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"Oh, I don't even know how to say this in Spanish"

The linguistic representation of Latinxs in "Jane the Virgin"

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In the absence of complex and diverse Latinx characters in entertainment media, film and television representations of Latinxs' culture and language typically embody limiting and harmful stereotypes. However, the highly praised U.S.-based romantic comedy-drama "Jane the Virgin" offers a very different representation. With believable characters and complex linguistic dynamics, the show provides a positive and relatively realistic representation both of Latinxs across generations and of their linguistic repertoires as documented in community studies of Latinx language. Through an analysis of the linguistic practices of Latinx characters in "Jane the Virgin," including patterns of intergenerational language shift, linguistic accommodation, and codeswitching, it is argued that the show acknowledges and treats as unmarked the linguistic complexity of Latinx families and communities. At the same time, the show oversimplifies this complexity in some ways, creating a representation that may be perceived as authentic despite its divergence from real-world Latinx language use.

Keywords: bilingualism, intergenerational language, language ideologies, Latinx community, media, representation, television

1. Introduction

Latinx viewers, especially bilinguals, are considered crucial to the survival of television networks, given the decline in viewers from other demographics (Uffalussy 2015). Yet, the popular media has done little to court the Latinx audience. According to the Latino Media Gap Report (Negrón-Muntaner 2014b), not only are Latinxs underrepresented in the media, making up less than 5% of directors, writers, producers, and lead actors, but the onscreen roles that they do hold are highly

stereotypical characters like maids (69%) and criminals (24.2%). Moreover, a disproportionate number of roles are based on racist character types such as the lazy Mexican, the oversexualized *señorita*, and the hyperviolent Latino gangster (Picker & Sun 2013).

This racist stereotyping extends to language. Although a number of English-language cable networks have tried to take advantage of the Latinx market (Puente 2014), everyday Latinx language practices are still relegated to the margins of the television landscape, treated as objects of exoticism or humor. As we discuss in a separate study (Melgarejo & Bucholtz in preparation), even acclaimed television shows with Latinx families and characters typically utilize Spanish to index Latinx identity, often stereotypically, rather than as a more nuanced semiotic index or as a communicative resource for characters (cf. Petrucci 2008 on Spanish in film). This use of Spanish is limited to tag phrases or familiar terms understandable by English monolinguals. Additionally, while such shows often include characters who speak Spanish natively, these characters are represented not as fluent Spanish speakers but rather as inept English speakers, whose nonnative accents are targeted for particular ridicule (Casillas, Ferrada, & Hinojos 2018). This situation is part of a well-documented pattern of U.S. media representations of Spanish, which rely on stereotypical features and phrases recognizable to white monolingual English speakers (Hill 1993).

Such representations are informed by the strongly hegemonic monolingual ideology of the United States (Urciuoli 1996; Zentella 2014) and related raciolinguistic ideologies disparaging racialized ways of speaking (Flores & Rosa 2015; Rosa & Flores 2017). Consequently, scripted television dialogue is almost exclusively in English, even in Latinx-themed shows. A translational strategy such as subtitling is therefore necessary. However, subtitling remains rare in U.S. television, due to American viewers' much-discussed – and overstated (Merry 2015) – aversion to subtitles and the practical difficulties involved in subtitling extensive dialogue (Jiménez Carra 2009). Raciolinguistic and monolingual ideologies conspire with these factors to marginalize languages other than English on U.S. television.

In this article, we analyze a television show that is a bright spot in this otherwise disheartening media landscape. The CW's award-winning romantic comedy-drama "Jane the Virgin," which aired from 2014 to 2019, has been widely praised for creating relatable and nonstereotypical Latinx characters. Despite its over-the-top telenovela-inspired plotlines, "Jane the Virgin" is generally considered a rare realistic media portrayal of Latinxs in the United States by Latinx and non-Latinx commentators alike (e.g., Concepcion 2016; Zeilinger 2015). One of the most groundbreaking and frequently discussed aspects of the show is its extensive inclusion of Spanish and bilingualism, both extremely unusual features

in an English-language television network (Garcia Romero 2017). Taken together with other aspects of language within the show, these representational choices disrupt the white public space (Hill 1999) of U.S. English-language television.

The present study analyzes the production, representation, and reception of bilingualism in the first season of "Jane the Virgin." We examine the show's representation of bilingualism as portrayed in the interaction of three generations of women in the Latinx family at the center of the show, as well as other central characters. As we demonstrate, the show's representation of multilingual practices in cross-generational Latinx family interaction succeeds to some extent in capturing the complexity of such situations. However, in other ways this linguistic representation is idealized and simplified. We argue that these simplifications are primarily motivated by the show's political commitment to a positive, respectful portrayal of Latinxs, as part of its larger commitment to supporting Latinx social justice issues. That is, "Jane the Virgin" strategically counters raciolinguistic ideologies by normalizing certain bilingual practices while omitting other bilingual phenomena that may be interpreted negatively by some Latinx and non-Latinx audience members. As we argue, rather than undermining the show's believability, this respectful representation contributes significantly to the creation of an "authenticity effect" (Lopez & Bucholtz 2017, 3), which creates the perception among viewers that "Jane the Virgin" offers a realistic portrayal of Latinx life.

