CRITICAL, COMPELLING, AND LINGUISTICALLY SCAFFOLDED LITERATURE: IMPLEMENTING TEXT SETS MULTILINGUALLY FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

ALEXANDRA BABINO, JUAN J. ARAUJO, AND MARIE L. MAXWELL

ABSTRACT

In most cases, the curriculum chosen for wide-use does not mirror or address the pressing needs of bi/multilingual learners, especially for those who are in middle and high school settings. In light of this and the increasingly negative national discourse surrounding minoritized students, our focus in this article is to offer in-service teachers a heuristic for compiling a multi-genre, multilingual text set to support bi/multilingual students' positive identities and literacies practices. This text set is designed with the themes of identity and social justice in order to reflect the students' struggle to fully participate in the American Dream. It also describes how teachers can purposely plan for linguistic support in students' additional languages, language varieties, and English. Taken together, we believe that deeply exploring these compelling books from a critical perspective with linguistic scaffolds will allow teachers to foster robust multilingual literacy skills to address social justice in the classroom and beyond.

"I only know that learning to believe in the power of my own words has been the most freeing experience of my life" (Acevedo, 2017, p. 357)

Recently, both federal policies and local acts of racism have created a vitriolic political climate towards (im)migrants and other minoritized groups, particularly those of Mexican-origin (López & Pérez, 2018). In fact, following the 2016 election, the Southern Poverty Law Center surveyed over 10,000 K-12 educators and found that 90 percent believed that the presidential election had a negative influence on the school environment. This antagonistic climate has been coined the "Trump Effect," for the relationship between the 45th president's election and ensuing policies and discourse around marginalized peoples. Four out of five educators in the same survey reported an increase in anxiety for their (im)migrant, Muslim, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender,

questioning, (LGBTQ) and African American students. Additionally, the Human Rights Campaign (2017) surveyed over 50,000 adolescents and found that over 70 percent witnessed bullying or hate acts since the election, with 79 percent reported believing that such harassment had increased since the election. Furthermore, the reality is that in most cases the curriculum chosen for wide use does not mirror or address the pressing needs of culturally and linguistically diverse learners[1] and other minoritized social groups, especially for those who are in middle and high school settings (Stewart, 2013).

In light of this particular historical moment, educators may interrupt this negative discourse and its effects by fostering spaces for students to engage in critical literacy tasks that see them for who they are and who they can become. That is, educators can contest the Trump Effect as they celebrate students' existence and hopefully find that they truly belong in their classrooms, communities, and America at large (Genova & Stewart, 2019). Like Xiomara, in Acevedo's (2017) *The Poet X* quoted at the beginning of this article, our students can develop a belief in the power of their own words in school spaces that create an agency they carry and exert in all other spaces they traverse. Herein we provide practical approaches that in-service teachers can use to reach bi/multimingual students as they attempt to engage with the English language arts curriculum. To that end, in this article we provide steps and examples for creating text sets that teachers can use to target issues related to identity, finding one's voice, and simultaneously develop increasing linguistic dexterity. Taken together, we believe that deeply exploring these compelling books from a critical perspective with linguistic scaffolds in and between students' languages will allow teachers to foster robust multilingual literacy skills to address social justice in the classroom and beyond.

We admit that differentiating literacy curriculum and classroom practices are not the only answer to a multitude of social issues (i.e., poverty, immigration status, joblessness) that bi/multilingual learners and their families face in 2019. Yet we believe it is an action teachers can take to make a difference in their students' lives. This is because children's literature offers a potentially non-threatening environment from which children can explore and resist daily challenges (Todres, 2018). It is an avenue for students to make deep connections to their lives and to participate in dialogue and critique about those significant issues which they engage in on a daily basis (Patterson, Wickstrom, Roberts, Araujo, & Hoki, 2010). Many children and adolescent books explicitly or implicitly explore themes of human rights and social justice (Todres & Higinbotham, 2015). So when children and adolescents read books on these themes, they learn not only that "they

---

[1] We use "culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) learners" as a broad term that encapsulates the varied and complex experiences of students who are not mainstream. That is, it includes those students whose languages and cultures are not White, and monolingual, Standard American English speaking. In particular, this article focuses on the subgroup of CLD students who are bi/multilingual, those who are in the dynamic process of using two or more languages varieties in life and school. In all other places, we will use the term "bil/multilingual" to denote the multiple languages and varieties students use.

have rights and should stand up for themselves but also that other children have rights that deserve respect." (Todres, 2018, p. 337)

Furthermore, creating a compelling text set using critical literacy skills is also an opportunity for students to develop the linguistic tools that allow them to effectively disrupt the status quo, as agentive citizens in each of these spheres (Morrell, 2015). Thus, taking this approach encourages teachers to recognize and galvanize students' textual, contextual, and personal affordances (Araujo, 2013) and put into action their everyday knowledge to mediate learning of school concepts; this work explicitly capitalizes on the wealth of cultural and linguistic resources the students already possess as they continue to dream for a brighter future (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005). In sum, our main aim in this article is to provide a heuristic for teachers as they build text sets to fully engage all their students.

The following three sections describe our critical orientation toward education, followed by the major tenets of translanguaging pedagogy, before describing how the text set approach may be employed for socially just literacy practices.

TAKING A CRITICAL ORIENTATION TOWARD EDUCATION

We take a critical sociocultural view of education, where educators are central actors in the classroom and school community that can use their authority to maintain the status quo of macro power relations or disrupt them to engender equity and social betterment (Lewis & Moje, 2003). Key to educators disrupting these macro power relations is maintaining a spirit of conscientization (Freire, 1970), or social reflexivity in who we are as educators, what our roles are, and how and why we teach in light of their sociopolitical contexts. As such, teachers explicitly explore and engage in their group identities that represent an array of dominant/majority and oppressed/marginalized groups based on their racial/ethnic groups, languages spoken, citizenship, political, and religious beliefs (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017). Each group identity includes dominant and oppressed groups like those shown in Table 1.

