form of gentrification and position this process as a curricular "generative theme" (Freire, 1997) provided opportunities to integrate community histories, the knowledges of minoritized groups, and foment critical dialogue. Students' development of critical consciousness occurred in nuanced ways, as the findings succinctly demonstrated that students' understanding and lived realities around gentrification impacted their perspectives of this process (Leistyna, 2007). Some students believed gentrification only created negative consequences, while others thought it had both negative and positive consequences. Nonetheless, *all* students developed a deeper sense of critical consciousness about how a "situation of extreme injustice" like gentrification was affecting their city, communities, and TWI school and classroom. In addition, students grappling with a complex phenomenon such as gentrification across social class, cultural, and racial differences has implications for

TWI's third pillar around the development of multicultural competences, as this has been underexplored in the TWI literature (Feinauer & Howard, 2009; Palmer et al., 2017). The findings documented in this study reveal a powerful interdependent relationship between TWI's pillars three and four, as Michelle's integration of critical pedagogy promoted the development of students' critical consciousness and multicultural competence. Findings shed light on both, students grappling with gentrification and grappling with this topic across social class, racial, and cultural divides, which sheds light on how these two pillars will most likely manifest interdependently. As more critically-minded teachers such as Michelle intentionally weave the proposed fourth pillar of TWI into their teaching practice, these processes have great potential to foment student dialogue and in turn promote a deeper understanding of diverging identities, positionalities, and lived realities. It is essential that the "rich promise" of TWI promote the academic and linguistic benefits that have already been "proven" and touted, while also highlighting the "rich promise" of TWI spaces that promote critical pedagogies and the development of critical consciousness. The current sociopolitical climate driven by neoliberalism, fear, hostilities against immigrants, and intimidation demand that teachers strive for this "rich promise" in all of its complexities. As mentioned previously this is a challenging endeavor, nonetheless Michelle's powerful work offers a hopeful example of how "Spanish, love, content, not in that order" can "realize the vision" (Howard & Sugarman, 2007) of academic achievement, bilingualism, biculturalism, equity, and social justice in the TWI classroom.

**Language-as-Empowerment Framework**

Despite the inequalities that have been documented at the classroom level in TWI programs, which have highlighted more agentic experiences for English-dominant students, the positioning of Spanish as a resource (Ricento, 2005; Ruíz, 1984) does offer hope for native-language instruction in TWI classrooms. At the same time neoliberal processes that can potentially commodify the linguistic resources of transnational bilinguals (Cervantes-Soon, 2014: Palmer et al., 2017; Petrovic, 2005) are reminders that classroom teachers should be vigilant about making sure these resources are not sequestered by the dominant group in their quest to become bilingual (Palmer et al., 2017). The implications of Michelle's language-as-empowerment framework, specifically around her personal TWI pillars of "Spanish, love, content, not in that order," provided this vigilance while at the same time extended Ruíz's (1984) language-as-resource framework to tap this resource as a vehicle to satisfy the fourth pillar of the development of students' critical consciousness. Michelle positioned Spanish as "a tool of empowerment" for her Latinx students who had been pushed out of the Plainview community, while at the same time positioning the language as something that English dominant students were transgressing through its usage. Most importantly, this "tool of empowerment" took on Freirian significance, as students not only read the word (Spanish) but read the world (Freire & Macedo, 2005) by accessing Spanish as a vehicle to engage critical "content" around issues such as gentrification and take action (love) about this situation that was negatively impacting their community. The use of Spanish in a decontextualized vacuum holds limited potential in a teacher's attempt to promote the

development of students' critical consciousness, and this was demonstrated succinctly in Michelle's curriculum, pedagogy, and engagement with the community. The current neoliberal assault and the Trump administration's hostile aggression aimed at transnational bilinguals and their families demand we are not satisfied with tapping into the native language as a decontextualized resource. This resource should be extended into empowering spaces and used "with" (Freire, 1997) students as a tool to engage with critical curriculum, and as a tool to dialogue across social class, race, and culture.