2.   Latinx linguistic practices

English-only media representations ignore the reality that many Latinx viewers live in bilingual and multilectal worlds. Linguistic research has documented the diverse ways of speaking among Latinxs in the United States (e.g., Fought 2003; Mendoza-Denton 2008; Silva-Corvalán 1994; Zentella 1997a), as well as their significance as indexes of Latinx identity (Mendoza-Denton 2008; Rosa 2019). Latinx linguistic repertoires encompass multiple varieties of both Spanish and English and often other languages, as well as Spanglish, which speakers typically understand as distinct from either English or Spanish, rather than simply a blend of both (e.g., Bustamante-López 2008). Spanglish and similar practices are therefore best viewed as forms of translanguaging (García & Li 2014), a category that includes the phenomena traditionally labeled *codeswitching* and *code mixing*.

Latinx bilingual practices are deeply shaped by the racialized politics of language access and language shift. Younger generations have greater access to English, while their intergenerational interactions encourage proficiency in Spanish, because adults who did not grow up in the mainland United States are typically more fluent in Spanish (Zentella 1997a). Under pressure from the raciolinguistic

hegemony of English, many Latinxs shift toward English (Cashman 2009). However, English-dominant Latinxs frequently maintain some degree of receptive bilingualism (Hockett 1958: 327).

Despite their rich complexity, all of these ways of speaking are often devalued both by non-Latinxs and Latinxs (Rosa 2016; Zentella 2007). It is not surprising, then, that in the white public space of English-language television, the diversity of Latinx voices is distorted at best and silenced at worst. As an exception to this pattern, "Jane the Virgin" incorporates some but not all of the bilingual linguistic practices found in Latinx communities, largely treating these as unmarked ways of speaking as part of the show's political commitment to a respectful representation of Latinxs.

3.   Data and methods

"Jane the Virgin" airs on the CW, an English-language cable network catering to the 18-to-34 female demographic (Lausch 2013). While Latinxs watch the show in large numbers, they comprise only 24% of its audience (Nielson Company 2018). (Minor spoilers follow.) The premise of "Jane the Virgin," which is loosely based on a 2002 Venezuelan telenovela, "Juana la Virgen," is that its title character, Jane Villanueva, who has never had sex, is accidentally artificially inseminated and becomes pregnant. The show playfully highlights its telenovela roots in a number of ways. Most obviously, "Jane the Virgin" uses a metanarrative framing device in the form of an unseen "Latin Lover Narrator" (the Dominican American voice-over actor Anthony Mendez) who, in performed Spanish-accented English, summarizes and offers breathless commentary on the show's intricate plot twists. In addition, each episode title is a numbered chapter that appears on the screen in a typewriter-style font, an allusion to the fact that the protagonist, Jane, is an aspiring romance novelist. Jane's long-lost father, Rogelio, is a telenovela star (played by real-life Mexican telenovela star Jaime Camil). This show-within-the show features prominently throughout the series.

"Jane the Virgin," which is set in Miami, focuses on three generations of women in the Villanueva family. Jane, a third-generation American, is portrayed by Gina Rodriguez, who as of this writing has been nominated three times for a Golden Globe, winning in 2015. Jane is represented as bilingual but English-dominant. Jane's mother, Xiomara, a singer played by Andrea Navedo, is a second-generation American, and like her daughter she is bilingual but primarily speaks English; in the first season she performs songs in both Spanish and English. Jane's grandmother or *abuela*, whose first name is Alba, is played by Ivonne Coll; this character, an immigrant from Venezuela, is Spanish-dominant.

The three actors are of Puerto Rican heritage; Rodriguez and Navedo grew up in the mainland United States, while Coll was educated in Puerto Rico and pursued her acting career there as well as on the mainland. All three actors are bilingual. However, Navedo only learned Spanish as a young adult (Martin 2015), and Rodriguez's Spanish abilities have been attacked on social media (Moreno 2015). Meanwhile, Coll speaks fluent English, contrary to her character's infrequent and halting use of English in the show's first season.

The linguistic practices represented within "Jane the Virgin" reflect in a general way the pattern of language shift in many Latinx families (Taylor et al. 2012). In fact, a news article on Latinx intergenerational language shift used "Jane the Virgin" as an example of the phenomenon (Castaneda 2017). At the same time, the show's reliance on a relatively generic form of Latin American Spanish rather than, say, a distinctively Venezuelan variety of Spanish for Alba, Miami Spanish for Jane, or Mexican Spanish for Rogelio departs from the wide variability of Spanish within the United States (Lipski 2008) and renders the show less believable to some Latinx viewers (Mourad 2018).