Table 1. *Group identities across relations of power*

Minoritized/ Oppressed Group	Oppression	Dominant/ Majority Group
Peoples of Color	Racism	White
Poor, working class, middle class[2]	Classism	Owning Class

---

[2] Although Sensory and DiAngelo (2017) indicate that the middle class is considered minoritized in this table, in the context of teachers, we argue that the middle class with its resulting worldview, beliefs, and experiences is significantly different enough from what are termed "poor" and "working class" groups that we consider "middle class" teachers to be part of a dominant group. In practice, it may be more helpful to view group identities across multiple axes of power on a continuum rather than individual, static categories.

Minoritized/ Oppressed Group	Oppression	Dominant/ Majority Group
Women, transgender, genderqueer	Sexism	(cis)men
Gays, lesbians, bisexuals, two-spirit	Heterosexism	Heterosexuals
Muslims, Buddhists, Jews, Hindus, and other non-Christian groups	Religious Oppression, Anti-Semitism	Christians
People with disabilities	Ableism	Able-bodied
(Im)migrants (perceived)	Nationalism	Citizens (perceived)
Indigenous peoples	Colonialism	White settlers

Note: Table adapted from Sensoy & DiAngelo (2017)

Collectively, these group identities create teacher positionalities in the social world in and out of the classroom that largely shape their worldviews, attitudes, beliefs, and instructional decisions (Vinlove, 2016). Most educators belong to the more dominant groups of white, middle class, English-speaking, citizens (Gay, 2015) while Texas students increasingly represent the more marginalized groups of (im)migrants, peoples of color, and language learners (Texas Education Agency [TEA], 2018). During the 2017-2018 school year, over 52 percent of all Texas K-12 students were Hispanic[3]; over 12 percent identified as African American/Black, over 4 percent as Asian, and 2 percent as mixed race. Furthermore, over 58 percent of all students are considered economically disadvantaged, and 18 percent of all students are labeled English Learners (ELs). Subsequently, teachers who identity with the dominant groups in their race, class, and language identities must understand how their identities differ from their students as a first step in conscientization to create more socially just teacher identities (Brock et al., 2017).

Of course, not all Texas teachers identify with all the dominant group identities. Thus, the conscientization of minoritized teachers in education may in part mirror that of their students; those teachers with minoritized identities (who are not white, middle class, English-dominant, citizens) often operate under an extension of what W. E. B. Du Bois (1903) has called "double consciousness"—an awareness that a person is both minoritized and an American, living with the friction of bringing both selves together. Depending on how these teachers have understood and self-authored their own identities, they display a range of agency in their figured worlds as teachers (Alfaro & Bartolomé, 2017; Babino & Stewart, 2018; Freire & Valdez, 2017) that affects their

---

[3] TEA uses the term "Hispanic" to refer to all those from Spanish-speaking countries or heritage. This term differs from the term "Latino" in that the latter refers to those of Latin-American origin or heritage. Recently, scholars across the social sciences have taken up of the term "Latinx", as a gender-neutral, inclusive alternative to "Latino". While the authors prefer to use the term "Latinx" in general, we employ "Hispanic" only when referencing data from TEA. Additionally, when referring to specific people and characters, we use the terms the authors and/or characters have chosen to identify themselves (i.e. "Afro-Latina" in place of Afro-Latinx).

instructional decisions to include culturally sustaining pedagogy, those practices that sustain and further develop students' languages and cultures (Valdéz, 2017). Some teachers may develop integrated bi/multilingual and bicultural identities, especially if they have experienced positive, critical experiences in bi/multilingual programming and families (Wong, Athanases, & Banes, 2017). This allows them to cull their cultural and linguistic experiences to act a as a role model for their students as they make purposeful connections with and between students' cultures for learning. However, it is common for many minoritized and bi/multilingual teachers who have experienced English-only or English-majority schooling to struggle to leverage their language and cultural connections with their students from the same backgrounds. That is, while they have much in common with their students, minoritized, bi/multilingual teachers may not actively make these connections in the classroom amidst the pressures of a standardized curriculum (Freire & Valdez, 2017).

Overall, whether teachers identify as part of dominant or minoritized groups (or somewhere in between), creating a critical and compelling text set that allows students to utilize their entire linguistic repertoires is a practice in social reflexivity for educators, where the educator is not only reflecting on *what* books they include but *why* they include certain texts over others, and *how* the texts can be used as purposeful tools for their students. Additionally, for the minoritized/bi/multilingual teacher, it is an opportunity to bring double-consciousness to bear: as the minoritized teacher engages with these diverse, compelling texts, they are able to also see themselves (perhaps for the first time) and thus become more fully who they are as a multilingual and multicultural person and role model for minoritized, bi/multilingual students.

IMPLEMENTING TRANSLANGUAGING PEDAGOGIES

Translanguaging, a term coined by Welsh teacher and researcher Williams in 1994 and then reintroduced in the early 2000s, involves allowing individuals to use all available language knowledge to create meaning, gain an understanding of their lives, and accurately express themselves (Lewis, Jones, & Baker, 2012). Thus, translanguaging pedagogies encourage students and teachers to use everything in their language repertories to assist in teaching and learning (Morrow & Gambrell, 2019). Translanguaging embraces a dynamic model of bilingualism as opposed to the often-embraced subtractive model. The subtractive model of bilingualism views bilingualism as a hindrance to the acquisition of the dominant language. Students are expected to work toward success in a monolingual classroom leaving their first language (L1) behind. This view of a student's L1 as a negative is too often unknowingly embraced by students. Students see their L1 through a lens of shame, shifting their own identity and loyalty toward their second language (L2). This shift fractures families and identities. Conversely, the additive models view bilingualism from the lens of using all available languages to facilitate success and reinforces fully, dynamic bilingual identities.