**Implications for Critical Pedagogy**

Michelle's language-as-empowerment framework and intentional centering of TWI's fourth (Freirian) pillar around the development of critical consciousness has profound implications for the field of critical pedagogy, as the lack of translation of critical pedagogical principles into concrete practice has continued to plague the field (Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008). Michelle demonstrated the hopeful possibilities of a problem-posing education fueled by "love, imagination, and fury" (De Lissovoy, 2015) against the TWI neoliberal logic at Plainview and beyond, which promoted dialogue, engagement in inquiry, and the development of critical consciousness (Freire, 1997). Specifically, I highlight three distinct facets of Michelle's work that offer potential to extend the tradition of critical pedagogy, while also providing empirical instances of TWI's fourth (Frierian) pillar. Her deep commitment to and engagement with parents was driven by critical pedagogical principles, as their knowledges were included in both the *Tamalada* lesson and the gentrification unit and were pushed to engage in cross-cultural

dialogue in house meetings. Michelle recognized the urgency of tapping into *parents'* "funds of knowledge" (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González, 1992) around tamale making, the housing market in east Austin, and the harsh realities of gentrification as a vehicle to deepen students' critical consciousness. Michelle was also very intentional about centering the minority language (Spanish) in her house meetings, which engendered the necessity of finding one's "bilingual pair" in order to capture the essence of the topic of discussion. Michelle's dialogical pedagogy with students was relevant and powerful, while this same approach with parents provided a glimpse of the critical and hopeful possibilities of extending this work to include parental involvement and entanglement. Michelle broadened the traditional TWI pillar that focuses on the promotion of students' multicultural competence to include the parents, which should be a priority when centering issues of equity and social justice in TWI programs. In addition, Michelle's language-as-empowerment framework is a critical pedagogical extension of Ruíz's (1984) language-as-resource framework. Her personal TWI pillars of "Spanish, love, and content, not in that order" were first and foremost critical manifestations of Michelle's commitment to centering the interests of her transnational bilingual students and TWI's fourth pillar. As Ruíz's language-as-resource framework also has dangerous potential to be gentrified due to the neoliberal impact on TWI programs, it is crucial that Michelle's criticality around the minority language is taken seriously. TWI's focus on biliteracy and bilingualism should be celebrated, nonetheless, we must remain vigilant that this focus does not take root through traditional banking pedagogies that limit students' opportunities to engage in critical language, content, and cross-cultural opportunities.

Michelle's integration of a critical pedagogy of "love, imagination, and rage" (De Lissovoy, 2015) utilized *both* languages in explorations of problematizing histories and societal configurations, through dialogue "with" students, and to foment the development of critical consciousness for all stakeholders (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017). Thus, the documentation of Michelle's language-as-empowerment framework shed light on the hopeful possibilities of practical applications of critical pedagogy in the TWI classroom. Finally, a key tenant of critical pedagogy is the ability to complement one's deep understanding of the "required" curriculum and state standards with a clear conceptualization of the political structure of schooling (Kincheloe, 2004). Michelle's deep understanding of this political structure and the dialectical relationship between the macro and micro were instrumental in fomenting a critically infused curriculum that addressed both local and global issues impacting her students and their families. For example, Michelle's race radical vision of TWI (Flores, 2016) coupled with her strategic ability to critically broaden state standards were contextualized at the local classroom level through curricular explorations of key historical processes such as immigration, politics, and gentrification. Teachers in the mold of Michelle who possess this political and ideological "clarity" (Bartolomé, 1994) around these key historical processes at the macro and micro levels will be equipped to engage students in critical pedagogical projects, such as the framing of gentrification as a "generative theme."

## Implications for Classroom Research in TWI Spaces

As the propensity for the "gentrification" of TWI programs (Valdez et al., 2016) increases due to neoliberal processes that were documented in this study, it will be essential to engage in more critical ethnographic work that is centered on social justice, equity, and assuring these programs are centered on the interests and realities of transnational bilinguals and their families (Flores, 2016; Palmer et al., In Press). This study addressed the paucity of critical ethnographic research that attempts to document how neoliberal processes manifest "on the ground" in urban public schools (Means, 2013). In addition, the study extended this call through "humanizing research" (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017; Paris & Winn, 2014) that brought together the researcher (me) and the researched (Michelle) in a collaborative exploration with students about the same neoliberal processes that were impacting Plainview "on the ground." This study revealed that the "rich promise" of TWI, due to the "reissuing" of the "cautionary note," needs to transition beyond academic outcomes, teaching in the minority language, and multicultural competence to include students' development of critical consciousness as part of a proposed Freirian fourth pillar in TWI (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017). Our "collaborative exploration" through the development of a thematic unit about gentrification demonstrated that there is a powerful and succinct relationship between critical "humanizing" ethnographic methodologies and TWI's proposed fourth pillar around critical consciousness. They both intentionally positioned the research and curriculum as political terrain (Barton, 2001; Freire, 1998, 2007; Madison, 2012; Trueba, 1999), mapped local/micro experiences and processes to their global/national

