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# 9

## FINDING A PLACE

### Migration and Education in Mixed-Status Families

*Ariana Mangual Figueroa*

The 2010 census has confirmed the significance of two trends that began in the last decade—first, the internal migration of Latinos from traditional receiving states such as California, Florida, and New York to new settlement areas in the South and Midwest; second, the growing number of children born in the United States to at least one undocumented parent (Passel, Cohn, & Lopez, 2011; Passel & Taylor, 2010).<sup>1</sup> Of the 5.1 million children of undocumented migrants living in the U.S., 1.1 million are undocumented migrants like their parents, and 4 million are U.S.-born citizens (Passel & Taylor, 2010). In emerging Latino communities, undocumented children tend to be older siblings who migrated with their parents, whereas younger children are usually U.S.-born citizens (Passel & Cohn, 2009). Scholars refer to such families as mixed-status families, and they are composed of undocumented migrant and U.S.-born members, as well as members in various stages of applying for citizenship (Fix & Zimmerman, 2001). As of 2009, 6.8 percent of U.S. public school students lived in mixed-status families (Passel & Cohn, 2009).

Although mainstream perceptions of Spanish-speaking migrants suggest that they are resistant to learning English and that their enrollment in bilingual education programs hinders assimilation (Cummins, 2000; Wiley & de Klerk, 2010), empirical research shows that language loss is more normative than achieving bilingualism (Wong-Fillmore, 2000). Secondary analyses of the 2000 census provide evidence that linguistic assimilation among Latinos occurs within just three generations of arrival to the United States (Alba, 2004). Longitudinal studies of Spanish-speaking communities across the country show that the vast majority of children of immigrants become English speakers at the expense of retaining Spanish (López & Stanton-Salazar, 2001; Rumbaut & A. Portes, 2001) and that school language policies increase the pressure placed on students to learn English

and shed Spanish (A. Portes & Hao, 1998). The most recent longitudinal study of immigrants shows that although the children of immigrants have a strong desire to learn English and do acquire conversational English rapidly, the schools that they attend often deny them much-needed opportunities to learn the academic English that they need to master in order to succeed by traditional schooling measures (C. Suárez-Orozco, M. M. Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008).

This chapter hopes to contribute to a growing body of research that documents migrant families' language use in order to understand which practices foster learning in home and school settings (Bhimji, 2005; Delgado-Gaitan, 1992; Valdés, 1996; Vásquez, Pease-Alvarez, & Shannon, 1994). I draw from a 23-month ethnographic study of an emerging community located in the Rust Belt region of the United States, part of the new Latino diaspora, in order to analyze the ways in which members of one mixed-status family talk about their migration and educational experiences. I address the following questions: First, how do educational programs foster or constrain migrant parents' opportunities to be involved in their children's schooling? Second, how do undocumented parents and children demonstrate their perceptions of the relative value of Spanish and English? In the following section, I provide an overview of the language socialization framework that frames this study. I then describe the city of Millvalley where this study took place and introduce the Marinero-Chavez family, which is the focus of this chapter.<sup>2</sup> After presenting the findings, I discuss the implications for educators and researchers and consider three areas for policy change at the national level.

## Diversity within the Family

Language socialization is an interdisciplinary paradigm that focuses on interrelated processes of language acquisition and socialization (Ochs, 1986). Empirical research has shown that becoming proficient in the grammatical conventions of a linguistic code and competent in the social norms for interacting with others is a concurrent process that transpires throughout an individual's life span and across settings (Garrett & Baquedano-López, 2002). Sociocultural perspectives on learning underscore the way in which a group's identity is both shaped by historical conditions and renegotiated during ongoing culturally organized activities that are shaped by institutions such as schools (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Rogoff, 1990; Vadeboncoeur & P. R. Portes, 2002). Children are agentic social actors who participate in the negotiation of cultural practices as they are taught and as they learn (Ochs & Schieffelin, 2008; Whiting, 1980). The use of multiple communicative resources allows interlocutors who occupy different social roles (e.g., family members of multiple ages with different migratory statuses) to achieve common ground during routine interactions (Hanks, 2006).

Although language is the primary medium by which interlocutors arrive at shared understandings about themselves and the world, it is also the way in which individuals convey their unique perspectives and positions. Focusing on

the heterogeneous experiences of members of a nuclear family helps to counteract tendencies to essentialize or homogenize the shared practices of the cultural group (Ochs, 2002). Locally situated perspectives on socialization that highlight the dynamism and diversity inherent in learning and development can debunk deterministic views of culture that lead to deficit models of historically marginalized groups (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003; Ovando, Collier, & Combs, 2003; Valencia, 2002). Ethnographic studies of language use in Latino families point to the various linguistic and cultural resources employed in multilingual families and suggest important implications for redefining power relations in home and school interactions (González, 2001; Mercado, 2005; Valdés, 1996; Zentella, 2001). This chapter identifies the multiple perspectives that parents and children have about language and learning and explores how these beliefs are shaped by migration and education experiences.