Current research in bi/multilingual education suggests that translanguaging, or drawing across all one's languages in order to make meaning, is considered a transformative practice that teachers should understand and utilize with bi/multilingual students in order to provide meaningful instruction that considers their first language experience and expertise (García & Menken, 2015). The pedagogical practice of translanguaging is believed to allow students to develop a more robust grasp of academic content, build necessary scaffolding for less proficient languages and enable better communication with home and community members (Lewis, Jones, & Baker, 2012). Content area learning often contains challenging vocabulary for learners. Content area vocabulary can be especially difficult for emergent bilingual students who have not developed specialized academic vocabulary in their L1.

Allowing bi/multilingual students to stretch and hone their understanding of content area learning using both languages gives them the benefit of using their L1 to build their L2 and their L2 to build their L1. Translanguaging directly opposes pedagogies that require a separation in language and culture. It instead encourages speakers to organically incorporate all their language knowledge. (Axelrod & Cole, 2018). By using cross-language comparisons to create and extend a student's understanding of concepts and material, teachers allow students to use all available resources to learn. Whether teachers are bi/multilingual or monolingual, teaching in English-only or bilingual programs, educators can foster translanguaging pedagogies through a variety of instructional practices, which will be explored in the text set.

TAKING A TEXT SET APPROACH

A text set approach is one that includes a variety of readings tightly organized around a coherent topic. It effectively allows students to deeply develop background knowledge and content vocabulary around a topic in a way that provides them with both a broad and nuanced view of a topic (Cervetti, Wright, & Hwang, 2016; Ivey, 2002). Subsequently, students can develop increased knowledge on a particular theme at the same time they increase their reading comprehension and thinking capacities, especially when combined with direct instruction on text structures and writing opportunities (Hebert, Bohaty, Nelson, & Brown, 2016).

We take a text set approach because our goal is to present a collection of related texts that focus on current issues facing bi/multilingual students, namely multicultural identity negotiations and developing agency in and across the U.S. In doing so, we were cognizant that most bi/multilingual students in Texas are Latinx; however, we also wanted the text set to represent other bi/multilingual and minoritized populations so that students could have a variety of books that serve as windows, mirrors, and sliding glass doors (Bishop, 1990). For this reason, we purposely began the text set with several books chronicling complex bi/multilingual, Latinx characters; yet, we also wanted to include several texts that explored Asian bi/multilingual experiences and the interconnected themes of language and religion with books featuring Muslim characters. Finally, we purposely included several compelling books featuring Black protagonists in order to

emphasize how bi/multilingual students may engage in a variety of language registers, or language varieties, within the same language and emphatically display the diversity of expressions in one's ethnic/racial identity.

 While text sets can be organized in a variety of ways around myriad themes, most are organized around an anchor text, where each accompanying text is presented in a methodical order to further develop the topic. Table 2 includes the text set presented in the order we would use with our middle and high school students to develop the main themes of identity and agency, starting with books that our students may most relate to as mirrors and continuing with books that may serve as windows. Altogether, our goal is that this text set will help bi/multilingual learners "see" themselves, celebrate who they are, and develop critical literacy skills (Wickstrom, Araujo, Patterson, & Hoki, 2011).

Table 2. *Texts in Set*

Text	Author(s)	Language(s)	Genre	Main Characters	Voice	Themes
The Poet X	Elizabeth Acevedo	Translanguaged English Spanish	Novel with slam poetry	Xiomara Afro-Latina Female Poet High school	First Person	Fitting in Family Religion Abuse Reflection
They Call Me Güero	David Bowels	Translanguaged English and Spanish	Novel in verse	Güero White Mexican-American Male Poet Middle school	First Person	Transborder identity Bilingualism Colorism Young love Family
Turning Pages: My Life Story	Sonia Sotomayor	English and Spanish versions	Picture Book,	Sonia	First Person	Education Agency

Text	Author(s)	Language(s)	Genre	Main Characters	Voice	Themes
			Autobio-graphy	Puerto Rican Female Supreme Court Justice		Learning a second language Dreams
Islandborn	Junot Diaz	English and Spanish versions	Picture Book	Lola Female Dominican Elementary student	Third Person	Bicultural Identity Belonging Family
Inside Out and Back Again	Thanhha Lai	Translanguaged English and Vietnamese	Narrative Poem	Female Asian Immigrant	First Person	Immigration Learning a second language Family
Yo Soy Muslim: A Father's Letter	Gonzales and Mehrdokht Amini	English	Picture Book, Letter	Father, Male, Muslim Immigrant	First Person	Religion Dreams Family
The Love and Lies of Rukhsana Ali	Sabina and Kahn	Translanguaged English and Arabic	Realistic Fiction Novel	Rukhsana Muslim-American Female Lesbian	First Person	Double consciousness Family Religion Sexuality

Text	Author(s)	Language(s)	Genre	Main Characters	Voice	Themes
				Teenager		
Black Enough Edited	Ibi Zoboi	English	Short Stories	Female and male	First Person for each character	Double consciousness Sexuality Religion
All American Boys	Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely	English	Realistic Fiction Novel	Rashad and Quinn Black and White high school students	First Person for each character	Double consciousness Police violence Implicit bias Racism
Refugee	Alan Gratz	English and Spanish versions, some translanguaged text	Historical Fiction Novel	Josef, Isabel, Mahmoud Jewish, Cuban, and Syrian school age students	First Person for each character	Persecution/ immigration, family

CREATING A CRITICAL AND COMPELLING TEXT SET

Next, you will find a heuristic for a text set that invites in-service teachers and their students to freely use a combination of languages and language varieties to help them mediate content, language, and culture in adolescent settings. We believe that if teachers and their students take this approach it is possible that it will produce opportunities for bi/multilingual students that are both personally and academically meaningful as they attempt to achieve academic success in secondary settings, the university, and beyond. We recommend that the following five steps occur as an interactive dialogue amongst colleagues spanning the monolingual/multilingual and

majority/minority spectra as they collaboratively consider how they and their students may endeavor to read the word and the world more critically.