manifestations (Means, 2013), centered the knowledges and realities of the oppressed (Freire, 2007; Madison, 2012), vouched for hope (Carspecken, 1996; Denzin, 2001), and provided opportunities for praxis in the defense of human rights (Freire, 2007; Trueba, 1999). Thus, it was essential that we took a critical stance to engage in openly ideological research (Giarelle, 1992), while also taking a critical stance in the TWI classroom (Reyes & Villone, 2007). The neoliberal path (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Peck et al., 2009) targeting a "political" space such as TWI at the micro/macro levels demanded that we enact "agency" in centering the knowledges of those being impacted by gentrification, with the aim of creating a more hopeful, critical, and equitable TWI classroom. The ethnographic documentation of this complex micro reality has the potential to inform TWI processes at the macro level, which calls for more of this openly ideological, collaborative, and social-justice driven research.

The "reissuing" of the "cautionary note" due to neoliberalism's impact on TWI, the proposed Freirian fourth pillar in TWI around the development of critical consciousness, and the call for more humanizing methodologies offer the field of bilingual education an empowering opportunity to document inequalities in TWI *and* most importantly bring researchers and stakeholders together to challenge these inequalities. Previous documentation of these inequalities in TWI contexts through ethnographic work revealed the urgency to extend TWI's pillars of academic rigor, linguistic proficiency in two languages, and multicultural competence to include a pillar focused on critical pedagogical perspectives that centers the interests and realities of transnational bilinguals and their families. This urgency to extend TWI's pillars into

more critical terrain offers critical scholars/researchers empowering opportunities to take up more activist-minded, counterhegemonic, and humanizing methodologies on the ground in collaboration with administrators, teachers, and parents. The critical terrain that can be forged when centering the fourth pillar also has implications for professional development with in-service TWI teachers, which is covered in the next section.

## Implications for TWI Teacher Professional Development

Michelle's unwavering advocacy towards her students and families, application of critical pedagogy, and race radical vision of TWI (Flores, 2016) was a truly magical experience to document as a researcher. At the same time, this commitment, dedication, and advocacy is exhausting work, and may oftentimes be experienced in isolation and be stigmatized by colleagues due to the myriad pressures teachers encounter on a daily basis. Nevertheless, my collaboration with Michelle and specifically the documentation, validation, and discussions as an "anthropological confidant" of her equity focused social justice work in the classroom served as a type of mirror, which provided empowering experiences and supported her own growth as critical (TWI) pedagogue. Through local and national venues such as bilingual education conferences (*Adelante*, *La Cosecha. NABE*) and Michelle's dialogue with bilingual pre-service teachers in the *Foundations of Bilingual Education* course I was teaching during data collection, she was able to disseminate her empowering social justice work in front of peers, administrators, and future TWI teachers. This engagement with her own professional community and the academic world most importantly offered insightful opportunities for her to reflect on her

own practice, which oftentimes never comes to fruition due to the invisibility one feels when working in isolation. Thus, our collaborative research partnership was a form of support for Michelle's race radical vision of TWI (Flores, 2016), centering of TWI's fourth pillar (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017), and empowerment as a critical TWI teacher. This unique and social justice driven collaboration between a practicing TWI teacher (Michelle) and a researcher (me) has important implications in mapping out a more critical conceptualization of professional development with in-service TWI teachers. These collaborations offer great potential for teachers to move beyond TWI's traditional pillars of academic rigor, bilingualism and biliteracy, and multicultural competence to include the development of critical consciousness for all TWI stakeholders. Finally, the urgency around intentionally centering TWI's fourth (Freirian) pillar has succinct connections to how we prepare future bilingual teachers, which is the focus of the next section.