By viewing the language and cultural practices in Latino families as sites for learning, this research highlights the ways in which individuals and community members' participation in culturally specific activity systems shapes their "funds of knowledge" (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González, 1992, p. 133). In keeping with this approach, this chapter focuses on the social networks in which learning occurs. Elsewhere I have shown that funds of knowledge in mixed-status communities are saturated with concerns about citizenship status that are transmitted to children (Mangual Figueroa, 2012); in this chapter, I demonstrate how parents and children talk about the ways in which language education policies (Shohamy, 2003) and migration processes shape the social networks that they can access. The findings show that migration and education practices, historically seen as distinct spheres of policy and behavior, converge in the everyday lives of mixed-status families. Closely examining parents' and children's language use during everyday interactions advances our goal of helping educators to develop classroom practices and school policies responsive to the experiences of the mixed-status families that they serve.

### **Mixed-Status Families Living in Millvalley, Pennsylvania**

This 23-month, multisited ethnographic study (Marcus, 1995) took place in Millvalley, Pennsylvania, a postindustrial city located in the Rust Belt region of the United States, part of the new Latino diaspora (Wortham, Murillo, & Hamman, 2002). During the period in question, there were ongoing efforts to clarify how many Latinos belonged to the emerging community. The 2006 American Community Survey reported that Latinos totaled 1.8 percent of Millvalley's population and that Mexicans comprised 1,537 of the 5,466 Latino residents. A local pediatrician, and founder of the first bilingual health clinic in Millvalley, estimated that there were between 10,000 and 15,000 Latino residents. He attributed the rapid growth of the Latino community to high fertility rates (D. Correa, personal communication)<sup>1</sup> that were consistent with national trends (Durand, Telles, & Flashman, 2006).

In the spring of 2009, local leaders began encouraging Latino residents to participate in the 2010 census. Sister Elise, a Catholic nun and trusted advocate of many members of the Latino community, conducted outreach in order to assuage undocumented migrants' fear of being reported to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) by explaining that their responses to the questionnaire would be anonymous (E. Smith, personal communication). This mirrored a national phenomenon in which church leaders of Spanish-speaking congregations worked to encourage undocumented migrants' participation in the census (Preston, 2009). The 2010 census reports indicate that Latinos are the fastest growing group in the county where Millvalley is located; within the past decade, respondents who identified as Hispanic grew by 71 percent.

These demographic changes have led to the implementation of a range of formal and informal educational reforms within Millvalley. According to a local Millvalley newspaper, in 2004–2005 there were 273 English-as-a-second-language (ESL) students enrolled in the Millvalley Public School District (MPSD); in 2007–2008 the number rose to 485, and it was projected to reach 1,085 students by 2010–2011. By 2007, the ESL services being provided by itinerant teachers proved insufficient, and the MPSD was legally mandated to expand its ESL programs. According to Ned Tieran, the director of ESL for MPSD, after a year of contentious debate between community members and district leadership, it was decided that the two ESL programs for Spanish-speaking students would be housed in the kindergarten through twelfth-grade feeder schools located in the Brickyard neighborhood of Millvalley (N. Tieran, personal communication). Students were placed in the ESL program based on their responses to a home-language survey administered upon enrollment and their scores on a statewide standardized assessment; they were assigned one or more periods of ESL classes depending on their English proficiency. During the summer of 2009, Tieran recruited a Spanish-speaking ESL teacher to work at Ridge Elementary School. Although there was no formal policy in place to hire school staff who spoke the same home languages as their students, he did so in order to facilitate communication among ESL students, parents, and teachers (N. Tieran, personal communication; see also Mangual Figueroa, 2013).

I recruited four mixed-status families to participate in this study through the "snowball method" of asking one person to introduce me to a family that in turn recommended other families (Ritchie, Lewis, & Elam, 2003). The parents had all lived in other parts of the United States before migrating to Millvalley, where they settled in the Brickyard neighborhood. The children in all four families attended the Brickyard public schools described previously. The eldest children in the focal families were undocumented migrants like their parents, whereas the younger children were U.S.-born citizens. In two of the families, the undocumented youth were enrolled in middle and high school; in the other two families, the undocumented children attended elementary school. My weekly visits to the families' homes would begin when the children arrived home from school and would last until dinner. I did not predetermine which activities I would observe; I documented the families' participation in routine after school activities.

I recorded more than 45 hours of interaction in the families' homes, collected artifacts such as school correspondence and children's drawings, and wrote field notes for each visit. I also conducted interviews with school district employees and wrote field notes for parent/teacher conferences and community forums on immigration policy. I coded all of the field notes and video logs, focusing on the multiple ways in which families referred to their migratory status during everyday interactions. I developed a series of theoretical constructs about how citizenship was understood and enacted in everyday life. I triangulated these constructs with other data sources (Goetze & LeCompte, 1981) including the interviews and artifacts. Conversation analysis transcription methods highlighted the complex communicative resources that interlocutors used to convey their stances and identities during interaction (Ochs, 2002; Schegloff, 2007).

The Marinero-Chavez family that is the focus of this chapter is represented in Figure 9.1. In addition to traditional genealogical notations denoting marriage and descent (O'Neil, 2008), the shading indicates the family members' migratory status. The shaded symbols indicate U.S.-born children, and unshaded symbols denote undocumented migrant family members born in Mexico.