Step 1: Find a compelling anchor book with critical issues. The first step is to find a compelling and complex book. For the first author, my go-to strategies are checking the latest award winners as seen in Table 3, asking my librarian friends, and learning from Twitter colleagues such as @diversebooks, @wearekidlit, @ILAToday, and @ncte. The National Council for Teachers of English (NCTE) has a Twitter hashtag (#) called "build your stack," where teachers post their stack of middle grades and young adult books they are reading. The initiative aims to foster teachers' book knowledge and take a critical stance of their classroom libraries. Teachers in the NCTE community will also commonly post a theme or age range they are teaching, soliciting suggestions for contemporary texts to include alongside those in the required curriculum. I also skim these to see if there are recurring titles I have yet to read. In fact, several of the books in this text set have come from my Twitter perusal of this initiative.

Table 3. *Latest Award Winners*

Award Names
Amelia Bloomer Award
American Indian Youth Literature Award
Batchelder Award (book written in a language other than English)
Caldecott Awards
Lambda Literary Award (LGBT)
Teen Choice Book Award
Texas Tayshas Reading List
USBBY Outstanding International Books (OIB) List
William C. Morris YA Debut Award
World of Difference Recommended Multicultural and Anti-Bias Books for Children
World Science Fiction Society (WSFS) Award for Best Young Adult Book
YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction

We also suggest scouring the recent award winners, asking your library friends, and consulting your Twitter colleagues. As you do, we encourage you to ponder what major issues and concerns your students grapple with. Which books capture these struggles in ways that reflect their realities and inform their realities? Do they defy stereotypes? Do they demonstrate positive multilingual

and multicultural identities and inspire pride? Furthermore, are the plot and characters compelling, thus evoking interest to keep reading?

The Poet X (2018) by Acevedo was one of these books that we believe acutely captures our students' multifaceted, multilingual realities. We employ the *Poet X* as an anchor text because of its complexity in genre and themes as well as its powerful portrayal of an agentive bi/multilingual, bicultural character. In short, the novel is about an Afro-Latina poet, Xiomara, who is navigating similar issues as bi/multilingual adolescent students in our schools: identity, womanhood, growing up, and finding a voice in America. Acevedo highlights Xiomara's multilayered identity negotiations not only as an adolescent woman, but also as an Afro-Latina in the United States, engaging in her Spanish and English languages and their varieties. She uses slam poetry in her journey not only as a way to process and cope with her struggles, but also as a creative force of making her mark. As such, Xiomara is a strong, relatable character for many of our students for how she utilizes language creatively across languages for her own purposes. After reading, an essential question for the classroom emerged for us that would inform the rest of the text set; it beckoned us to ask the question for our students, "How can I use language creatively and purposefully in my life?" Each subsequent book serves as a partial answer to fill out the facets of this multidimensional question.

Step 2: Explore other equally compelling books that display different facets or greater depths of previous themes. After finding a compelling and complex anchor text, the next step is to explore additional texts that could be as equally compelling. Essential in this step is recognizing your unique positionality as a teacher (Vinlove, 2016). That is, what social and individual identities shape how you view the world, schooling, and your book choices? For the first author, as a Mexican American and former bilingual teacher I've noticed a tendency to look for books that are in Spanish or are available in both languages. I definitely notice that many times when I do this, I can focus so much on finding Spanish or bilingual books featuring Latinx characters (so that my students have appropriate mirrors) that I forget to also provide books that are windows and sliding glass doors.

Furthermore, as a female, I notice that if not kept in check, I will almost exclusively choose books that have female protagonists. Knowing these tendencies in myself as a result of my positionality, I'm able to critically consider the representation of characters in my text set choices. In the creation of this text set, we were careful to include both male and female protagonists with a variety of ethnic/racial identities, languages, and experiences with their identity negotiations in diverse communities. Table 2 lists the books of our text set, which served as a guide to ensure we maintained parity and complexity in character representation. We added to the chart as we read books so that we could examine the depth and complexity of our text set.

Another consideration in choosing supplementary readings for a text set is the language(s) the texts are written in. Is English the only language the texts are written in? Are there other languages available? Additionally, are bilingual or translanguaged texts included as well? Especially for middle grades and young adult literature, teachers must purposefully plan to use multiple languages that represent their students' linguistic reality. By including multilingual texts and

calling attention to the protagonists' language choices, teachers may make space for students to more fully enact their multilingual identities at the same time they increase their dexterity in using their languages for their own purposes (Babino, 2018). More details on translanguaging strategies will be discussed in step four.

In terms of choosing other texts to complement and elaborate on a text set's central theme(s) we argue that is important to consider the genres represented. Students across the educational pipeline tend to find fiction texts easier to comprehend due to the fact they are more familiar with the text structures (Topping, 2015). Thus, text sets, especially those that include expository texts and other genres, give students the opportunity to deeply engage in multiple genres, especially those that may be more challenging for them. This particular text set has a specific emphasis on poetry because studies have recognized that it can promote oral language development, word consciousness, pronunciation, and simultaneously enhance reading comprehension (Hadaway, Vardell, & Young, 2001; Hadaway, Vardell, & Young, 2002).