Other characters represent other linguistic backgrounds, adding further complexity to the show's portrayal of linguistic diversity. Rogelio is a native speaker of Spanish who speaks Spanish-accented English; his mother (played by Puerto Rican actor Rita Moreno) is also bilingual. One of Jane's love interests, Rafael, whose ethnoracial background is not specified, is English-dominant; however, he speaks some Spanish and is receptively bilingual (he is played by Justin Baldoni, an American actor of Italian and Jewish heritage). Jane's other primary love interest, Michael (Brett Dier, a white Canadian actor), is an English monolingual with little ability to understand Spanish. Rafael's (ex-)wife, Petra, and her mother are bilingual in Czech and English (the actors who play these characters are Israeli and American, respectively). Given this unusually broad linguistic diversity, it is noteworthy that unlike most comedies featuring characters who are not native English speakers, in "Jane the Virgin" such characters' accents are almost never a source of humor and are rarely remarked on by characters. (One of the few instances takes place in Season 1, Chapter 13, when Rogelio attributes his failure to win a role in an audition because his American accent is not "believable.").[1] Just as importantly, accents are never a source of confusion or miscommunication. Strikingly, given the show's extensive use of Spanish "Jane the Virgin" very rarely portrays Spanish as an index of Latinx identity, doing so primarily in its first season (e.g., line 1 of Example (1) below). This omission may be intentional, given that, as discussed above, previous television depictions of indexical Spanish

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1. However, in later seasons of the show, a Czech-speaking character's exaggerated nonnative accent is regularly a focus of humor.

language use tend to be heavily stereotypical. In this way, the show diverges from real-world bilingual practices in order to avoid potentially problematic representations of Latinx characters.

The following analysis focuses on the first season of "Jane the Virgin," which aired in October 2014 through May 2015. Season 1 of "Jane the Virgin" consisted of 22 episodes (or "chapters"), each 42 minutes long. We viewed all episodes in the season, coding for linguistic interactions that included Spanish. Apart from the use of Spanish in Rogelio's telenovela and in songs, as shown in Table 1 we found four types of such interactions (in descending order of frequency): nonreciprocal bilingualism (113 instances), conversational codeswitching (13 instances), linguistic accommodation to Spanish speakers (12 instances), and loanwords from Spanish into English or vice versa (8 instances).[2]

We looked for but did not find Spanglish or other innovative translanguaging practices. The examples below illustrate the first three of the practices we found. Based on our viewing of the entire series, these four types largely capture the show's representation of Spanish use.

Our analysis is further contextualized through a brief consideration of the creation of the show's bilingual practices and how they have been received by viewers; these supplemental forms of data were collected after the analysis of the show's dialogue was complete. To address the first issue, Victoria Melgarejo interviewed Jennie Snyder Urman, the executive producer, showrunner, and writer for "Jane the Virgin." The interview, which was conducted via Zoom and lasted slightly more than sixteen minutes, consisted of ten questions about the show's linguistic choices. To address the second issue, we analyzed posts related to Spanish on the "Jane the Virgin" fan forum on the social media site Reddit. As of this writing, this forum, r/JaneTheVirginCW, had 17,400 members. The forum is one of the largest and most publicly accessible fan outlets for the show and is easily searchable; in addition, the site's practices of upvoting posts and awarding points to replies (both forms of positive evaluation) provide a rough quantitative measure of viewer attitudes. While most forum discussions relate to the plot, many Reddit users ask and answer questions surrounding the show's linguistic practices. We searched for all forum comments containing the term *Spanish*; this yielded 54 discussion threads.

Based on these three data sources, we argue that "Jane the Virgin" takes a deliberately respectful approach to Latinx language practices. We further argue that although this representational choice does not fully reflect the complex reality of Latinx bilingual lives, it disrupts several hegemonic raciolinguistic ideologies and creates an authentic viewing experience for its audience.

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2. Loanwords were distinguished from lexical codeswitching on the basis of phonology.

Table 1. Interactional uses of Spanish in "Jane the Virgin," Season 1

Chapter	Nonreciprocal bilingualism	Conversational codeswitching	Linguistic accommodation	Loanwords
1	6	0	0	2
2	6	0	0	1
3	11	1	2	1
4	6	2	2	0
5	3	0	0	0
6	2	0	0	0
7	1	0	0	0
8	3	0	1	0
9	8	2	1	0
10	3	1	0	2
11	8	3	1	0
12	2	0	1	0
13	8	1	0	0
14	2	0	0	0
15	2	0	0	0
16	4	0	0	0
17	4	0	0	1
18	10	3	0	1
19	4	0	0	0
20	8	0	1	0
21	5	0	3	0
22	7	0	0	0
Total	113	13	12	8

4.   Analysis

Our examination of bilingual practices in "Jane the Virgin" focuses on the three most common types within the show: nonreciprocal bilingualism, linguistic accommodation, and conversational codeswitching. Each practice is rarely represented on U.S. television; the show's matter-of-fact inclusion of these practices, albeit in simplified form, normalizes them within the white public space of English-language media.