In 2004, Inés, Ignacio, and Pedro migrated from a coastal city in Southwestern Mexico to the city of Orange Grove, Florida, where Inés's father lived. Two years later, they moved to Millvalley where Ignacio's family offered the couple housing help and assistance finding work. The Marinero-Chavez family lived in a one-bedroom apartment on the third floor of a house that was owned by Ignacio's uncle. Ignacio's father, along with his wife and three children, occupied the first and second stories of the house. Pedro was in third grade at the time of this study and had recently been reclassified as English proficient and exited from Ridge Elementary School's ESL program. Fani and Junior were four and two years old, respectively; when I first met the family, they attended a neighborhood Head Start program. Although all of the focal families knew a family member or friend who was deported during the course of this study, the Marinero-Chavez family was the only one in which a parent was deported.

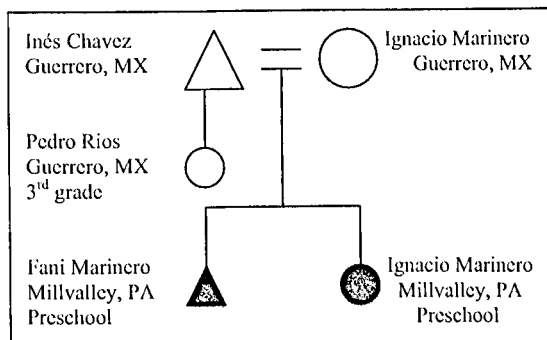


FIGURE 9.1 The Marinero-Chavez Family

Ignacio was deported in December 2009, after failing to produce state-issued identification when stopped during a routine stop for a traffic violation.<sup>4</sup> Within a month and a half of his deportation, Ignacio crossed the border from Mexico to the United States for a second time in order to rejoin his family. The interactions presented in the following section took place about a month after Ignacio returned to Millvalley.

## Findings

The following three examples are excerpts from a conversation that I recorded in the Marinero-Chavez home on March 31, 2009. The family had just begun to readjust to school and work schedules after Ignacio's deportation and return migration; the exchanges that took place on this day were embedded within typical after-school routines. At around 4:00 p.m. Inés arrived home after having picked up Fani and Junior from day care, and by 4:30 p.m. Pedro was dropped off by the school bus. I spent my afternoon visits with the family in the common room of the apartment where the living room, dining room, and kitchen were located. Once Ignacio arrived from work, he joined us in the common room while Inés prepared dinner. Both parents and children participated in the conversations and activities that transpired throughout the afternoon.

### Example One: From Bilingual to English-Only Schooling<sup>5</sup>

This exchange followed a conversation about the siblings' language use in which Inés explained that her children tended to speak only in English with their cousins and peers (see Table 9.1 for transcription conventions). She then recounted Pedro's experience learning English as a recent migrant to the United States and compared the language education programs of the schools that he attended in Orange Grove and Millvalley.

- 1 Inés: *Él no hablaba nada de inglés cuando llegamos (.5) Yo dije como le voy hacer*  
He didn't speak any English when we arrived. I said how am I going to do it
- 2 *ahora que vaya a la escuela*  
now so that he can go to school
- 3 Ariana: Yah
- 4 Inés: *Pero en Orange Grove? esa escuela(.)yo creo que me ayudó basta::nte porque*  
But in Orange Grove? that school. I think it helped me a lot because
- 5 *allá el sistema es muy diferente<sup>e</sup>=*  
there the system is very different
- 6 ((gestures as if weighing an object in each hand))
- 7 Ariana: *[Sí*  
Yes



- 8 Inés: =*allá hablan el inglés?- te hablan en español? y te van metie::ndo* ↑  
 there they speak English- they speak to you in Spanish and they add  
 9 *el inglés poco a poco.* ((signals forward and up with right hand)) *Y aquí no* ↑.  
 English little by little. And here no.  
 10 *Aquí tienes que aprender el inglés* ((snaps and crosses hands))  
 Here you have to learn English  
 11 Ariana: *Eso se llama el mode::lo de inmersión. Es como sumergir al niño en un*  
 That is called an immersion model It's like submerging a child in  
 12 *baño de [agua=* ((gestures with two hands as if dunking an object in water))  
 a bath of water  
 13 Pedro: [SÍ YO SABÍA ↑ EL INGLÉS ↑  
 YES I KNEW ENGLISH  
 14 Ariana: =*a ver si aprende a nadar, y si no?* ((wipes one hand with the other))  
 to see if they learn to swim, and if not?  
 15 Pedro: *sabía* ↑ *un poquito de inglés* ↑ *porque saqué um high SCORE*  
 I knew a little bit of English because I got um high score  
 16 Ariana: *en ESL?*  
 in ESL?  
 17 Pedro: I was the highest [score um

Inés described the anxiety that she felt as a recent migrant who wondered about how she would help Pedro make the transition to U.S. schools when neither of them spoke English (line 1). She found support in the bilingual school that Pedro attended because Spanish was spoken and English was introduced



gradually (line 9). This model contrasted sharply with the English-only schooling that Pedro received in Millvalley; Inés stated that “*el sistema es muy diferente*” / the system is very different (line 5). Although the bilingual programming was a significant source of help for her (line 4), the same kind of language support did not exist in Millvalley schools (“*y aquí no*” / and here no, line 9). Notably, Inés talked about Pedro’s language learning by describing the way that bilingual schooling fostered her ability to support his development. She highlighted the benefits of bilingual education not only for Pedro as a learner—in other moments she claimed that Pedro most certainly would have been retained a grade if he hadn’t attended a bilingual school—but also for her own ability to participate in his schooling.

