THEMATIC SECTION:
ANTHROPOLOGY OF EDUCATION

Transnational Care Constellations and Education: im/migrant children's family ties across borders

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ABSTRACT – Transnational Care Constellations and Education: im/migrant children's family ties across borders. Educational researchers often foreground the linguistic-cultural differences that immigrant students bring to school, overlooking the salience of legal and cultural citizenship for identity formation and classroom participation. Moreover, they usually frame (im)immigrant children as *students* and *English language learners*, or (more rarely) *emergent bilinguals*. This narrow framing obscures certain aspects of students' complex experiences, with important implications for learning. This article leverages anthropological evidence to present more holistic ways of representing and discussing immigrant families' experiences in a globalized world. This article asks: how can an anthropological perspective on transnational families help us understand how immigration shapes the educational lives of children? Thus, I address how transnational care constellations as a methodological approach contribute to ongoing discussions about equity and belonging in educational scholarship.
Keywords: **Transnational. Care. Family. Education. Children.**

RESUMO – Constelações Transnacionais de Cuidado e Educação: laços de crianças i/migrantes com famílias transfronteiras. Muitas vezes os pesquisadores educacionais se interessam pelas diferenças linguístico-culturais que os estudantes imigrantes trazem à escola, negligenciando a proeminência da cidadania legal e cultural para a formação da identidade e a participação em sala de aula. Além disso, em geral rotulam as crianças (i)migrantes como *estudantes* e *aprendizes de língua inglesa* ou, (mais raramente) *bilíngues emergentes*. Esta rotulação estreita dificulta evidenciar determinados aspectos das complexas vivências dos estudantes, com implicações importantes para a aprendizagem. Este artigo destaca evidências antropológicas para apresentar maneiras mais holísticas de representar e discutir as vivências de famílias imigrantes em um mundo globalizado. Este artigo questiona: como uma perspectiva antropológica sobre famílias transnacionais pode nos ajudar a compreender como a imigração modela a vida educacional das crianças? Assim, abordo como as constelações transnacionais de cuidado como abordagem metodológica contribuem para discussões continuadas sobre equidade e pertencimento em estudos no campo educacional.
Palavras-chave: **Transnacional. Cuidado. Família. Educação. Crianças.**

Introduction

In this article I argue that Brazilian immigrant children's experiences in the classroom are shaped by their ideas and memories of family in Brazil. I show how children in a school in the United States are constantly relating their current present life in the U.S. with their histories of Brazil. In addition, this article reflects on children's parents as it refers to family ties in Brazil. Care is a defining trait in the relationship between children, parents and grandparents across borders. Thus, transnational care constellations work as the backdrop and context for how children in these classrooms learn, discuss and understand the content. This paper draws on ethnographic data collected over eighteen months in one school in the Northeast of the United States, where a large number of newcomer Brazilian immigrant children have settled. Children's discussion of their grandparents and their distant parents inside the classrooms reflect realities that cross physical and emotional borders; through these narratives, students work through questions about where they belong as new members of this society.

Brazilian Immigration to the United States

Brazilian immigration into the United States began in the 1930s and 1940s, with musicians travelling from Brazil to the United States (Andrade Tosta, 2005). In 1945, Brazilian president Eurico Gaspar Dutra instituted repressive measures in Brazil, which included the closing of all casinos. The casinos gave musicians and performers a source of employment, so their closing led to the performers' immigration to the United States. Most of these immigrants before 1960 were white, as non-whites faced discrimination; many were from Rio de Janeiro (Davis, 2008).

In the 1940s, during World War II, Americans came to the Brazilian municipality Governador Valadares in the State of Minas Gerais for mica extraction and development work. This created close contact between Brazilians and Americans. Brazilians developed a positive image of American wealth, prompting their immigration to the United States in the 1960s (Andrade Tosta, 2004; Dantas DeBiaggi, 2002; Marcus, 2009; Siqueira, 2008). This initial relationship initiated a steady stream of migration from Governador Valadares, in particular (Rubinstein-Avila, 2005; Siqueira; Lourenço, 2006).