4.1   Nonreciprocal bilingualism

Nonreciprocal bilingualism is by far the most frequent bilingual practice represented on "Jane the Virgin," occurring nearly ten times as often as any other. This extensive representation is due to the fact that beginning with its pilot episode, the show presents bilingualism as the unmarked and unremarkable linguistic norm in Latinx family life. Much of the dialogue in the Villanueva household includes both Spanish and English, particularly in conversations involving Jane's grandmother, Alba. Our first example, from early in the pilot episode, puts viewers on notice that Spanish is central to "Jane the Virgin." Here, Jane, Alba, and Xiomara are watching a telenovela in Spanish starring Rogelio, who unbeknownst to Jane is actually her father. (Our translations of Spanish dialogue are taken from the show's subtitles.)[3]

Example 1. (Chapter 1, 02:19–03:09)

1	Jane:	\<entering room\> ¡Ay ay ay! At least you could turn it down.	
2	Alba:	Te estaba dejando saber que está empezando. Cómete tu cachito de grilled cheese, mija.	'I was letting you know that it was starting. Eat your grilled cheese, mija. \<gestures to plate\>
3	Xiomara:	Mom, she doesn't have to watch if she doesn't want to.	
4	Jane:	Of course I'm gonna watch! You guys got me hooked on these things. But you really have to know telenovelas have ruined romance for me.	
5	Alba:	Shh, shh.	
6	Rogelio:	\<on the television\> A pesar de las circunstancias hay una cosa que sé. Estamos destinados a estar juntos, mi amor.	'Despite the circumstances there's one thing I know. We were meant to be, my love'.

This scene previews a pattern found throughout the show, whereby Jane and Xiomara speak English, Alba speaks Spanish, and everyone understands both languages. The example also includes some minor translanguaging: Jane uses a Spanish-language exclamation (*¡Ay ay ay!*; line 1) to complain about the television

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3. The subtitled translations are often somewhat loose, due to the fact that the dialogue was originally scripted in English (which appears in the subtitles) and then translated into idiomatic Spanish by the show's Latinx writers, with input from the actors (Urman interview).

volume, and Alba uses a loanword from English (*grilled cheese*; line 2) to offer her granddaughter a quintessentially American sandwich. Furthermore, the fact that the family is watching a telenovela underscores the point that although the younger women primarily speak English, they enjoy Spanish-language entertainment. These details help create a realistic portrayal of this Latinx family as equally comfortable in English and Spanish, embracing both transnational Latin American popular culture and U.S. comfort food.

The two instances of translanguaging in this scene appear to be designed to alert viewers right away to the linguistic dynamics of the Villanueva household. Moreover, these moments are intelligible even to monolingual English viewers: Jane's exclamation *¡Ay ay ay!* is a widely recognized linguistic stereotype of Latinx identity that a young third-generation Latinx would in fact be unlikely to use (and one that never again occurs on the show), and Alba's use of the English loanword *grilled cheese* in line 2 (rather than a more Latinx-specific food item) is immediately understandable. Thus, even when characters briefly engage in translanguaging, they do so in ways that do not burden English monolingual viewers.

Despite the extensive use of Spanish, the representation of bilingualism on "Jane the Virgin" is simplified compared to real-world Latinx family interaction. Most notably, apart from this early scene, the characters almost always avoid translanguaging and instead adhere to a "one-language-per-speaker" strategy; this representational choice aligns with a monoglossic ideology that orderly speech is produced in a single language (García & Torres-Guevara 2010; Rosa 2019). We argue below that this strategy is motivated by the show's careful avoidance of negative representations of Latinxs, which extends to the representation of creative linguistic practices that are disparaged by both Latinxs and non-Latinxs (Zentella 2014). The result is a positive yet incomplete representation of Latinx bilingualism.

A second and related simplification is the show's handling of nonreciprocal bilingualism, in which a language user consistently produces one language but is addressed in another (Bilaniuk 2005). Despite almost never speaking their nonpreferred language, every member of the Villanueva family exhibits perfect comprehension of that language when produced by others. Example (1) is representative in this regard: Characters who speak one language never express confusion or lack of understanding of speech produced in the other language (such as Jane's use of the idiom *got me hooked on* in line 4). Such idealizations of the complex machinery of conversation are of course commonplace in television and film (Chepinchikj & Thompson 2016), but this omission projects an idealized version of bilingualism for English-monolingual viewers that reinforces an ideology of language comprehension as effortless (and thus as not requiring public resources or support). In Latinx families in the United States, where language shift

is widespread, it is unlikely that speakers from different generations would perfectly understand one another's preferred languages.

"Jane the Virgin" provides only a single portrayal of an intergenerational communication gap, though not in relation to language comprehension. This highly marked moment also takes place in the pilot episode. In Example (2), Alba discovers Jane's abortion medication, which Jane's doctor (Rafael's sister) prescribed to her after accidentally inseminating her with Rafael's sperm sample. Alba, a devout Catholic who has warned Jane against premarital sex, appears devastated as Jane tries to explain that she was accidentally artificially inseminated.