As I began to characterize the Millvalley ESL program as a “sink or swim” (Villanueva, 2000; Wiley & Wright, 2004) approach to teaching English without native language support, Pedro interrupted me and asserted that he did in fact know how to speak English. He rejected Inés’s claim that he could not speak English when they first migrated to the United States and shouted that he *did* know English (line 13). He explained that the proof of his English-language ability was the fact that he received a high score (line 15), probably referring to the standardized assessment of language ability that he had taken in the previous spring when he was reclassified as English proficient. I confirmed that he was referring to his score in ESL, and his excitement about having the “highest score” (line 17) demonstrated his uptake of the local school language policy that valued language acquisition reflected in students’ performance on standardized exams.

## Example Two: Demographic Changes in Millvalley Schools

As Inés prepared dinner, we continued talking about Ridge Elementary School. I mentioned that I had recently spoken with the head of ESL for the MPSD about the increasing number of children enrolling in the school’s ESL program. Inés offered her perspective on recent changes that she had noticed in Millvalley’s growing Latino community.

- 18 Ariana: *Y me dijo que::: en el último mes? Me dijo que ha:::n matricula:::do casi quince*  
And he told me that in the last month. He told me almost fifteen have enrolled
- 19 *niños nuevos en el programa de ESL. Así que va creciendo la población*  
new children in the ESL program. So therefore the population keeps growing
- 20 *de no solo [Latínos-*  
of not only Latinos-
- 21 Inés: *[Sí he notado basta:::nte Latí:::nos (.) sí:::]*  
Yes I’ve noticed a lot of Latinos yes
- 22 Ariana: *Sí? De Latinos han llegado mucho?*  
Yes? A lot of Latinos have come recently?

- 23 Pedro: >Mami, mami, mami< no le heches mole:::°  
 ((glancing at the food on the table))  
 Mommy, mommy, mommy don't add mole
- 24 Inés: *Por lo regular* (.) *en la misma familia? por ejemplo nosotros que vinimos*  
 Usually in the same family for example we came
- 25 *de Orange Grove? Que a veces no sa:::ben como esta::* (.)  
 from Orange Grove. Sometimes they don't know what it's like
- 26 *Y luego te preguntan pues qué tal es allá? no pues que aquí*  
 And then they ask you well what's it like over there? no well here it's
- 27 *es muy diferente* (.) *estamos bien*=  
 very different. we're fine
- 28 ((gestures as if she was weighing two objects in her hands))
- 29 Pedro: *Hola, I'm Pedro*  
 Hi, I'm Pedro  
 ((teeters and waves at the camera, making a clownish face))
- 30 Inés: =*que sé yo* (.) *O hay más trabajo.*  
 or whatever. Or there's more work.
- 31 *Por lo regular* ↑ *>el Latino viene<*  
 Usually Latinos come
- 32 *siguiendo::: el trabajo*  
 following the work
- 33 Ariana: *el traba[jo]=*  
 work
- 34 Inés: [y el tipo de pago de trabajo°  
 and the working wages
- 35 Ariana: =yah
- 36 Inés: *Y entonces >allí también vienen los niños* ↑ *< y ya se establecen.*  
 And then the children come there too and they establish themselves.
- 37 *Y es* ↑ *chistoso porque >la mayoría de los Latinos que estamos aquí< en*  
 And it's funny because the majority of the Latinos that are here in
- 38 *Millvalley? nos conocemos* ((makes several circles with her index finger))  
 Millvalley know one another



Inés chronicled the economic circumstances that drove Latinos to engage in secondary migration from traditional settlement states in the United States to emerging diasporic communities like Millvalley. She detailed the phone conversations typical among family members trying to determine the best place to live and raise a family (lines 25 and 26), and her words and gestures once again underscored the fact that Millvalley was very different from Orange Grove (lines 26 and 27). As Inés described the migratory experience that she and others shared, Pedro enacted his own representation of a migrant living in Millvalley. Speaking in a mock Spanish (Hill, 1997) characterized by elongating the closed Spanish vowel sounds of *hola* (pronouncing the 'o' like the [ʔ] sound in the word 'open')

and the ‘a’ like the [ʔ] in ‘laugh’) and pronouncing *Pedro* like *Pay-dro* (elongating the ‘a’ and ‘o’ sounds), he teetered toward the camera and waved while making a clownish expression. Pedro’s caricature is particularly interesting because of his use of mock Spanish—it was as if he was imitating an English speaker parodying a migrant. Inés painted a portrait of Latino migrants seeking work and enrolling their children in school (line 36), while Pedro provided insight into local perceptions of migrants that he and others may have encountered upon their arrival in Millvalley.

### Example Three: Establishing and Dismantling Social Networks

In this final example, Inés talked about her experience participating in educational events held at the Head Start center that Fani and Junior attended at the beginning of this study. As in her previous accounts, Inés’s descriptions of schooling experiences in the United States were linked to migration and, in this case, Ignacio’s deportation. She described the support she received from the director of the Head Start program—an educator who was learning Spanish and established relationships of trust with many of the Latino families whose children were enrolled there.