Drs. Elisa New and Gillian Osborne have convinced the second author that explicitly focusing on the "arts" portion of ELA enhances the reading response and connections for students. The *Poetry for America* Courses at Harvard have taught me that enjoying language this way improves motivation, retention, appreciation, but more than anything reading and writing poetry is life-enriching. With that said, poetry becomes a tool that aids both the expressive and receptive knowledge of bi/multilingual learners.

Step 3: As you build the text set, consider creating explicit social justice objectives. ELA teachers naturally plan with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and increasingly more with the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) in mind. These are necessary steps in teaching bi/multilingual students for equity. Some scholars argue that one of the prime reasons for the achievement gap between CLD and mainstream students is the lower expectations teachers have for CLD students (Noguera, 2018). For a variety of reasons, CLD students have less opportunity to the standard curriculum, thus creating a gap in opportunity for them to excel. Therefore, it cannot be overstated that when creating critical and compelling text sets for social justice that teachers consider how they provide opportunities for their students to achieve the grade level ELA curriculum through careful planning with the TEKS and ELPS.

An additional step in creating social just text sets then is implementing social justice standards like those created by TeachingTolerance.org (2016). Created in partnership with the Southern Poverty Law Center, the *Social Justice Standards: The Teaching Tolerance Anti-Bias Framework* aim to provide teachers at all levels (kindergarten to twelfth grade) with age-appropriate anchor standards in striving for social justice. Unique from other guides and social justice curricula that focus on social action and reducing bias, these objectives attend to four anchor standards of identity, diversity, justice, and action. By including these four standards at each grade level, they comprehensively address the internal thinking and attitudes at the same time they focus on personal and collective actionable steps.

For the purposes of this text set, we chose to focus on several identity sub-standards from grades 6-8, in concert with one standard from each of the subsequent three standards of diversity, justice, and action shown in Table 4. By openly discussing the need for positive self-talk and self-compassion, teachers can expose their students to strategies to use when disappointment or injustice occur. These strategies will increase student resilience and grit thereby increasing student success in all subjects (Banse & Palacios, 2018).

Table 4. *Social Justice Standards for the Text Set*

Anchor Standard	Code	Grade Level Outcome
Identity 4	ID..6-8.4	I feel good about my many identities and know they don't make me better than people with other identities.
Identity 5	ID.6-8.5	I know there are similarities and differences between my home culture and the other environments and cultures I encounter, and I can be myself in a diversity of settings.
Diversity 7	DI.6-8.7	I can accurately and respectfully describe ways that people (including myself) are similar to and different from each other and others in their identity groups.
Justice 11	JU.6-8.11	I relate to people as individuals and not representatives of groups, and I can name some common stereotypes I observe people using.
Action 16	AC.6-8.16	I am concerned about how people (including myself) are treated and feel for people when they are excluded or mistreated because of their identities.

Choosing and planning classroom lessons with the social justice standards in mind not only allows teachers to intentionally select books that focus on developing these standards as themes, but also

to target their classroom discussions, reflection prompts, and major assignments to further develop these social justice beliefs and actions. After using these standards with students for a unit, teachers can invite students to self-select which standards from each category they would like to develop over the course of a subsequent unit or semester of study.

Step 4: Plan translanguaging opportunities. Implementing a translanguaging pedagogy can happen in any classroom and be done by any teacher. It does not matter if you are bi/multilingual in any or all of your students' languages or are teaching in a monolingual English or bilingual program. Central to creating a translanguaging classroom is having a student-centered, asset-based stance towards students and their languages (García, Seltzer, & Witt, 2018). A great place to start is to search for and include multilingual texts. This can be texts with versions in English and other languages, books written bilingually (with the same text in both languages), or translanguaged texts (those written in a combination of English and another language). The International Children's Digital Library is an online resource that includes digital copies of texts around the world in a variety of genres and grade levels (See More to Explore for the link).

Additionally, teachers can provide space for students to construct meaning through discourse. As teachers use repeated readings with small groups of students to develop familiarity with texts, they can also open up conversation for students to speak in whatever combination of languages and varieties they choose. This activity allows learners to interact and actively engage with vocabulary. Students are more likely to discuss the text and use more elaborate thinking strategies while using dialogic practices (Brook & Bramwell, 2006). Furthermore, teachers effectively position students as dynamic and competent bi/multilinguals and further foster positive bi/multilingual identities along with their competencies (Palmer, Martínez, Mateus, & Henderson, 2014). Other oral translanguaging practices include creating cognate lists, words that sound and/or are spelled similarly in two languages, for key content words, previewing or reviewing a lesson in the opposite language of instruction, as well as providing space for students to discuss the thinking process of translations for key texts (Cole, 2019).

Furthermore, educators can encourage students to write in and between their languages through dialogue and reflection journals. In Bauer, Presiado, and Colomer's *Writing Through Partnership: Fostering Translanguaging in Children who are Emergent Bilinguals* (2017) students in a dual language classroom were put into buddy pairs. These pairs were created with one native Spanish speaker and one African American native English speaker that worked together on all phases of writing. Results demonstrated that translanguaging in the writing classroom allowed students to achieve greater academic success especially in writing. In particular, allowing students to use all their linguistic knowledge increases their ability to monitor their own learning. (Velasco & García, 2014).

While translanguaging can offer many opportunities for students to develop positive and agentive bilingual identities and literacies, it can also further entrench social inequities if English-dominant students and the English language dominate the classroom (Hamman, 2018). Accordingly,

educators can foster a critical translanguaging stance in their classrooms by noting which students are using which language combinations to what degree and engaging in conversations about students' purposeful language choices. In doing so, teachers can suss out their students' views about their languages and develop increased consciousness, pride, and dexterity in their language choices.