Example 2.   (Chapter 1, 29:46–31:09)

1	Alba:	Me has rotó el corazón.	'You've broken my heart'.
2	Jane:	\<turns to Alba\> Oh, abuela, it's not what you think.	
3	Alba:	Creo que tú me has mentido por mucho tiempo.	'I think you have lied to me for a very long time'.
4	Jane:	I didn't. I got ... accidentally ... \<pauses\> Oh, I don't know how to say it in Spanish!	
5	Alba:	Tuviste relaciones sexuales.	'You had sexual relations...'
6	Jane:	No, no, I didn't, abuela. The doctor made a mistake. And at my appointment she ... accidentally ... put a sample of a man, into me.	
7	Alba:	\<furrows brow\> ¿Qué? ¿Una muestra de un hombre?	'What? A sample of a man?'
8	Jane:	Yes. From his ... \<gestures with two fingers downward, then upward\>	
9	Alba:	\<gasps\> Oh!	
10	Alba:	¿Y quedaste embarazada?	'And you got pregnant?'
11	Jane:	\<nods\>	

Jane and Alba engage in what almost resembles a game of charades as Jane attempts to explain as delicately as possible the unusual circumstances of how she became pregnant. Although she speaks entirely in English, her frustrated exclamation in line 4 – *Oh, I don't know how to say it in Spanish!* – implies that she should switch to Spanish at this point, despite Alba's apparently perfect comprehension of English. Jane's remark seems to imply that Alba is unlikely to know the English medical term *artificial insemination*, while also acknowledging Jane's own unfamiliarity with the Spanish equivalent. In fact, however, the Spanish term

inseminación artificial is extremely similar to the English term and is far less likely to cause confusion than the terms the two women use instead, *sample/muestra* (as signaled by Alba's confused expression in line 7). The communicative difficulty adds a moment of levity to an otherwise dramatic scene. At the same time, this interaction iconically uses an intergenerational linguistic gap (i.e., how to explain a medical procedure) to represent an intergenerational cultural gap (i.e., Alba's disapproval of pregnancy without marriage). This crucial scene also underscores the importance of the show's use of subtitles for Alba's dialogue. Here Alba is given multiple complex lines that express her strong emotions. Her use of Spanish is central to the dramatic tension, establishing her character as a traditional Catholic Latina grandmother.

Example (2) highlights the challenges of intergenerational linguistic differences, yet the eventual communicative success of the conversation suggests that the differing linguistic repertoires of family members across generations do not fundamentally prevent understanding. This representation accurately portrays communication difficulties but may paint an unrealistically rosy view of intergenerational Latinx family communication, in which interaction – especially between the first and third generations – is often significantly hampered by the lack of a shared language (Zentella 1997b).

4.2   Linguistic accommodation

The second bilingual practice on "Jane the Virgin" that we consider, linguistic accommodation, was represented much less frequently than nonreciprocal bilingualism, despite there being numerous occasions when it could have occurred. As several studies have shown (Sachdev & Giles 2004), a bilingual speaker's interactional choice of one language over another is strongly influenced by their perception of their addressee's preferred language. Linguistic accommodation is in fact one of the primary functions of codeswitching (Gumperz 1982). In "Jane the Virgin," however, the Villanueva family's perfect bilingual comprehension may seem to render superfluous the need for linguistic accommodation, at least for reasons of intelligibility. And indeed, in most interactions the characters adhere to their own preferred language.

Nevertheless, one central character within the show uses both English and Spanish extensively. This character is Rogelio, the Mexican telenovela star who is revealed to be Jane's father. Spanish language use indexes Rogelio's status as an immigrant, while English language use indexes his cosmopolitan professionalism. Thus Rogelio, more than any other character in Season 1, is positioned to accommodate his addressee's linguistic preference.

Example (3), which takes place much later in the season, portrays one instance of Rogelio's linguistic accommodation to others. In this example, he alternates between English and Spanish to accommodate two different addressees, Xiomara and Alba, as the three discuss Xiomara's singing career.

Example 3. (Chapter 9, 19:00–19:44)

1	Rogelio:	\<To Xiomara> How was your meeting at the record label?	
2	Alba:	El idiota del productor le dijo que está muy vieja para ser estrella de pop.	'That idiot producer said she's too old to be a pop star'.
3	Rogelio:	¿Qué? \<looking at Xiomara> That is ridiculous!	'What?' \<not translated in subtitles>
4	Xiomara:	I don't know. Maybe it's time to get realistic. Face the fact that I missed my window.	
5	Alba:	\<singing> Libre, como el mismo aire vive libre, como lo hace el viento vuela libre.	'Free, like the very air live free, like the wind fly free'. \<not translated in subtitles>
6	Rogelio:	Alba.	
7	Alba:	¿Hm?	
8	Rogelio:	¿Acaba de cantar a Paulina Rubio?	'Is that Paulina Rubio?'
9	Alba:	Mhm. Ella es la ídolo de Xiomara. Y "Libre" es su himno. Mira, tú ves hasta de tu parte estoy en esto.	Xiomara's hero. And the song "Libre" is her anthem. See? By now even I'm on board.
10	Xiomara:	Thanks, Ma, but I think it's time to let it go.	

Rogelio consistently addresses Xiomara in English and Alba in Spanish, even switching languages mid-utterance as he switches addressees (line 3). Within the first season, this practice of linguistic accommodation is largely limited to Rogelio (as well as another immigrant character in later seasons). This representation contrasts with the widespread use of accommodation in everyday Latinx communication, especially among the second generation, which is most likely to be bilingual (Krogstad & Gonzalez-Barrera 2015). The show's character-specific use of linguistic accommodation may signal Rogelio's immigrant identity. This analysis is supported by the fact that his speech is marked as nonnative, not only through his Spanish-accented English (which is characteristic of actor Jaime Camil's everyday speech as well) but also by his tendency to avoid contractions (e.g., *That is ridiculous!*; line 3), which often functions as an index of nonnativeness in perfor-

mance (Bucholtz 2002). In this way, the show ideologically associates extensive use of both Spanish and English with nonnativeness. Hence Rogelio's language use is marked within the show in a number of ways, even as it reflects real-life linguistic practices in Latinx families and communities.