## Implications for Bilingual Teacher Preparation

The "astounding effectiveness" (Collier & Thomas, 2004) and "rich promise" (Lindholm-Leary, 2005) of TWI programs to develop high levels of academic achievement and bilingualism will be catalysts in the expansion of these programs at the national level. This growth and the inherent complexities of TWI spaces (Palmer & Martínez, 2013) presents myriad challenges for the field of bilingual education, with one of those being the preparation of future teachers in bilingual teacher preparation programs. How can bilingual teacher preparation programs prepare future teachers for the

demands of delivering rigorous content in two languages, fomenting cross-cultural relationships, and opening up curricular spaces for the development of students' critical consciousness? Undoubtedly, the addition of TWI's fourth pillar makes an already challenging endeavor even more challenging, nonetheless there are elements that bilingual teacher preparation programs can integrate into coursework and fieldwork that will position candidates to successfully and critically engage students around all four TWI pillars. The documentation of Michelle's pedagogical and curricular stance and her intentionality around fomenting critical consciousness in her students revealed that this "race radical" vision and social justice lens was necessary in order for her to integrate all four pillars into her teaching practice. Hence, Michelle displayed a critical orientation around her personal TWI pillars of "Spanish, love, content, not in that order" and the "official" pillars of TWI, while most importantly being deliberate about integrating the proposed fourth pillar around students' development of critical consciousness. This critical orientation, as demonstrated by Michelle in this study, is essential in positioning teachers to better promote the development of critical consciousness *and* have critical perspectives on curriculum, language, and cross-cultural relationships amongst students and parents. Lacking this critical perspective, students would not have had generative opportunities to engage bilingually around rigorous critical academic content or dialogue across race, social class, and gender. The "reissuing" of the "cautionary note," the growing popularity of TWI programs, and the proposed Freirian fourth pillar of TWI demand a reorientation of bilingual teacher preparation programs, and I outline some recommendations below:

1. *Problematizing TWI: The Impact of Neoliberalism*- Research has shown that students enrolled in TWI programs perform better in comparison with other bilingual education programs (Thomas & Collier, 2004). This research that highlights student academic outcomes have contributed to the growing popularity and growth of TWI programs, while also prompting critical scholars in bilingual education to "reissue" the "cautionary note" due to the dangerous potential that neoliberal processes can exert on these respective programs. At the same time, critical scholars in the field of teacher education vouch for coursework that introduces future teachers to critical theory before entering the field (Apple, 2010; De Lissovoy, 2015; Kumashiro, 2008). Neoliberalism's impact on bilingual education, specifically in additive programs like TWI, needs to become an integral topic of discussion and investigation in the preparation of future bilingual teachers. How do market-oriented discourses and policies, the potential commodification of the minority language by the dominant group, and the dual gentrifications of TWI programs like Plainview align with neoliberal processes in bilingual education? How do these processes go against the original aims of bilingual education programs that were developed to benefit transnational bilinguals and their families (Flores, 2016; Grinberg & Saavedra, 2000)? The complex, contested, and political history of bilingual education in the US is manifesting in unique nuanced ways in the current neoliberal moment in TWI, which should be problematized with future bilingual teachers. For example, pre-service teachers should be exposed to how additive bilingual programs such as

TWI have taken on more nuanced significance in this neoliberal moment, due to the emergence of a global/human capital framework that positions TWI as a site of human capital accumulation by society's elites (Valdez et al., 2014). Teacher educators in bilingual teacher preparation programs have the ethical responsibility to emphasize how this neoliberal framework goes against an equity/heritage framework that seeks to combat asymmetrical power relations (Valdez et al., 2014) to prevent the "gentrification" of TWI (Valdez et al., 2016) and maintain a "race radical" vision of bilingual education that centers the interests and realities of transnational bilinguals and their families (Flores, 2016; Grinberg & Saavedra, 2000).