Step 5: Plan linguistic supports in English. Building background, providing realia, sentence stems, and word banks are key sheltered instructional strategies for giving students linguistic support as multilingual students develop their English language proficiency (Herrell & Jordan, 2015). Additionally, discussing course topics before, during, and after reading with opportunities for critical writing in English are other key practices to ensure that students are truly developing increased proficiency if is English is students' second language (Ortega, 2013). And while there exist many options for bi/multilingual learners to build linguistics supports in English, this text set uses poetry as its primary support mechanism to build schema, vocabulary, and tap into students' lived experiences (See the Poetry and Multimedia section of the reference list.)

Because there already exists an extensive list of multilingual, multicultural poetry, it is likely that there exist mentor poems teachers can use that meets the needs of their set. Some of these sets include the Poetry Foundation, Poetry for America, Frontier Poetry, Poetry Magazine, and Pushcart Poetry Nominees and Winners (See More to Explore for the links). For this social justice text set we recommend Tafolla's *Marked* (2007) and De Burgos' *La Grifa Negra* (1996) as complementary readings to scaffold literacy development in English, because their language registers are accessible and rhyme scheme is familiar to both emergent and long-term bilingual students. Moreover, both of these works cover similar themes as *Poet X* like reaching the American Dream, fierceness, womanhood, and individuality. For options, there is an extended list on immigration within the Poetry Foundation site (See Explore More section of the resources for link.)

When necessary to build schema about the unique situations of (im)migrant bi/multilingual students, we recommended using Emma Lazarus' *The New Colossus* (1883) to introduce an additive perspective for their role in the U.S. Additionally, the Poetry for America Television Series features an extended conversation about the Emma and immigration in general. To address the nostalgia sometimes students go through when they remember their home countries we recommend Claude McKay's *The Tropics in New York* (1922), a short poem about missing his Jamaican home.

CONCLUSIONS

It is our view that Texas educators in particular are at the forefront of bi/multilingual education and have been leaders in the education field since its inception more than 40 years ago. We also believe providing critical, compelling, and linguistically scaffolded literature can enhance comprehension, language acquisition, and a sense of inclusiveness and belonging for our students. Our intent with this work is to provide literacy educators practical ideas that work for bi/multilingual learners by explicitly describing our decision-making process in crafting a social

justice text set. As Texas teachers, we must continue to provide meaningful and worthwhile instruction *for all* our youth. To do so, it is pivital to plan and deliver instruction and experiences that engage our bi/multilingual students fully into the academic and social structures and fabric of U.S. life. And we can do that, if, and only, when we use texts that honors their abilities and gives them the tools to transform their lives and communities. In sum, we hope educators will strive to:

- build knowledge about the benefits of text sets with bi/multilingual students;

- provide bi/multilingual students' opportunities to engage with authentic, compelling texts;

- cultivate a range of text genres that highlight characters with positive bi/multilingual, bicultural identities;

- consider providing bi/multilingual students a variety of viewpoints and ideas about belonging; and

- plan practical linguistic supports that guide students in developing more complex forms of language and literacy in and between their languages.

REFERENCES

Alfaro, C., & Bartolomé, L. (2017). Preparing ideologically clear bilingual teachers: Honoring working-class non-standard language sse in the bilingual education classroom. *Issues in Teacher Education*, *26*(2), 11-34.

Araujo, J. J. (2013). Expanding the learning zone: Decisions that transform the practices of two English language arts teachers. In S. Szabo, L. Martin, T. Morrison, L. Hass, & L. Garza-Garcia, *35th Association of Literacy Educators and Researchers Yearbook*, (pp. 87-107), Louisville, KY: Association of Literacy Educators and Researchers.

Axelrod, Y., & Cole, M. W. (2018). 'The pumpkins are coming…vienen las calabazas…that sounds funny': Translanguaging practices of young emergent bilinguals. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy, 18*(1), 129-153. doi:10.1177/1468798418754938

Babino, A. (2018). Humanizing (multi)literacy teaching: a starter kit to renewed hope. *The National Journal of Middle Grades Reform, 1*(1), 27-32.

Babino, A., & Stewart, M. A. (2018). Re-modeling dual language programs: Teachers enact agency as critically conscious language policymakers. *Bilingual Research Journal. 41*(3), 272-297.

Banse, H., & Palacios, N. (2018). Supportive classrooms for Latino English language learners: Grit, ELL status, and the classroom context. *The Journal of Educational Research, 111*(6), 645-656. doi:10.1080/00220671.2017.1389682

Bauer, E. B., Presiado, V., & Colomer, S. (2017). Writing through partnership: Fostering translanguaging in children who are emergent bilinguals. *Journal of*

Literacy Research, 49(1), 10-37. doi:10.1177/1086296X16683417

Bishop, R. S. (1990). Mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors. *Perspectives*, *6*(3), ix-xi.

Brock, C. H., Borti, A., Frahm, T., Howe, L., Khasilova, D., & Ventura-Kalen, K. (2017). Employing autoethnography to examine our diverse identities: Striving towards equitable and socially just stances in literacy teaching and research. *International Journal of Multicultural Education*, *19*(1),105-124.

Brooke, G. D., & Bramwell, W. (2006). Promoting emergent literacy and social-emotional learning through dialogic reading. *The Reading Teacher, 59*(6), 554-564.

Cervetti, G. N., Wright, T. S., & Hwang, H. (2016). Conceptual coherence, comprehension, and vocabulary acquisition: A knowledge effect? *Reading and Writing*, *29*(4), 761-779.

Cole, M. W. (2019). Translanguaging in every classroom. *Language Arts*, *96*(4), 244-249.

Du Bois, W. E. B. (1903). *The souls of Black folks.* Greenwich, CT: Fawcett.