4.3   Conversational codeswitching

The final bilingual practice on "Jane the Virgin" that we analyze is conversational codeswitching, or the use of two languages by a single speaker in a single utterance or turn. This practice, which is extremely common in Latinx speech communities, occurs slightly more often than linguistic accommodation in Season 1. While the show represents some of the interactional and indexical functions of codeswitching, such as to express emotion, most instances are brief and are either easily understood from context (as in Example (1)) or are essentially translated through repetition or paraphrase in the other language. However, in several important scenes, conversational codeswitching diverges both from community-based practices and from the show's own patterns of language use. As seen in the previous examples, for the three Villanueva women the preferred linguistic practice is "one language per speaker," while for Rogelio it is "one language per addressee." Lengthy divergences from this monoglossic pattern occur primarily via conversational codeswitching and are so marked that they function as plot devices.

Perhaps the most dramatic example of plot-driven codeswitching comes midway through Season 1, as part of a narrative arc in which Alba has been hospitalized after having been pushed down a flight of stairs. In Example (4), Xiomara is in Alba's hospital room with a police officer, while Alba lies unconscious in the bed. The audience has learned in a previous episode that Alba is an undocumented immigrant who consequently is terrified of the police, and for this reason Jane has chosen to drop a lawsuit against Rafael's sister for artificially inseminating her. Alba's hospitalization may expose her immigration status and put her at risk of deportation. Due to a hurricane, which has blocked the roads, Jane is unable to get to the hospital, so she uses a police radio to find out about Alba's status. In the ensuing conversation, Xiomara and Jane use extensive spoken Spanish for the first time in the series:

Example 4. (Chapter 10, 25:06–25:50)

1	Xiomara:	\<taking the radio from the police officer> Hello?
2	Jane:	Mom, it's me. How is she?
3	Xiomara:	Physically, no change.

4	Jane:	What is it? What's going on?	
5	Xiomara:	\<turning to police officer\> La comida aquí está horrible, ¿no? \<Officer looks confused\>	'The food here sucks, doesn't it?'
6		\<to Jane\> ¿Te acuerdas por qué retiraste el caso de la corte? De lo que teníamos miedo?	'¿Remember why you withdrew your court case? Remember what we were afraid of?'
7	Jane:	Sí.	'Yes'.
8	Xiomara:	Bueno, el hospital está diciendo que van a hacer lo mismo a abuela.	'Well, the hospital is saying that they're going to do the same thing to Abuela'.
9	Jane:	No haga nada, ¿okay? Voy tan pronto pueda.	'Don't do anything, okay? I'll be there as soon as I can'.
10	Xiomara:	Espera que abran las calles de nuevo, acuérdate que estás embarazada, no te arriesgues.	'Wait till the roads reopen. You're pregnant, remember. No risks'.
11	Jane:	Okay, yeah. I love you, Mom.	

In this example, for the first and only time within the series Jane and Xiomara hold a conversation in Spanish, motivated by the fear that they will jeopardize Alba's safety if they are understood by the police officer. The radio conversation begins in English, the unmarked language choice for both women, then utilizes Spanish for privacy. Xiomara first tests the officer's Spanish ability by abruptly addressing him in that language (line 5), then continues her conversation with Jane in Spanish. Up to this point, Xiomara and Jane have used Spanish almost exclusively receptively, so Xiomara's sudden codeswitch generates both surprise and heightened drama. It is clear, however, that the use of Spanish is entirely due to its ability to prevent eavesdropping and has no other indexical or interactional function within the scene. Hence, when Jane ends the conversation, she switches to English to express her love for her mother (line 11). This codeswitch indexes the stronger emotional pull of English for Jane (Dewaele 2008) – and for English-monolingual viewers.

A briefer but similarly plot-driven use of conversational codeswitching is presented in Example (5), where Xiomara again utilizes Spanish as a secret code to interact privately with ingroup members. The scene opens during dinner at the Villanueva home, with Rafael as the family's guest. While Xiomara prefers Michael as a romantic partner for Jane, she has agreed to give Rafael a chance and is trying to get to know him. Jane, a character who likes to plan in advance, has coached Rafael on how to win her mother's approval.

Example 5. (Chapter 11, 14:27–14:44)

1	Rafael:	As I was saying, I believe that hard work is the key to success. I mean, as a Taurus you must know what I mean. Persistence is everything.	
2	Xiomara:	Hm. <looking at Jane> Lo preparaste bien. No soy tonta.	'You've prepped him well. I'm not a fool'.
3	Rafael:	Claro que no es tonta.	'Of course you're not a fool'.