A larger and broader wave of Brazilian immigration began in the 1960s (Davis, 2008). Throughout the 1960s, the majority of the Brazilian immigrants in the United States were from the middle or upper class (Siquiera, 2008; Marcus, 2011). These immigrants wrote letters back home telling about their economic success, which urged more people to emigrate from Brazil in the next few decades (Siqueira, 2008). Additionally, an economic recession in the 1980s and a decline in middle class social mobility spurred migration (Braga Martes, 2011). Due to low wages and lack of employment, Brazilians sought economic refuge in the

United States (Siqueira; Lourenço, 2006). During the 1980s, the Brazilian population in the United States doubled, then tripled in the 1990s. It is important to note that 59% of Brazilian immigrants arrived in the United States before 2000 (Blizzard; Batalova, 2019).

After the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001, there was increased pressure to deport and widespread fear of deportation among immigrants in the United States (Braga Martes, 2011). This scrutiny made it harder for Brazilians to get tourist visas to come to the United States (Margolis, 2008; Braga Martes, 2011). The majority of Brazilians who come to the United States do so with a visa, typically a tourist visa (Blizzard; Batalova, 2019). However, Brazilians become undocumented when they overstay their visa and begin working in the United States (Joseph, 2011; Lotufo, 2017; Blizzard; Batalova, 2019). Due to the increased difficulty in securing a visa since 2001, more immigrants have attempted to enter the U.S. by traveling through Mexico, which significantly limits how many Brazilians arrive and exposes them to much higher risks.

A significant proportion of the current Brazilian-born population living in the U.S. is undocumented. According to U.S. census figures, approximately 450,000 Brazilian immigrants resided in the U.S. in 2017. However, the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs estimates that almost three times as many Brazilians live in the U.S., suggesting that a large number of Brazilians in the U.S. are undocumented[1]. Looking at Massachusetts specifically, Siqueira (2008) notes that of her sample of 141 Brazilian immigrants, 57.4% were undocumented, 20.6% had a green card, and 14.9% were American citizens. She also notes that most of the Brazilians who were documented were the ones who had been in the United States longer (Siqueira, 2008). In the Boston area, most of the Brazilian immigrants are first generation, undocumented, and have a strong connection with Brazil (Siqueira; Lourenço, 2006).

Undocumented people who live in the U.S. constantly fear exposure and deportation; their status also influences their mobility. The deportation of undocumented Brazilians rose from 1,413 in 2017 to 1,691 in 2018; Brazilians were the sixth-largest group of nationals removed from the U.S[2]. If a family leaves the United States for a temporary trip, they might not be able to return if it is discovered that they had previously been in the country undocumented. Similarly, if a Brazilian immigrant tries to come back to the United States with a valid visa and passport, they could be denied entry if it is discovered that they were previously undocumented in the country (Margolis, 2008). This creates an issue of feeling trapped in the United States: if Brazilian immigrants are undocumented, they are more and more worried about leaving the United States and not being able to come back. This fear has especially increased since September 11th, 2001. For this reason, many Brazilian immigrants end up missing important family events back in Brazil and may feel like they've lost their place (Margolis, 2008). For these reasons, many second-generation Brazilian immigrants whose parents are undocumented do not know a lot about Brazil. Due to their parent's un-

documented status, these children do not often visit Brazil and they therefore learn about their country from what their family tells them or from what they find on the Internet (Braga Martes, 2011).

Conceptual Framework: transnational care constellations

In astronomy, a constellation is a recognizable pattern of stars that has official borders and an official designation. The International Astronomical Union explains that throughout human history and across many different cultures, names and mythical stories have been attributed to the star patterns in the night sky, thus giving birth to what we know as constellations.