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (MB Ramos, Trans.). New York: Continuum.

Freire, P., & Macedo, D. (2005). *Literacy: Reading the word and the world*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Freire, J. A., & Valdez, V. E. (2017). Dual language teachers' stated barriers to implementation of culturally relevant pedagogy. *Bilingual Research Journal, 40*(1), 55–69. doi:10.1080/15235882.2016.1272504

García, O., & Wei. L. (2014). *Translanguaging: Language, bilingualism, and education.* New York: Palgrave Pivot.

García, O., & Menken, K. (2015). Cultivating an ecology of multilingualism in schools. In B. Spolsky, O. Inbar-Lourie, & M. Tannenbaum (eds.), *Challenges for language education and policy: Making space for people.* New York: Routledge.

García, O., Seltzer, K., & Witt, D. (2018). [Disrupting linguistic inequalities in US urban classrooms: The role of translanguaging.](#) In P. Van Avermaet, S. Slembrouck, K. Van Gorp, S. Sierens, & K. Marijns. (Eds.). *The Multilingual Edge of Education* (pp. 41-66). London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Gay, G. (2015). The what, why, and how of culturally responsive teaching: international mandates, challenges, and opportunities. *Multicultural Education Review, 7*(3), 123-139.

Gilbert, L. R., Spears Brown, C., & Mistry, R. S. (2017). Latino immigrant parents' financial stress, depression, and academic involvement predicting child academic success. *Psychology in the Schools*, *54*(9), 1202-1215. doi:10.1002/pits.22067

Genova, H., & Stewart, M. A. (2019). " My Life, My Stories": Reading, writing, and belonging in the ESL classroom. *English Journal*, *108*(3), 34-43.

González, N., Moll, L. C., & Amanti, C. (Eds.). (2005). *Funds of knowledge: Theorizing practices in households, communities,*

and classrooms. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

Hadaway, N. L., Vardell, S. M., & Young, T. A. (2001). Scaffolding oral language development through poetry for students learning English. [Electronic version]. *The Reading Teacher, 54,* (8), 796-806.

Hadaway, N. L., Vardell, S. M., & Young, T. A. (2002). Choosing and sharing poetry with ELL students. [Electronic version]. *Book Links*, 51-56.

Hamman, L. (2018). Translanguaging and positioning in two-way dual language classrooms: A case for criticality. *Language and Education*, *32*(1), 21-42.

Hebert, M., Bohaty, J. J., Nelson, J. R., & Brown, J. (2016). The effects of text structure instruction on expository reading comprehension: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *108*(5), 609.

Herrell, A. L., & Jordan, M. (2015). *50 strategies for teaching English language learners (5th ed.)*. Boston, MA: Pearson.

Human Rights Campaign, *Post-Election Survey of Youth*, 2 (2017). https://assets2.hrc.org/files/assets/resources/HRC_PostElectionSurveyofYouth.pdf

Ivey, G. (2002). Getting started: Manageable literacy practices. *Educational Leadership*, *60*(3), 20-23.

Lewis, G., Jones, B., & Baker, C. (2012) Translanguaging: developing its conceptualisation and contextualisation, *Educational*

Research and Evaluation, 18(7), 655-670.

Lewis, C., & Moje, E. B. (2003). Sociocultural perspectives meet critical theories. *International Journal of Learning,* 10, 1979–1995.

López, P. D., & Pére, W. (2018). Latinx education policy and resistance in the Trump Era. *Association of Mexican American Educators Journal, 12*(3), 7-12.

Morrell, E. (2015). *Critical literacy and urban youth: Pedagogies of access, dissent, and liberation*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Morrow, L. M., & Gambrell, L. B. (2019). *Best practices in literacy instruction*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Noguera, P. A. (2008). The trouble with Black boys: And other reflections on race, equity, and the future of public education. San Francisco, CA, US: Jossey-Bass.

Ortega, L. (2013). *Understanding second language acquisition.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Palmer, D., Martínez, R., Mateus, S., & Henderson, K. (2014). Reframing the debate on language separation: Toward a vision for translanguaging pedagogies in the dual language classroom." *The Modern Language Journal 98*(3): 757–772.

Park, M. (2014). Increasing English language learners' engagement in instruction through emotional scaffolding. *Multicultural Education, 22*(1), 20-29.

Patterson, L., Wickstrom, C., Roberts, J., Araujo, J., & Hoki, C. (2010). Deciding when to step in and when to back off: Culturally mediated writing instruction for adolescent English language learners. *The Tapestry Journal, (2)2,* 1-28. http://tapestry.usf.edu/journal/documents/v01n02%20-%20MS%231-Patterson_Culturally%20Med%20Writing.pdf

Sensoy, O., & DiAngelo, R. (2017). *Is everyone really equal?: An introduction to key concepts in social justice education*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Southern Poverty Law Center. (2016, November 28). *The Trump effect: The impact of the 2016 presidential election on our nation's schools.* Retrieved from https://www.splcenter.org/20161128/trump-effect-impact-2016-presidential-election-our-nations-schools

Stewart, M.A. (2013). Giving voice to Valeria's story: Support, value, and agency for immigrant adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, *57(4),* 42-50.

Texas Education Agency [TEA] (2018). *Enrollment in Texas Public Schools, 2017-2018*. Retrieved from https://tea.texas.gov/Reports_and_Data/School_Performance/Accountability_Research/Enrollment_Trends/?LangType=1033

Todres, J. (2018). The Trump Effect, children, and the value of human rights education. *Family Court Review*, *56*(2), 331-343.

Todres, J., & Higinbotham, S. (2015). *Human rights in children's literature:*

Imagination and the narrative of law. NY: Oxford University Press.