- 38 Inés: *Sí, y cuando tuve el problema* ((gestures toward Ignacio)) *ella me ayudó bastante,*  
Yes when I had that problem she helped me a lot, she
- 39 *me dio una prórroga de un mes* ↑ *para que la niña estuviera ausente* ↑, *pero pues*  
gave me a window of one month in which the girl could be absent, but well
- 40 *>ya no pudo< regresa:::r. De hecho* ↑ *ya era muy complicado por los*  
*Horarios*  
she couldn’t return. In fact it was already too complicated because of the  
schedule
- 41 ((gestures with hands as though she was weighing one object in each hand))
- 42 *Pero Sí me dolió mucho* ↑ *que ella saliera de allí* ↑ *porque era una*  
*buena* ↑  
But yes it hurt me very much that she had to leave there because it was a  
good
- 43 *escuela* ↑ *(.) conocí a más pa::dres de fami::lia* ↑ *(.) convivíamos cada mes* ↑  
school. I met more parents and we came together every month
- 44 Ariana: *Sí eso cuenta mu::cho verdad? poder ver:::se y poder habla:::r*==  
Yes that matters a lot right? To be able to see one another and to be able to  
talk
- 45 Inés: *Sí::::::*  
Yes
- 46 Ariana: *=compartir comi:::da*  
share food
- 47 Inés: *Sí::::::y plati:::cas* *(.) con más ge:::nte*  
yes and you talk to more people

- 48 Ariana: *y Marta me dijo que también ponen como temas =*  
and Marta told me that they also propose topics
- 49 Inés: *Sí::::*  
Yes
- 50 Ariana: *=de inmigración:::n, educación:::n*  
like immigration, education
- 51 Inés: *Sí(.) entonces ella es muy abierta (.) te ayuda bastante. La última ↑ vez fue::: la*  
Yes. So she was very open she helps you a lot. The last time was the  
52 *reunión de noviembre, no ↑ de diciembre. Y puso Santa Clo:s, y*  
November meeting, no the December one. And she put up Santa Claus and  
53 *le dieron regalos a todos ↑ los niños, hasta los >que no iban allí<.*  
they gave gifts to all of the children, even those that didn't go there.
- 54 Ariana: *ah ha*  
um hmm
- 55 Inés: *Entonces este, dio jugue:::tes, luego el día de Halloween pusieron a los niños a*  
So then they gave gifts, then on Halloween they arranged for all of the children to  
56 *pinta:::r con los padres y a los niños calaba:::zas, cosas como que nos hacía*  
paint with the parents and the children pumpkins, things that kind of made us  
57 *que nos uniera=*  
that united us
- 58 Ariana: *Ya*  
Yah
- 59 Inés: *=entonces. muy muy buena escuela.*  
so. a very very good school.

Inés's description of the support that she received in the local Head Start program began with a reference to Ignacio's deportation ("*con todo el problema que tuve*" / due to the problem that I had, line 38). She had to withdraw Fani and Junior from the program (line 40) because, when Ignacio was deported, Inés moved into a smaller apartment on the other side of town, began working two jobs, and was too far away from the Head Start to drop off and pick up the children each day. She noted how difficult it was for her to decide to withdraw the children because of the connection that she felt to the program and to the community convened by the director. Inés enumerated several attributes of the program that she found supportive: the director reserved the children's seats in the program during the family's separation and transition (line 39); the monthly parent meetings fostered Inés's connection to other families in the community (lines 43 and 47); the director created a forum for discussing pressing topics in the families' lives (line 51); and she included all the children within the families (lines 53 and 57).

In other conversations that I had with Inés in the spring of 2009, she told me that the Halloween and Christmas events described previously were the last public events that she and her family had participated in since Ignacio's deportation

(in December 2008). That same spring, after receiving Pedro's report card in the mail, Inés requested a parent/teacher conference with his teacher, and I accompanied her to translate. Even though the teachers at Ridge Elementary School did not know about Ignacio's deportation, they reported that Pedro's behavior had changed and that he had begun acting withdrawn and depressed during the same period when Ignacio was in Mexico. When Ignacio returned to Millvalley, he and Inés had to find new jobs and were not able to reenroll Fani and Junior in the Head Start program; instead, they found a state-subsidized day-care center where they could take the children during the workday. Consequently, the trauma of the deportation had lasting effects on the family's feeling of safety, their connection to the larger Latino community, and the children's educational experiences.

### **Implications: Rethinking Parental Participation**

This chapter has examined the way in which one undocumented mother and her son demonstrated their stances toward language use and learning in U.S. public schools. Inés identified at least two types of school programming that fostered her ability to support her children's learning: first, bilingual education that facilitated her interactions with school staff and supported Pedro's ability to learn English, and second, early childhood programs that provided a space for migrant Latino parents to convene to share resources and to learn about public systems such as education and immigration. The three examples underscore Inés's desire to be involved in her children's schooling and challenge persistent deficit perceptions of Latino parents who are uninterested in their children's schooling. These exchanges also provide insight into the ways that migrant children make sense of their experiences living in two languages, migrating at a young age and growing up in the United States, and being a member of an emergent student population.

These findings confirm research showing that undocumented migrants want to participate in U.S. civic life and gain a sense of "cultural citizenship" even as they face institutional practices that systematically deny them basic civil rights such as health care, living wages, and the possibility of political participation (Flores & Benmayor, 1997). At the same time, the economic structures that lead to globalization and migration continue to influence learning and development upon families' arrival to the United States (M. Suárez-Orozco, 2001). As parents adjust to new labor conditions and develop survival strategies particular to living in diasporic communities, their family's ways of interacting and learning shift as well (O'Leary, González, & Valdez-Gardea, 2008; Veléz-Ibañez & Greenberg, 1992). In addition, children attending U.S. schools develop novel identities informed by the ways others' perceive them and their own beliefs about what citizenship means across settings and national borders (Abu El-Haj, 2007; Banks, 2008).