Several scholars have adopted the notion of constellation in their work on migration. In her study, Dreby (2007) used the idea of constellations to describe changes in family dynamics among parent, child, and caregiver. I further develop the concept by putting caregivers in the center and focusing on how care crosses transnational terrains and how it influences children in the United States. Political scientist Rainer Baubock (2010, p. 848) proposes the term *citizenship constellation* to denote a structure in which "[...] individuals are simultaneous(ly) linked to several such political entities, so that their legal rights and duties are determined not only by one political authority, but by several". In the same vein, I propose that children and caregivers are linked and that the relationships they develop are determined not only by interactions between them and the people they live with, but also by people who are away from them, whom they imagine to be a certain way. Transnational care constellations became my unit of analysis for examining how everyday life happens across borders. Thus, as we understand immigrant children's everyday lives as part of transnational care constellations, teachers and educators can further conceptualize immigrant children in their classroom as more than language learners.

Theoretical Framework: transnational family life

In this section I use the framework of transnational family life. Transnational families are family units in which one or more family members lives across a national border. This concept frames the discussion present in this article as children and parents make sense of how much they *care* for members of this constellation across terrains. While in this article I use the concept of transnational care constellations, it is important to review how other authors have similarly thought through the framework of transnational families in order to make sense of people's everyday lives.

Authors in transnationalism have argues that distance forces a redefinition of the nuclear family when some members migrate. Bryceson and Vuorela (2002, p. 3) explain that transnational families "[...] live some or most of the time separated from each other, yet hold together and create something that can be seen as a feeling of collective

welfare and unity, i.e. 'familyhood', even across national borders". Usually these families have multiple identities, related to where each member has resided in the past. Extended family members tend to become more involved in the family life, and older siblings can sometimes take on maternal or paternal roles. Additionally, these transnational families have to put more effort into constructing their family community because they do not have day-to-day interactions. While families who have migrated recently may have a strong attachment to their home area, they often utilize local networks in their new homes to learn about housing and employment and to form a sense of community. Bryceson and Vuorela (2002, p. 30) add that the identity of transnational families is constantly changing, as their "[...] sense of place is continually being reformulated through their locational dispersal". Brazilian immigrants in this research, children and adults, actively make sense of belonging and care across borders. Thus, while the sense of place has been modified, their understandings of family have stayed.

Transnational families also involve a rethinking of family practices, as family members live in different countries and are not able to see these family members for long periods of time (Reynolds; Zontini, 2014). However, there is a sense of resilience in these families, as "[...] rather than fragmenting or disintegrating as a result of migration, family relationships simply transform and are reconstructed in new forms" (Reynolds; Zontini, 2014, p. 256). Additionally, for these folks, *family* can include more extended members and include partners, parents, children, (great) aunts/uncles, grandparents, nieces/nephews, and cousins (Boehm, 2012). These relationships often support migration, as people migrate either with family or to support family back at home (Boehm, 2012). In the case of participants in this research, grandparents in Brazil are kept in their everyday interactions in school.

While remittances have long been one of the main pieces that link immigrants and their families, authors have described other connections that result from remittances. Looking at Salvadoran migration to the U.S., Abrego (2009) emphasizes the importance of remittances for these transnational families. She notes that parents migrate to the U.S. for employment and better wages in order to help their children. These transnational families often send one or more core members to work abroad and send back monetary remittances (Abrego, 2009). However, there is often a difference between the amount of money that migrant men and migrant women earn. Abrego (2009) found that Salvadoran immigrant women experienced labor exploitation and earned low and unreliable wages, while men experienced more upward mobility in their jobs. However, when sending money back to El Salvador, mothers "[...] were not only more reliable remitters than fathers, but they sent larger percentages of their earnings, often allowing mother-away families to enjoy greater economic well-being than father-away families" (Abrego, 2009, p. 1077). With this money, mothers were able to pay for food, school, and other education-related expenses. The fact that mothers sent money more consistently than fathers stems from the social

expectations of mothers as selfless, putting their children's well-being above their own (Abrego, 2009).