Topping, K. J. (2015). Fiction and non-fiction reading and comprehension in preferred books. *Reading Psychology*, *36*(4), 350-387.

Valdéz, G. (2017). Forward. In O. García, S. I. Johnson, & K. Seltzer, *The translanguaging classroom: Leverage student bilingualism for learning* (pp. v-vii.) Philadelphia, Caslon.

Velasco, P., & García, O. (2014). Translanguaging and the writing of bilingual learners. *Bilingual Research Journal*, *37*(1), 6-23. doi:10.1080/15235882.2014.893270

Vinlove, A. (2016). Place, positionality and teacher preparation. *Journal of Sustainability Education*, *11*. 1-16.

Wickstrom, C., Araujo, J., Patterson, L., (with Hoki, C., & Roberts, J.). (2011). Teachers prepare students for careers and college: "I see you", therefore I can teach you. In P. Dunston, K. H. Gambrell, P. Stecker, S. Fullerton, V. Gillis, & C. C. Bates (Eds.), *60th Literacy Research Association Yearbook,* (pp. 113-126), Oak Creek, WI: Literacy Research Association.

Wong, J. W., Athanases, S. Z., & Banes, L. C. (2017). Developing as an agentive bilingual teacher: Self-reflexive and student learning inquiry as teacher education resources. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 1–17.

Young Adult Literature Cited

Acevedo, E. (2018). *The Poet X*. NY: Harper Teen.

Bowels, D. (2018). *They call me Güero: A border kid's poems*. El Paso, TX: Cinco Puntos Press.

Diaz, J. (2018). *Islandborn*. NY: Dial Books.

Gratz, A. (2017). *Refugee*. NY: Scholastic Press.

Gonzalez, M., & Mehrdokkht, A. (2017). Yo soy Muslim: A father's letter to his daughter. NY: Simon & Schuster Books.

Kahn, S. (2019). *The love and lies of Rukhsana Ali*. NY: Scholastic Press.

Lai, T. (2013). *Inside and out and back again*. NY: Harper Collins.

Reynolds, J., & Kelly. (2017). *All American boys*. NY: Atheneum Books.

Sotomayor, S. (2018). *Turning pages: My life story*. NY: Philomel Books.

Zoboi, I. (Ed.) (2019). *Black enough: Stories of being young and black in America*. NY: Balzer + Bray.

Poetry and Multimedia

De Burgos, J. (1996). Ay, ay, ay la grifa negra. *Song of the simple truth: The complete poems of Julia de Burgos*. Curbestone Press. Downloaded from http://www.favoritepoem.org/poem_AyAyAydelaGrifaNegra.html

Hernandez, D. (2016). All American. https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/147354/all-american-5b3fd3f533d4c

Home Box Office (2011). The tropics in New York (video). In *HBO's A Child's Garden of Poetry*. Downloaded from https://www.poetryfoundation.org/video/77373/the-tropics-in-new-york

Lazarus, E. (1883). The new colossus. Downloaded from https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/46550/the-new-colossus

McKay, C. (1922). The tropics in NY. Downloaded from https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44697/the-tropics-in-new-york

Poetry in America. (2018). The new colossus. Downloaded from https://www.poetryinamerica.org/episode/the-new-colossus/

Tafolla, C. (2007). Marked. *Anthologies*. Scott Foresmann. Downloaded from https://carmen.texaspublicstudio.org/marked/

Whitman, W. (1855). *Leaves of grass*. New York, NY: Barnes and Noble Classics.

More to Explore

Barbour, A., Munson, T., Oberheim, A., & Shea, B. (n.d.) Introduction to Poems in Translation. Retrieved from http://www.favoritepoem.org/lessonplans/intro-poems-trans.html

Favorite Poem Project (n.d.). Resources for educators. Retrieved from http://www.favoritepoem.org/teachers.html

International Digital Children's Library (n.d.) Retrieved from http://en.childrenslibrary.org/

Poetry Foundation (n.d.). Poems on immigration: The stories of immigrants, refugees, and exiles can tell the history of a nation. Retrieved from https://www.poetryfoundation.org/collections/144265/poems-on immigration

Simon & Schuster (n.d.) All American Boys. Retrieved from https://www.simonandschuster.biz/books/All-American-Boys/Jason-Reynolds/9781481463331

AUTHORS

Alexandra (Ale) Babino, PhD, is an assistant professor of in the Department of Curriulum and Instruction at Texas A & M University – Commerce, where she co-directs the undergraduate and graduate bilingual/ESL program. She also teaches literacy, bilingual, and ESL classes at the undergraduate, master's, and doctoral level. Her research explores how and why bilinguals become biliterate and bicultural to varying degrees across contexts, with an emphasis on uncovering the complex intersectionalities that encourage or discourage biliteracy and bicultural development in dual language programs at a systems level. She is also Co-Editor of the Association of Literacy Educators and Researchers (ALER) yearbook (2018-2020). Her email address is alexandra.babino@tamuc.edu.

Juan J. Araujo, PhD, is an associate professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at Texas A&M University-Commerce. He teaches courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels with respect to literacy assessment, writing and its instruction, preservice education, the instruction of English learners, and ELA methods. His research interests include adolescent and adult literacy, in-service professional development, writing and its instruction and learning theory. Currently, he is the Co-Editor of the ALER Yearbook and is a reviewer for Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy and other national journals. His email address is juan.araujo@tamuc.edu.

Marie Loper Maxwell is an adjunct instructor at Tarrant County College for the education and early childhood programs. She is also a doctoral student at Texas A & M University – Commerce. She has taught at the elementary, middle school, high school, and college levels for over 20 years. Her research interests include best practices in training pre-service and in-service teachers to meet the needs of struggling readers. Her email address is marie.maxwell@my.tccd.edu.