

“YA ME CONFORME”: RESISTING DOMINANT NARRATIVES IN MATHEMATICS CLASSROOMS

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Mathematics is often portrayed as an apolitical, culture- and color-blind universal language (Gutiérrez, 2013; Marin, 2009; Shah, 2017). However, Recent work in mathematics education has called for a need in exploring the intersectionality between mathematics, learning, and student identities (Gutiérrez, 2002, 2013; Shah, 2017; Zavala, 2014). This is of particular interest for multilingual students since they are a growing and diverse population (de Araujo et al., 2018) at the intersection of race, language, culture, and immigration.

In this poster, we draw from Critical Race Theory and Latinx Critical Theory (Delgado Bernal, 2002; Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001) as the basis for examining patterns of resistance by Latinx multilingual students in linguistically diverse high school mathematics classrooms. Resistance is a form of agency that can be used to explore how multilingual students negotiate and struggle with structures, and use those interactions to create meanings (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). We were particularly guided by the following research question: How do students engage in resistance that are motivated by a critique of oppression and an interest in social justice?

Similar studies have analyzed Latinx experiences in mathematics high school classrooms in more diverse settings (e.g., Zavala, 2014). However, this study includes four ninth graders from one classroom at a more racially segregated setting, City High. City High is located on the US-Mexico borderlands and has a relatively large population of recent immigrant and transnational students. The four students included in this study represent a variety of Latinx experiences, from students who recently arrived to City High from Mexico to students who have lived around City High their entire life.

Counterstories (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002) of semi-structured interviews about mathematics and identity and classroom observations are shown to illustrate how students engage in resistance. Particularly, we found that students acted in both individual and collective forms of resistance that are at the intersection of Solórzano and Delgado Bernal's (2001) transformational and conformist resistance. *Transformational resistance* includes students who are motivated by social justice and explicitly critique oppression. *Conformist resistance* includes students who are motivated by a need for social justice but do not hold an explicit critique of oppression. *Resilient resistance* lays at the intersection of transformational and conformist resistance and includes students whose actions challenge oppression, but they may not explicitly challenge the nature of the oppressive structures (Yosso, 2000). For example, students may say things like “ya me conforme” and note that race and language do not have a direct impact on their educational experiences. Yet, they may also collectively organize (e.g., assigned group roles to each other, embrace translanguaging, and engaged in collaborative group work) as a way to negotiate, struggle, and make meaning within school structures.

More importantly, the four students in this study did not have direct instruction about critiquing oppression or fostering a motivation social justice, as is with critical pedagogy (e.g., teaching math for social justice). Yet, students showed steps toward a path of transformational resistance, providing evidence for critical consciousness that students bring into the classroom.

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