In her study of young adult children in transnational families in the Philippines, Parreñas (2005) adds to our understanding of transnational mothering. In this country, while more women have entered the labor force, they still have domestic expectations in the home; therefore, when mothers migrate, fathers do not increase the amount of their household tasks. The eldest daughter is usually faced with household responsibilities when the mother migrates, and the mother maintains close ties with the children across borders. Parreñas (2005, p. 256) notes that, "[...] while men reject the work of nurturing the family from up close, migrant mothers remain responsible for ensuring both the economic and emotional security of their children".

Grandmothers also take on an important role when looking at transnational families. In Nicaraguan families, grandmothers often take care of their grandchildren when their mothers migrate. In this way, grandmothers participate socially, culturally, and emotionally in transnational family life even though they themselves do not cross the border (Yarris, 2014). However, many of these grandmothers note feeling uncertain about the future of their families' lives, given the mother's migration. In these families, transnational migration "[...] upends cultural ideals for solidarity and togetherness in Nicaraguan family life" (Yarris, 2014, p. 494). These grandmothers see transnational migration as interfering with the typical familial expectations.

With Honduran migrants to Massachusetts, remittances and phone calls are common ways parents stay involved in their children's lives (Schmazalbauer, 2008). Parents often support their children through teaching them the importance of education and that life is not always easy. These children learn to adapt to a relationship with their parents based on phone calls. Additionally, many children feel this separation is temporary, making it easier to cope with (Schmazalbauer, 2008). When migrant family members send remittances back home to those staying in Honduras, the family is able to engage in more middle-class activities when they previously had a lower socio-economic status (Schmazalbauer, 2008). Children who remained in Honduras note that their lives have improved since receiving remittances from their parents (Schmazalbauer, 2008).

Communication between transnational family members is also an important topic to investigate. In a study of Filipino women working in the U.K., it was observed that they use different technologies for different communication (Miller; Madianou, 2012). They will text family members for a quick check-in, will use a webcam to sing to their child, and will even conduct a video call through a laptop to participate in a funeral service at home (Miller; Madianou, 2012). This aspect of polymedia is essential in the understanding of transnational familial communication in the modern world (Miller; Madianou, 2012). Technology can also help migrants form social networks in their new locations.

When living in a new country, many of these migrants form connections and a sense of community with other migrants (Nagasaka; Fresnoza-Flot, 2015).

Being part of a transnational family can also affect intimate relationships. There are often cultural differences between the home country and the new country of residence, leading to some frustrations. For example, for some Mexican migrants, men may think of the migration as limiting their domestic power, while women see it as limiting their power to control their children (Hirsh, 2003). Relationships between parents and their children are also deeply affected by migration. Typically, in transnational families, children are the last to move abroad because parents may be concerned about the dangers and costs (Heidbrink, 2014; Dreby, 2007). These children may withdraw emotionally from their parents and feel a lack of affection. When looking at children left behind in Mexico, young children identified having multiple mothers and fathers, because they have their caregivers in Mexico and their actual parents abroad (Dreby, 2007). However, among older children, there is often more resentment toward their parents as they understand more about their situation. This can sometimes lead to behavioral and academic difficulties for these children, and they may even drop out of school (Dreby, 2007).

Thus, it is within this theoretical framework of transnational families and transnational care constellations that this article shows the understudied ways in which children in schools and their parents make sense of their positions within their transnational families. In the previous review, authors have thoroughly explored the different effects of transnational family living. However, missing from the literature are the ways in which school-age children discuss their transnational experiences and invoke members of their families in their home countries in the context of caregiving.

Methods

Data for this article stem from a larger ethnographic research project that focuses on how children, parents, and teachers navigate the cultural complexities related to Brazilian immigration in a public elementary school in a northeastern city in Massachusetts. Data sources in the larger project include: field notes from biweekly classroom observations (500 hours); multiple interviews with six teachers, thirteen school staff, and twenty two focal students and their parents; home visits for focal students (22); church visits; doctor's appointments; town hall meetings; lawyer's appointments; speech therapist visits; and observations of school events and staff training sessions (14 events). In addition, the study includes student academic achievement data; drawings and other student-produced artifacts; and information gathered from three quantitative surveys.