As an undocumented parent, Inés struggled with the ongoing tension of wanting to be a visible presence in the public schools that her children attended while

remaining invisible to authorities that might deport or otherwise punish her for her undocumented status. As a result, there were certain kinds of involvement that Inés sought out, and others that she avoided. On the one hand, she wanted to have the opportunity to communicate with teachers in Spanish and attend monthly parent meetings for Latino parents led by trusted educators; on the other hand, Inés often felt too anxious to attend schoolwide events at Pedro's school, was unsure about how to volunteer during the school day, and was afraid to serve as a chaperone on field trips. Baquedano-López's research on Mexican mothers' struggles to maintain bilingual *doctrina* classes within the heightened anti-Spanish and anti-immigrant climate that existed in California after the approval of Proposition 187 suggests that marginalized parents' participation in mainstream educational practices involves a series of subtle decisions about when to be a vocal advocate versus a passive observer of mainstream educative policies (Baquedano-López, 2004; Baquedano-López & Ochs, 2002). This suggests that we must be sensitive to the shifting roles and advocacy strategies taken up by undocumented parents as we identify opportunities for parental participation; a one-size-fits-all approach does not work for Mexican and migrant parents for whom immigration policies influence their ability to be active in schooling processes (see Baquedano-López, Hernandez, & Alexander, Chapter 2, this volume).

These findings suggest three major implications for school administrators and teachers. First, schools should provide opportunities for parents and children to communicate in their home language—and sediment these in programmatic policies like bilingual education or in interpersonal approaches like learning to speak the language of the parents—because this supports parental participation. Second, school leaders and staff can work to make schools available to the public constituencies that they serve. Creating forums in which parents are participants and leaders will facilitate communication among adults who can share resources that strengthen their own support systems and foster their children's development and well-being. This can work to counter the negative effects of deportations, family separations, and other forms of institutional marginalization experienced by mixed-status families (Chaudrey et. al., 2010). Third, as anti-immigrant laws are passed in states like Arizona and proposed in other states across the country, schools have to work even harder to build trusting relationships with parents. Recently, we have witnessed the exodus of Latino children from Arizona school districts, in part because their parents feared that the schools would become arms of the state's disciplinary power (Kossan, 2010). Throughout my fieldwork, I learned that these concerns reverberate through new Latino diaspora locations like Millvalley.

Teacher educators and researchers can support school leaders and teachers working in prekindergarten through twelfth-grade settings in conceptualizing ways of working in solidarity with migrant communities. In order to do so, we must begin to talk about the implication of the important Supreme Court ruling *Plyler v. Doe*, which protects students' rights to a public education regardless of their or their parents' migratory status by prohibiting educators from inquiring

about their citizenship status. In order to work alongside mixed-status families, we must acknowledge that there is a tension between acknowledging that this population exists and also protecting their right to an education. Teacher educators and researchers can play a tremendous role in facilitating this type of dialogue and scaffolding conversations about recognizing the diversity of families in an era of standardization. Educators in university settings bear a particular responsibility to talk with preservice teachers about *Plyler*—being one step removed from the public school provides them with a unique opportunity to talk about this point of intersection between juridical and educational practices openly and honestly.

By conducting research that highlights the voices of these families that have often been referred to as “living in the shadows” (Ruiz, 1998), researchers can help shed light on the resources that mixed-status families bring to schools and to the communities in which they live. Continued research in this area is needed to understand the ways that migratory processes shape student learning, attendance, and motivation across the life span, in addition to the more widely documented barriers to postsecondary study based on undocumented adolescents’ migratory status (Gonzales, 2008; Rogers, Saunders, Terriquez, & Velez, 2008). The goal of serving the needs of Latino children cannot be met by policies that divide them from their parents along the lines of citizenship or language, but we can begin to work against subtractive language policies (Brisk, 2006) and schooling practices (Valenzuela, 1999) furthered by deficit models that mistake undocumented parents’ fear of prosecution with a lack of interest in their children’s academic progress. Learning more about—and learning how to listen to—mixed-status families will help educators work alongside parents in the pursuit of more equitable schooling practices.

### **Stepping Back and Scaling Up: Policy Considerations on a National Level**

The experiences of the Marinero-Chavez family point to three areas of educational policy in need of urgent reexamination. Policy makers, scholars, educators, and community members must find ways to collaborate in these areas if mixed-status families are to have access to the material and social capital needed to support their children’s development and learning. First, we must develop educational practices that counter the invisibility of undocumented students and mixed-status families; second, we must reexamine the connections between education, immigration, and social policy instead of treating them as distinct; and third, we must shift our emphasis from securitizing the nation to promoting the social welfare of this growing population. I will briefly describe these three areas, citing examples of how activists and educators have undertaken “coordinated counteraction—the purposeful activity of making ineffective—or restraining or neutralizing—the usually ill effects of an influence by means of an opposite force, action, or influence” (Salas, P. R. Portes, D’Amico, & Rios-Aguilar, 2011, p. 128). Examples of “coordinated counteraction” give us insight into communities’ concerted efforts to develop

new educational practices that counter detrimental policies; it is my hope that presenting these models can broaden our vision of what is possible through sustained collaboration.