Xiomara's use of Spanish is clearly intended to let Jane know that her coaching of Rafael is obvious while preventing Rafael from understanding this comment. The entire Villanueva family is therefore astonished when Rafael not only breaks Xiomara's code but also responds to her statement in grammatically correct and pragmatically appropriate Spanish (including the use of the formal second-person verb form *es* 'you are' to address Xiomara in line 3). Although this is the only instance of Rafael speaking Spanish within the show's first season (and one of perhaps two instances in the entire series), the scene anticipates his perfect receptive bilingualism in later interactions with Alba. It also contributes to Rafael's "dreaminess" as an ideal lover by showing his unexpected linguistic, and by extension, cultural connection to the Villanueva family. Unlike Example (4) above, when Xiomara's switch to Spanish enhances the drama of the scene, in this scene the use of Spanish as an ingroup code is played for laughs, as it is revealed that Spanish use does not always guarantee secrecy.

In both Example (4) and Example (5), Xiomara codeswitches between rather than within clauses; the latter practice is deeply stigmatized yet extremely common and highly systematic (Anderson & Toribio 2007). The show thereby avoids drawing condemnation for representing what is ideologically often viewed as "disordered" language (Urciuoli 1996; Zentella 2007). Moreover, in both examples, Xiomara switches to Spanish in order to communicate with other Spanish speakers without being understood by (presumed) English monolinguals who are also present. It is noteworthy that this plot device – Spanish as secret code – is used in two different episodes of Season 1, given that this function of codeswitching has rarely been documented in community-based studies.[4] The show's repeated use of codeswitching for this statistically unusual purpose may unintentionally feed the "linguistic paranoia" of English monolinguals, who irrationally fear that speakers of other languages are talking about them or keeping secrets from them (Haviland 2003, 771).

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4. Such uses, of course, especially occur for purposes of self-protection or to maintain social boundaries; we thank an anonymous reviewer for highlighting this point.

In the preceding analysis, we have demonstrated how "Jane the Virgin" not only incorporates everyday bilingual Latinx practices into its characters' lives, but also presents Latinx language practices that diverge from real-world Latinx language use. In the next section, we move beyond the show as a self-contained cultural product to consider the motivations behind its bilingual practices and how these are interpreted by viewers.

5.   The production and reception of bilingualism in "Jane the Virgin"

In this section, we examine the production and reception of the show's bilingual practices based on an interview with the producer, Urman, as well as how fans discuss these practices online.

The online interview revealed that Urman considered Spanish central to the show from the very beginning. In response to Melgarejo's first question regarding what linguistic decisions were made to make the characters seem authentic, she emphasized the importance of the Villanueva family's bilingualism. Urman recounted that although the CW network asked her to shoot an English-only version of the pilot, she submitted only the bilingual version and received no pushback; as she remarked, "to their credit, once they saw the cut they never asked for anything in English." She explained that the Villanuevas' language use was informed by the "Latinx voices in the writing room" regarding linguistic practices within their families; she also noted that she took "cues off the actors and the households that they had grown up in." As a non-Latina producer, Urman emphasized the importance of "listening to those voices that are telling you things that you don't know."

For much of the interview, Urman focused primarily on Alba's language use; for example, she explained that Alba uses English only for loanwords that have no direct Spanish equivalent. She also described Alba as committed to language maintenance: "I think part of that is also wanting her daughter and granddaughter to grow up knowing Spanish. So that was probably also a choice early on about speaking Spanish inside the house." In response to a question about Rogelio's use of Spanish with Alba, Urman stated that this reflects the characters' shared background as immigrants from Spanish-speaking countries, and she characterized these scenes as portraying a "different sense of intimacy and a different part of their relationship." However, she did not specifically mention the use of Spanish by Jane, Xiomara, or other characters.

Urman summed up the motivation for the show's linguistic choices as follows: "But it is not about who they are as people and what language they use. That's a facet of them, not – It's treating where they are from with respect and as a fact of

who they are, and not a character trait." This statement confirms our conclusion, based on our analysis of the show's dialogue, that "Jane the Virgin" is committed to a respectful representation of Latinx language use. At the same time, Urman's comment highlights that language is a secondary concern, which helps account for our finding regarding the show's divergences from real-world language use.

Similarly, the Reddit fan forum data confirmed our analysis that viewers would find the show's linguistic representation believable. For example, a post by user lionheart07 asks, "is 2 people speaking a different language in a conversation normal for bilingual families? Like how Alba speaks Spanish but most people speak English with her." This post received 53 comments and was upvoted by 99% of the 46 readers who voted on it. The top comment, with 89 points, states, "Having known several bilingual families, it's pretty darn common from what I've seen." Other responses confirm this pattern in their own and others' households. The second most popular comment, with 55 points, links to the Wikipedia page for "code-switching." Only one respondent offers a somewhat negative view, but this is focused on conversational codeswitching, not reciprocal bilingualism: In a comment that received 41 points, tal-ostja characterizes their own codeswitching as a "bad habit."