2. *Language-as-Empowerment Framework*- Michelle's critical orientation around curriculum, pedagogy, and equity in the TWI classroom revealed she had a clear sense of ideological and political clarity (Bartolomé, 1994) about the original "race radical" vision of bilingual education (Flores, 2016). On myriad occasions she "named" power asymmetries and other harmful practices that were taking place on the ground at Plainview. An integral facet of this ideological and political clarity was her clear vision of TWI, which was driven by her personal pillars of "Spanish, love, and content, not in that order." Michelle's personal TWI pillars promoted the use of "Spanish" as a critical vehicle to engage students in critical "content," while also demonstrating a deep radical "love" (Cervantes-Soon, 2017) for all students and their families, especially those being pushed out of the Plainview community. Michelle's language-as-empowerment framework

was a manifestation of an "extraordinary pedagogy" that was "informed by robust understandings of language and bilingualism" (Palmer & Martínez, 2013, p. 288). Her language-as-empowerment framework has powerful implications for bilingual teacher preparation programs. Previous work in bilingual teacher preparation programs has highlighted the urgency to provide coursework in Spanish to help pre-service teachers improve their level of Spanish proficiency (Aquino-Sterling, 2016; Guerrero & Valadez, 2011; Sutterby et al., 2005). The creation of these Spanish speaking spaces in bilingual teacher education programs is key and should be commended and advocated for, while there is also an urgency to "demand more" (Haas & Gort, 2009) from teacher educators in the field of bilingual education. Michelle's stance in the classroom went beyond "Spanish first, all the time," albeit a key finding, to include an intentional criticality around her use of Spanish. It is essential that bilingual teacher preparation programs continue to offer coursework in Spanish, as most pre-service teachers have not had sufficient opportunities to develop academic proficiency in the language (Guerrero & Guerrero, 2013; Sutterby et al., 2005). Nonetheless, Michelle's manifestation of criticality around the use of Spanish demands that the field cannot be satisfied with only preparing pre-service teachers to deliver content in Spanish, even though this would be understandable considering that the teaching of a language other than English is often construed as an attack on American values (Faltis, 2014; Fitts & Weisman, 2010; Ricento, 2005). In the current neoliberal moment of TWI that has witnessed an explosive

growth in TWI programs due to interest from white English speaking families, this "attack" has been scaled back to placate the dominant group in their thirst for bilingualism. If indeed the "resource" has the potential to be commodified as part of the expansion of TWI programs, it is imperative that the Spanish "resource" be positioned from Michelle's language-as-empowerment framework. It is essential as part of this language-as-empowerment framework that Spanish is centered in bilingual teacher preparation spaces, while also integrating critical pedagogy (content pillar) and radical love (love pillar) that augments instruction in the minority language. Thus, the proposed fourth pillar of TWI around the development of students' critical consciousness (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017) should be embedded into the fabric of bilingual teacher preparation programs, with Michelle's language-as-empowerment framework serving as a generative critical starting point in the bilingual pre-service teacher path towards ideological and political clarity (Bartolomé, 1994). TWI spaces in the neoliberal moment, as sites of struggle that "demand more" than delivering decontextualized content in Spanish, reveal the urgency of exposing bilingual pre-service teachers to the theoretical and practical applications of Michelle's framework *before* they enter the field (Caldas, In Press).

3. *State Standards and Critical Pedagogy*- Michelle was a unique TWI teacher due to her focus on social justice, equity, critical pedagogy, *and* due to her strategic knowledge and integration of state standards into her curriculum. She demonstrated a deep understanding of the state standards, as was demonstrated

throughout this study. Michelle's knowledge of state standards offered her agentic opportunities to explore critical themes and enact her "content" pillar around issues such as immigration, gender, and the thematic unit on gentrification. This technical facet of the TWI classroom and curriculum was a critical tool that Michelle knew how to navigate to her benefit, and has important implications for bilingual teacher preparation programs. Much akin to the implications presented above with respect to going beyond the delivering of Spanish instruction to include an intentional critical bent to that instruction, it is not enough to expose pre-service teachers to state standards and how to align them with lessons in the content areas. Teacher educators in bilingual preparation programs have the responsibility to prepare pre-service teachers for those important tasks, while also facilitating discussion, modeling examples, and offering field-based explorations with state standards that go beyond alignment to include strategic application to foment critical curricular openings. We cannot expect future bilingual teachers to have this deep understanding and strategic awareness of state standards without the creation of deliberate discussions, examples, and most importantly opportunities to experiment with them in critical ways in the field.