### ***Area One: Moving from Invisibility to Visibility***

The year 2012 marked the 30th anniversary of the 1982 Supreme Court case *Plyler v. Doe*, which ruled that all children have the right to a public education regardless of their migratory status. This important protective clause has been implemented through a “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy in which educators are mandated never to inquire about the migratory status of the families that they serve (yet, recent reports by the American Civil Liberties Union have identified numerous violations across the nation). As a result of this silence, undocumented students in U.S. public schools remain largely invisible, and we know little about their educational experiences. In addition, *Plyler* only grants educational rights through the twelfth grade; undocumented students receive few, if any, protections upon high school graduation (Gonzales, 2011).

A growing body of research shows that living in the United States as an undocumented individual or as a member of a mixed-status family is an issue that affects development and learning at critical moments across the life span (Chavez, 1998). These moments begin in early childhood (C. Suárez-Orozco, Yoshikawa, Teranishi, & M. M. Suárez-Orozco, 2011) and continue through elementary school (Mangual Figueroa, 2011) into adolescence (Abrego, 2006; Gonzales, 2011; Perez, 2009) and parenthood (Yoshikawa, 2011). Migratory status has material and psychological impacts on individuals and families whose members confront the contradiction of both belonging to and being excluded from U.S. life on a daily basis (Gonzalez, 2011; Zavella, 2011).

Undocumented youth and adults have developed a grassroots strategy of “coming out,” or declaring their migratory status in public as a means of calling for support of Dream Act legislation that would provide eligible undocumented youth with a pathway to U.S. citizenship (Hing, 2011). This coordinated and strategic counteraction is evidenced by events like “Dreamers” staging sit-ins at President Obama’s campaign offices around the country and risking arrest to call for more attention to the significance of the Dream Act (Ingold, 2012) and the first ever “Dream Graduation” held in San Francisco to honor the accomplishments of undocumented students and call for federal policy change (E. Murillo, personal communication). University scholars should follow this example—convening concerned stakeholders to explore the relationship between citizenship and schooling and advocating publically for the rights of children, youth, and adults living in mixed-status families. Those of us deeply committed to upholding and extending these rights are uniquely positioned to engage in this work because we are not bound by *Plyler*’s mandate of silence. We can serve as liaisons between families (who often participate in our research) and educators of good faith restrained from



addressing citizenship status directly, helping parents and schools to collaborate with one another as opposed to interacting against a backdrop of fear and silence.

### ***Area Two: Connecting the Dots***

New research on mixed-status families indicates that undocumented parents endure poor working conditions, are afraid to access social services, and are socially isolated—all factors that negatively impact the cognitive and social-emotional development of their U.S.-born children during early childhood (Yoshikawa, 2011). Being undocumented shapes parents' incorporation into U.S. economic and social life (Chavez, 1998), which in turn impacts their children's experiences in public schools. Yet we continue to treat educational policy reform as distinct from immigration, economic, and social policy. Working to change policies in one area will constitute only a piecemeal approach unless we work in an integrated and systemic way to change the plight of families living in poverty who cannot access equitable social, educational, and economic opportunities (P. R. Portes, 2005).

We have increasing evidence of the ways in which immigration and education policy grow more intertwined each day. Republican congressmen have recently proposed repealing the Fourteenth Amendment that grants citizenship to children born in the United States, and that forms the basis for the *Plyler* decision, in the hopes of deterring their undocumented parents from crossing the southern border into the United States (Lacey, 2011). In the summer of 2011, the governor of Alabama signed a law requiring public schools to verify students' immigration status upon enrollment and denying undocumented students the opportunity to attend public colleges in the state (Preston, 2011). In June 2012, days after President Obama issued the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) memorandum, which allows undocumented immigrants brought to the United States as children the right to request two years of deferred action on deportation and legal permission to work in the United States, the Supreme Court struck down, on points of constitutionality, several key provisions impacting education of Arizona's S.B. 1070, one of the nation's most restrictive immigration laws (Sherman, 2012). Although applauded by civil liberties groups, neither of these actions has resolved the issues for undocumented students seeking postsecondary education; although 16 states have issued laws or Board of Regents' policies allowing undocumented students to pay in-state tuition at state institutions, 3 (Georgia, Indiana, and Arizona) officially prohibit in-state tuition rates for undocumented students, and 2 states (South Carolina and Alabama) prohibit admission to undocumented students at any state institution of postsecondary education (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2013). Given the variability in state-specific legislation, the national debate about who has the jurisdiction to control immigrants' rights continues in domains ranging from law enforcement to housing and schooling (Gomez, 2012).

Around the country, activists have come out to support mixed-status families. Some of the most notable counteractions are taking place in the state of Georgia where one of the nation's most restrictive immigration laws was passed in 2012 (Shashahani, 2012). University of Georgia professors, in response to the Board of Regents' barring undocumented students from admission to the state's five most prestigious universities and colleges (Associated Press, 2011), created the "Freedom University" that offers undocumented students college-level classes. In addition, undocumented Georgia high school students have engaged in organized, peaceful acts of civil disobedience, drawing national attention to the issue (Brumback, 2011), and the American Educational Research Association (AERA) boycotted the state by relocating their 2013 annual national conference, which had been scheduled to convene in Atlanta, to another city (AERA, personal communication).