For this article, I draw primarily interviews and participant observation with immigrant Brazilian children and their parents to un-

derstand how their transnational family structure contributes to their classroom experience in a school in the United States. Observations included school events and meetings, including fundraisers, holiday events for parents, parent teacher organization meetings, and curriculum nights. All observations were written and/or audio recorded and transcribed within days following the visit.

The School and the Classroom Space

In this section, through the use of data, this article shows how children connect the school and the classroom space with their transnational families in Brazil. These connections are unprompted and show the intentionality in children's understandings of identity and belonging. While language acquisition and language status are primary ways of categorizing immigrant students in schools, in the data below, I show qualitatively how salient transnational family ties are within the classroom space, and thus how immigrant children are more than the language they speak. Children think about their grandparents as prominent figures in their lives, even from a distance. Additionally, parents ponder about how directional their kinship is in terms of care. Caring about their children located in the United States, however caring about their own parents happens across borders, transnationally. Transnational care constellations help us understand how multidirectional these relationships are and in turn how children, parents and grandparents are part of the unit of a family.

Eu penso na minha vó/ I think about my grandmother

Children in this research discussed their grandparents actively. They connected the curriculum they learned at school and songs they were learning with the care they experienced in Brazil. Children, without being prompted, brought up missing their grandparents and thinking about them as caregivers. Thus, grandparents in Brazil were part of this transnational care constellation that transcended borders and appeared inside of classrooms in the United States. Both children and their parents linked grandparents in Brazil to the care and love they felt in the United States. Transnational care constellations are an important structure for teachers and staff in schools to think through, so they can better understand children's experiences in education.

Over sixty Brazilian children were observed over eighteen months of fieldwork. Every child brought up a member of their family in Brazil several times when speaking about their families. However, grandparents stood out as an important part of the narrative inside the classroom. Bruna, a six-year-old, was writing words in Portuguese as part of an assignment her teacher had given her. The piece of paper had the picture of a suitcase for her to color and write a sentence about it. As Bruna colored, she said: *Só de ver a mala eu me lembro da minha vó* (Just by seeing the suitcase I think about my grandmother). Bruna continued

to explain that she had heard from her father that her grandmother had been granted a passport and that she was going to be able to visit her in *América*. Bruna's parents, Antonio and Ludmilla, told me that Antonio's mother was not going to be able to come to the United States because she could not apply for a visa. Bruna later told me, *ela também não pode vim porque a gente tá aqui ilegal* (she can't come also because we are here illegally). I asked Bruna what she missed the most about her grandmother she had not seen in three years and she explained: *ela cuida da gente, faz comidinha, me dá bolo, ajuda em tudo, minha vózinha!* (she takes care of us, makes food, give me cake, my little grandma).

Another child, Camilo (7) also discussed his grandmother inside the classroom. *Minha vó é a melhor vó do mundo, ela me deixa comer no meu quarto, ela mora no Brasil, mas eu moro aqui* (My grandma is the best grandma in the world, she lets me eat in my room, she lives in Brazil and I live here). Camilo arrived in the United States when he was four years old. Three years later as he starts second grade his narrative of care and love continues to be connected with his history in Brazil with his grandmother. Camilo brought up his maternal grandmother often when friends would talk about eating sweets, playing and having pets. *Ela me deu um cachorrinho lá na minha casa do Brasil e ela me ensinou a cuidar dele* (She gave me a puppy in my house in Brazil and she taught me how to take care of him). Like Bruna, Camilo brought up everyday interactions of care and learning with his grandmother. Stories about grandparents in Brazil became currency among young children, as exemplified by this dialogue in the classroom:

> Patricia (7): Onde você mora, tia? (where do you live, auntie?)
> Researcher: Eu moro aqui perto em uma cidade chamada Elliott. E você?
> Patricia: Eu estava lá no Brasil e agora aqui! (I was there in Brazil, but now here!)
> Bruna: Eu também! Mas eu morava na casa da minha vó! (Me too, but I lived in my grandma's house)
> Patricia: Eu morava pertinho da minha vó! Eu sempre comia na casa dela… (I lived really close to my grandma, I always are at her house)
> Pedro: A minha vó morava comigo! Eu chamava ela de mãevó! (My grandma lived with me! I called her momgrandma).
> (Laughter)

As children discussed the degree to which they experienced physical closeness to their grandmothers, they also acknowledged that they no longer had that physical proximity. Carlos (7) was emphatic in describing the distance between him and his grandmother: *Quando você for no Brasil, visita minha vó, tá? É por ela que a gente está aqui!* (When you go to Brazil, visit my grandma ok? It's for her that we are here). Carlos had arrived at the United States only four months prior to the beginning of classes in September. He was from a rural area of the state of Minas Gerais and according to him *minha vó fez muito por nós, agora nós fazemos por ela* (my grandmother did a lot for us now we do it for her). Carlos along with his classmates displayed a narrative that aligned deeply with how his parents talked about duty, gratitude and transna-

tional care. Thus, while children like Cecilia, 6 years old, explained how she always thought about her grandmother and her grandfather when she was singing songs in Portuguese in the classroom, other children like Carlos discussed missing his grandmother, but also the reasoning behind migration to begin with.

Family Ties

Kris, Cecilia's mother discussed her relationship with her father: *Eu penso como eu não posso cuidar dele porque eu não estou lá, mas eu estou dando a melhor educação para as minhas filhas e o melhor futuro* (I wonder about how much I can't care for him because I am not there, but I am giving my daughters the best education and the best future). Kris ponders her own kinship to both sides of the hemisphere and justifies her choices out loud. To *care* is to try to give her daughters the best possible start in life. Being physically away from her own parents, or Cecilia's grandparents, has a clear purpose: for the education of her daughters. This narrative is common in Cecilia's house. Kris and Cecilia alongside her older sister Gabriela speak openly about missing their grandparents. They arrived to the United States in 2017. They were able to secure a tourist visa and overstayed in the United States. Kris is currently trying to enroll in an education institution so that she can apply for a student visa. Kris works as a cleaning person as well as a secretary for a local center for family life. She is active in her church and is currently volunteering as room parent for her daughter's class. Kris explains: *eu não vou ser parte daqui da América. Mas as meninas vão… a minha família, tipo meu pai minha mãe tão no Brasil… mas a família que eu tento criar está aqui* (I will not be able to be part of America. But the girls will…my family, like my dad and my mom are in Brazil…but the family I am trying to raise is here).

Kris, along with twelve other parents interviewed, described a mixed feeling of duty and gratitude toward their transnational constellation. *We come here for our children, but we leave our parents behind*, explained Ana, an immigrant Brazilian mother of two boys. The sense of duty was illustrated not only by the attempts to send remittances home, but also by the constant communication with family in Brazil. Whatsapp and Facebook were used daily. Groups with twelve to fifteen people constituted the *family chats* named by Brazilian immigrant parents.

Arielle is in constant communication with her mother in Brazil. Every day she records multiple audio messages through Whatsapp. Some audio messages are longer than a few minutes each time and Arielle makes a point to show me how she needs to download the messages to listen to them. Brazilian immigrant parents in the United States' narratives are deeply linked to notions of gratitude and care that spans borders that may divide Brazil and the United States. Arielle reflected, *I am able to be here taking care of my daughter and giving her the best opportunity possible because my parents taught me the value of education and they helped me with Jessy when she was born…it's not just because they*

are away that they are not part of her [Jessy] life. Jessy, who just turned 7 worries about her mother and her grandmother, *I know we are here to still help at home…but my grandma will get mad if I don't learn!.*