4. *Critical Scholarship in Bilingual Teacher Preparation*- The first three implications for bilingual teacher preparation programs demand courageous individuals who position themselves as critical scholars/researchers/teachers/activists. Apple (2010) describes this role:

> She or he needs to act as a deeply committed mentor, as someone who demonstrates through her or his life what it means to be *both* an excellent researcher and teacher and a committed member of a society that is scarred by persistent inequalities. She or he needs to show how one can blend these two roles together in ways that may be tense but still embody the dual commitments to exceptional and socially committed research and participating in movements whose aim is interrupting dominance. It should go without saying that she or he needs to embody all these commitments in his or her teaching. (p. 230)

Bilingual education and specifically TWI, as a field mired in "persistent inequalities," requires an intentional "commitment" to critically engage at all these levels in order to "interrupt" the "dominance" of neoliberal policies impacting the realities of classrooms (Picower, 2011). There is powerful potential to interrupt this dominance in TWI spaces through the integration of "humanizing methodologies" (Cervantes-Soon et al., 2017; Paris & Winn, 2014) that bring together researchers, teacher educators, classroom teachers, and TWI stakeholders. Michelle's classroom revealed this generative potential, as the knowledges of the researcher/teacher educator (me), the teacher (Michelle), students, and parents were integral in providing a hopeful example of teaching against the neoliberal logic that had descended upon Plainview Elementary due to the gentrification of its TWI program. It is our hope that this study can inform more equitable, social justice-driven, and critical processes in TWI policy, practice, research, and bilingual teacher preparation programs.

## Appendix A- Teacher, Administration, and Staff Interview Protocol

1. How long have you taught at Plainview?

2. Have you taught elsewhere? If so, where and for how long?

3. Can you talk a bit about your overall experience teaching at Plainview?

4. What, if any, are some changes that you have seen in the school over the last five years?

5. How have these changes impacted your classroom? How have they impacted your teaching style? How have they impacted your relationship to parents?

6. What are strategies you employ to communicate with parents? Do you find some forms of communication more or less effective with some families?

7. Do you find that parents (both native-English speaking and native-Spanish speaking) express concerns about their child's educational progress in the context of the dual-language curriculum? If so, how do you address these anxieties with the parents?

8. What, if any, are strategies you use to incorporate bicultural education into your curriculum? Have you experienced challenges in doing so? What have been some of your most successful strategies?

## Appendix B- Parent Interview Protocol

1. How long have you been a parent at Plainview?

   Is Plainview your neighborhood school, or did you transfer?

   If transfer, what would be your neighborhood school? Why did you choose Plainview?

   Can you describe your experiences of being a Plainview parent?

2. How would you identify your family's racial/ethnic composition?

3. What language(s) do you speak at home with your child?

4. How would you describe your socioeconomic background?

5. Do you consider Plainview to be a diverse school? Do you think that the Dual Language program contributes to the school's diversity?

6. What (if any) are challenges you or your kids have experienced being at such a diverse school? [if they answered yes to the above question]

7. How does the diversity contribute to your child's learning?

8. Does your family socialize with other Plainview families outside of school? If yes, how often and what kinds of activities?

## Appendix C- Interview Protocol for Michelle

1. Describe your educational trajectory.
2. How did you arrive to Plainview?
3. Describe your philosophy of teaching.
4. Describe your philosophy of TWI.
5. Describe the campus vision of TWI.
6. How do you engage with parents?
7. Describe the Plainview community.

## Appendix D- Interview Protocol for Michelle's Students

1. What is your name and how do you self-identify?
2. Why do you think I have been in your classroom all year?
3. How long have you been at Plainview? Describe your experience.
4. Describe Michelle's teaching style.
5. What were some lessons that stood out during the year?
6. Who are your friends and why do you like to hang out with them?
7. How did Michelle bring in the community to the classroom?
8. Describe any changes you have noticed at Plainview since you arrived?
9. How has the TWI program prepared you for the future?
10. Describe Michelle in three words.

## Appendix E- Interview Protocol for Parents in Michelle's Class

1. What is your name and how do you self-identify?
2. Do you live in the neighborhood or are you a transfer family?
3. Describe your experience as a parent at Plainview.
4. Describe Michelle's philosophy of teaching.
5. How did Michelle engage with you as a parent?
6. Did you attend Michelle's house meetings? If yes, what was your impression of them?
7. How do you feel that the TWI program has helped your child?
8. Where do you see Plainview in three to five years?

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