Educational leaders and politicians must support this work in vocal and public ways. This would require the national education secretary, the National Governors Association, and superintendents across the country to speak out for the civil and human rights of mixed-status families. The current educational focus on adopting Common Core State Standards and reforming high-stakes testing policies will do nothing to close the widening achievement gap if structural inequalities persist. Discussions of educational policy that ignore the reality of undocumented families—the difficulty of earning a living wage, the lack of health care and other social services, and the constant fear of deportation, among other factors—will not only fail to produce meaningful reform, they will also perpetuate a system in which individual students are blamed for what are collective failures.

### ***Area Three: Stop Criminalizing and Start Nurturing Mixed-Status Communities***

Despite the fact that migration to the United States has slowed and begun to decrease for the first time in 40 years (Passel, Cohn, & González-Barrera, 2012), and the fastest rate of growth of the Latino population is attributable to births of U.S.-born citizens (Passel et al., 2011), immigration policy and public discourse still operate as though border control is the utmost priority for addressing migration. There are currently at least 5,100 children and youth that have been placed in foster care because of the criminalization and deportation of parents (Wessler, 2011). The number of deportations has grown exponentially since President Obama took office (Slevin, 2010). Although the DACA memorandum—which calls for a halt on deportations for eligible undocumented youth who migrated to the United States before their 16th birthday (Preston & Cushman, 2012)—may quell some of the immediate fear that undocumented youth feel surrounding the threat of deportation, any policy that falls short of providing a pathway to citizenship will perpetuate a status quo in which families are separated and children live in instability and uncertainty. This discourse of criminalization and outmoded emphasis on border "security" serves only to create a permanent

underclass in the United States, diverting public funds from constructive projects and fostering mistrust between public officials and mixed-status communities.

Youth activists as well as community and professional organizations are waging a concerted campaign to change the public discourse regarding migratory status by calling on individuals to pledge not to use the word “illegal” when referring to undocumented youth (see <http://colorlines.com/droptheirword/>). The Society of Professional Journalists has called for journalists and media outlets across the country to stop using the word “illegal,” encouraging them to use the term “undocumented” instead (Scheiner, 2012). In response to public pressure, the Associated Press has updated their stylebook directing journalists to use the term “illegal” only when referring to an action, not a person except in direct quotes (Downes, 2013). Members of the Undergraduate Students Association at the University of California, Los Angeles, recently followed suit by voting to stop using the word “illegal” on campus. This decision corresponds with a change in leadership across the University of California system in which Janet Napolitano—the former head of Homeland Security—was selected to be the next president (“UCLA Student Body,” 2013), further underscoring the increasing connections between education, immigration, and securitization. These counteractions point to the importance of changing the public’s perception of undocumented populations as a vital first step in shifting the conversation from criminalization to humanization.

Educators and researchers who work with mixed-status families have a responsibility to push back against criminalizing discourses by helping to establish relationships between these families and other community members. At the very least, we can serve the important function of creating spaces in which undocumented individuals or their families can speak about and out of their experiences, countering the xenophobic stereotypes so often propagated by politicians and the media. Scholars of education who can find creative ways to enable mixed-status families to testify about their experiences in their own voice—whether through publication, public fora, classroom visits, or other means—will be helping, in their own small but significant way, to move beyond sound bites regarding “security” to a more nuanced sense of the human complexity of migratory status. Crucially, it will also alert scholars to grassroots strategies and counteractions developed within these communities, affording important opportunities for collaboration, and reminding us that scholars and policy makers have as much to learn as we do to teach.

**TABLE 9.1** Transcription Conventions

(.)	“Micropause”	CAPS	Especially loud talk
.	Falling, or final intonation contour	o	Talk following it was quiet or soft
?	Rising intonation	↑↓	Sharper intonation rises or falls
::	Prolongation of the preceding sound	(( ))	Transcriber’s description of events
_	Stress or emphasis	><	Fast or rushed talk
[	A point of overlap onset	=	Continuous utterance

## Notes

1. The term *unauthorized* is used largely in the policy literature (see Passel, 2005, and reports issued by the Pew Hispanic Center), whereas the term *illegal* is prevalent in public debates about immigration reform (Mehan, 1997; Santa Ana, 1999). I use the term *undocumented* because it closely reflects the language that the focal families used. When adults talked about migrants and included themselves, they said *nosotros los indocumentados* (we the undocumented); they also referred to citizenship status by using the metaphorical adjectival phrase *tener papeles* (to have papers). The term *undocumented* reflects this emphasis on legal documentation or paperwork.
2. All of the proper names used throughout this chapter are pseudonyms.
3. To protect participants' anonymity, I cite personal communications without including the date.
4. In Pennsylvania, undocumented migrants cannot apply for a state-issued driver's license or identification card. Although Millvalley had a public system of municipal transportation, travel to and from work was difficult without a car. Due to local laws and the heightened "citizenship policing" (Villenas & Moreno, 2001, p. 671), undocumented migrants driving cars were at heightened risk of being stopped, detained, and deported.
5. I adhered to conversation analysis transcription conventions; it is important to note that "punctuation marks are *not* used grammatically, but to indicate intonation" (Schegloff, 2007, p. 267).

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