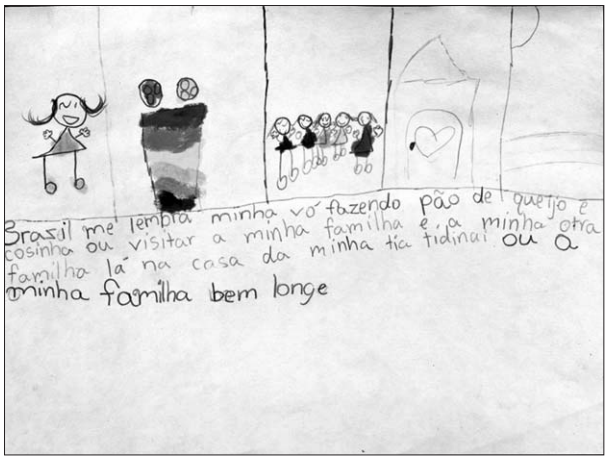
Family structure shapes Brazilian immigrant parents and their children's talks about care, duty and gratitude around their transnational care constellations. These constellations or structures cross national borders and exist both emotionally and digitally. While Cecilia, Jessy, Carlos, Bruna and Camilo are working through their sense of transnational belonging in and out of their classroom, their parents' sense of duty and care are multidirectional.

Conclusion

This article has sought to show how immigrant Brazilian children construct their experiences in the classroom in connection to their families in Brazil. It also showed how parents place their own parents (children's grandparents) into these transnational constellations of care. These constellations help us map how children construct a sense of belonging within classrooms. They also contribute to our understanding of how parents think about their own sense of duty as it related to care. I have argued that young children are actively making sense of their life in the United States as deeply linked to Brazil. This finding is crucial when understanding immigrant children's experiences in schooling. While the literature in transnational families largely focuses on the structure of the family unit, in this article I have argued that schools are paramount spaces to understand how children construct their transnational identity. Children and parents in this research displayed a strong sense of transnational care and belonging as illustrated through their construction of family ties. Salient in these findings is the clear relevance of grandparents as central characters in these constellations of care. Children and parents understood grandparents in Brazil to have a role in either their upbringing or in their imaginary. As the drawing below exemplifies, the narratives children have of Brazil as their home come attached to ideas about their family constellations. As scholars have pointed out transnational families create bonds that cross national boundaries. However, I add to that literature by insisting that we redraw what a *transnational family* looks like, by taking on the concept of a transnational care constellation. In this case children and parents in the U.S. and grandparents in Brazil become the constellation and the unit of analysis to be observed. Parents in the United States are also somebody's children. Thus, the multidirectional care that parents embody in the U.S. becomes apparent to their own children. My goal in this article has been twofold: first to show through the literature on transnational families how Brazilian immigrant families experience separation. Second, to illustrate how children inside classrooms use the space where they speak in Portuguese to discuss their bonds and memories of grandparents in Brazil. The field of anthropology and education has long valued the school space as an ethnographic space. The

field has also allowed us ethnographers to actively listen to immigrant children and to prioritize their transnational experiences and relationships, rather than their *label* of English Language Learners in schools. This study has afforded us this opportunity: to go beyond reductive understandings of immigrant children in schools as students of the English language. Immigrant children, while in school, maintain, reinforce and challenge ideas of what a family unit is. They do that making transnational connections through memories and imaginary. Additionally, this article contributes to possible ideas for curriculum development and teaching pedagogies inside the classroom.

Figure 1 – 'Brazil for me'



Source: Drawing by Leila, 6, and photo by Gabrielle Oliveira.

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Notes

1 See also: <https://library.brown.edu/create/fivecenturiesofchange/chapters/chapter-9/brazilians-in-the-u-s/>.

2 Available at: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-immigration-brazil-exclusive/exclusive-brazil-facilitates-deportation-of-its-nationals-after-u-s-pressure-idUSKCN1VG1PL>.

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