A user in another thread was more skeptical of the realism of the show's nonreciprocal bilingualism. In a post with the subject line "Unpopular opinion: Alba?" sanjuanac complains about the character and then asks, "Also, why does she speak to everyone in Spanish? It really bothers me that she ALWAYS speaks in Spanish and everyone responds in English. She can clearly speak well, as she's demonstrated several times." This question received 21 comments and a 62% positive rating out of 6 votes (the comments suggest that this relatively high rating is due to these viewers' general negative stance toward Alba, not specifically toward her use of Spanish). As in the previously discussed thread, replies to this post described both nonreciprocal bilingualism and codeswitching as family norms. One user, Elia_M, in a post that received 3 points, defended Alba's language use, saying, "What is wrong with ALWAYS speaking [Spanish]? I think it is great. I love that she is the only one beside Rogelio who speaks Spanish in the show." In a second post, the original poster, sanjuanac, clarified and mitigated their complaint: "I guess I just find this odd because personally my conversations with my family is different than what is shown. I'm used to speaking in the language that the conversation is initiated in. Looks like this is a common thing in other families." The objection, then, regards not Alba's use of Spanish but whether her nonreciprocal bilingualism is a realistic linguistic representation.

Overall, the Spanish-related threads on the Reddit forum indicate that most fans view the show's bilingual linguistic practices as authentic, based on their own knowledge and experiences. Although users' criticism of conversational

codeswitching was limited and mild, the more negative tone around this topic suggests that even some ardent fans might be uncomfortable with more extensive representations of this or other forms of translanguaging.

6.   Conclusion

By examining a prominent counterexample to the overwhelmingly stereotypical representations of Latinxs in the U.S. media, this study contributes to interdisciplinary research on language in racialized media representations. Our analysis of bilingualism on "Jane the Virgin" has demonstrated that the show sharply contrasts with most other English-language media representations of Latinx language use. Most notably, it uses Spanish as a language of communication by at least some characters and not only as an index of Latinx identity or as a target of racist humor. In addition, it incorporates many everyday linguistic practices of Latinxs, including language shift and related intergenerational communicative difficulties, nonreciprocal bilingualism, linguistic accommodation, and conversational codeswitching. Yet the representation of these practices simplifies real-world Latinx language use. In most cases, the show subscribes to "one-language-per-speaker" and "one-language-per-addressee" language ideologies that do not correspond to bilingual Latinx linguistic practices. Further, communication across generations and languages is almost always portrayed as effortless and unproblematic. Meanwhile, the representation of conversational codeswitching within the show focuses on a relatively uncommon function of this practice. We have argued that despite these simplifications, "Jane the Virgin" projects a positive and believable representation of Latinx bilingualism.

This argument found further support in our brief consideration of the production and reception of the show's bilingual practices: The producer takes a deliberately respectful approach to the representation of Latinx family bilingual dynamics, and this portrayal resonates with many viewers. Although the show does not capture the full complexity of such dynamics, fans either do not notice or are not concerned about these simplifications, and some may respond negatively to the inclusion of some practices, such as intraclausal codeswitching.

By balancing these issues, "Jane the Virgin" navigated the raciolinguistic landscape of English-language television to become a crossover success. The show's orientation to an English-monolingual audience is indicated by its use of subtitles, its much greater use of English than Spanish, and the exclusive use of English by the show's "Latin Lover" narrator. The focus on English speakers is further confirmed by Urman's interview statement regarding the show's linguistic choices: "I think that it's been inclusive instead of exclusive, that you can be an English-

speaking teenager in America and you can watch a bilingual show even if you are not bilingual, and I feel like that's a great thing to put out into the world and to celebrate." For many non-Latinx English-monolingual viewers, the normalization of Spanish language use on television is already a significant and surprising challenge to xenophobic raciolinguistic ideologies, while the characters' near-perfect bilingual communicative competence refutes ideologies of bilingual Latinxs as "languageless" (Rosa 2016). Further, these consistently positive representations insulate the characters – and by extension Latinxs more generally – from being perceived by viewers as linguistically deficient. In short, the respectful representation of Latinx language use on "Jane the Virgin" issues a powerful challenge to deficit-based raciolinguistic ideologies of Latinxs. Moreover, given the lack of accurate information about bilingualism in most public discourse, the show's authenticity effect would likely have been damaged rather than enhanced if the creators had aimed for greater empirical accuracy in its linguistic representations. In other words, a show such as "Jane the Virgin," which aims at both Latinx and non-Latinx audiences, produces an authenticity effect for viewers not because it is realistic but because it is relatable.

This counterhegemonic representation of Latinx language use is in keeping with the show's commitment to taking political positions on a range of issues facing the Latinx community, such as xenophobia and unjust immigration policies. Indeed, later in the series (Season 3, Episode 17), "Jane the Virgin" directly confronts the racist discourse surrounding the 2016 Presidential election. In this episode, the Villanuevas become politically active after Alba overhears a white woman say to a Spanish-speaking Latina, "This is America. You should learn how to speak English."

The audibility of the Spanish language on "Jane the Virgin," as well as the show's acknowledgment of bilingual practices as central to Latinx family lives, not only challenges the monolingual hegemony of the U.S. television landscape, but it also redefines the linguistic complexity of the Latinx family for the viewing public. While the show does not fully incorporate bilingual language practices, its revolutionary portrayal of Latinx language patterns as ordinary, complex, and communicatively significant creates the possibility of even more realistic, politically engaged, and counterhegemonic television portrayals of Spanish-English bilingualism.

Acknowledgements

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