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Pedagogies of Harmonies as Critical Love in English
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Thematic Dossier

Pedagogies of Harmony: Duoethnographic Practices of e-LOVE in Transformative English Language Education

Pedagogias da harmonia: práticas duoetnográficas do e-LOVE no ensino transformador da Língua Inglesa

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Abstract: This duoethnographic study explores how elevated-LOVE (e-LOVE) – Liberation, Openness, Vulnerability, and Equity – functions as pedagogies of harmony in multilingual education. Drawing from the L.O.V.E. framework of Charles (2024b), we actualize notions of love (Barcelos, 2022; Lanas e Zembylas, 2015; Pacheco e Hamilton, 2020) through duoethnography. Duoethnography, according to Norris & Sawyer (2012), is a dialogic research method that examines lived experiences through collaborative narratives and is employed to capture the relational dynamics between a teacher and student. Scholarship on relational equity (DiGiacomo & Gutiérrez, 2016; Ruef & Shepard, 2022) and inclusive pedagogies (Leung, 2021; Zembylas, 2015) reinforces the transformative potential of harmony-centered approaches in fostering healing and multilingual leadership (Charles *et al.*, 2025). At its core, this inquiry underpins pedagogies of harmony (Yiu 2024; Ho, 2017) that embrace interconnectedness, cultural reciprocity, and the co-construction of learning environments where individual agency is balanced with collective well-being. Practiced as e-LOVE, this pedagogy employs relational harmony, shared agency, collective well-being, and reciprocal vulnerability to amplify and nurture a learning environment rooted in equity and care. Findings indicate that e-LOVE fosters healing-centered learning by disrupting asymmetric power relations through shared authorship, affirming multilingual experiences via care, and creating spaces wherein dialogue drives transformation. By situating

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duoethnography within pedagogies of harmony and the e-L.O.V.E. framework, this article demonstrates the power to illuminate and enact transparent, relational, love-centered frameworks for equitable learning spaces and transformative English language education.

Keywords: Duoethnography; elevated-LOVE; pedagogies of harmony; relational equity; transformative English language education.

Resumo: Este estudo duoetnográfico explora como o elevado-AMOR (e-LOVE) – Libertação, Abertura, Vulnerabilidade e Equidade – funciona como pedagogias de harmonia na educação multilíngue. A partir do arcabouço L.O.V.E. de Charles (2024b), concretizamos as noções de amor (Barcelos, 2022; Lanas e Zembylas, 2015; Pacheco e Hamilton, 2020) por meio da duoetnografia. A duoetnografia, segundo Norris & Sawyer (2012), é um método de pesquisa dialógica que examina experiências vividas por meio de narrativas colaborativas e é empregada para capturar a dinâmica relacional entre professor e aluno. Estudos sobre equidade relacional (DiGiacomo & Gutiérrez, 2016; Ruef & Shepard, 2022) e pedagogias inclusivas (Leung, 2021; Zembylas, 2015) reforçam o potencial transformador das abordagens centradas na harmonia para fomentar a cura e a liderança multilíngue (Charles *et al*., 2025). No seu cerne, essa investigação sustenta pedagogias de harmonia (Yiu 2024; Ho, 2017) que abraçam a interconexão, a reciprocidade cultural e a co-construção de ambientes de aprendizagem onde a agência individual é equilibrada com o bem-estar coletivo. Praticada como e-LOVE, essa pedagogia emprega harmonia relacional, agência compartilhada, bem-estar coletivo e vulnerabilidade recíproca para amplificar e nutrir um ambiente de aprendizagem baseado na equidade e no cuidado. Os achados indicam que o e-LOVE promove a aprendizagem centrada na cura ao interromper relações de poder assimétricas por meio da autoria compartilhada, afirmar experiências multilíngues por meio do cuidado e criar espaços onde o diálogo impulsiona a transformação. Ao situar a duoetnografia dentro das pedagogias da harmonia e do e-L.O.V.E. Este artigo demonstra o poder de iluminar

e implementar estruturas transparentes, relacionais e centradas no amor para espaços de aprendizagem equitativos e educação transformadora em inglês.

Palavras-chave: Duoetnografia; elevado-AMOR; pedagogias de harmonia; equidade relacional; Educação transformadora em inglês.

1 Introduction

Building on theories of love in education (Barcelos, 2022; Lanas & Zembylas, 2015; Sealey-Ruiz, 2021; Pacheco & Hamilton, 2020), we examine how relational equity (DiGiacomo & Gutiérrez, 2015; Ruef & Shepard, 2022) and inclusive pedagogies (Leung, 2021; Zembylas, 2016) support transformative co-learning spaces. Central to our inquiry are pedagogies of harmony (Yiu, 2024), which prioritize interconnectedness, reciprocity, and shared agency, we enact elevated-LOVE (e-LOVE) – Liberation, Openness, Vulnerability, and Equity – through reflective, relational dialogue in an English language learning context. Across educational landscapes, especially within multilingual and English language learning contexts, there is a growing imperative to rethink pedagogical paradigms that center relationality, equity, and care. For example, Dr. Sealey-Ruiz (2021, p. 288) emphasized the role of critical love as being "rooted in a profound ethical commitment to caring for the communities in which teachers work and serve". Our article responds to that call by exploring how love as a pedagogical stance can be meaningfully enacted within classroom dynamics through dialogic and co-constructed practices. Drawing from Charles' (2024b) L.O.V.E. framework – Lifting, Offering, Valuing, and Evolving – we position love not as sentimentality but as praxis, capable of disrupting traditional power hierarchies and fostering healing-centered learning environments through duoethnography.

Duoethnography (Norris & Sawyer, 2012) is a collaborative methodology that foregrounds relational inquiry through narrative dialogue. This method offers a unique lens to examine the lived experiences of teacher-student interactions by illuminating how pedagogical love manifests through shared storytelling. As evinced in Charles *et al*. (2025), duoethnography is also a method that generates critical incidents of learning and teaching within multilingual spaces. Grounded in the pedagogies of harmony (DiGiacomo & Gutiérrez, 2016; Ruef & Shepard, 2022; Zembylas, 2015), our work emphasizes interconnectedness, cultural reciprocity, and co-agency as the foundation for equitable learning spaces that advocates for transformative English language education. By situating duoethnography within this broader framework, we demonstrate how reflective dialogue becomes both the medium and message of a harmonizing pedagogy rooted in e-LOVE, that is a pedagogical mode that amplifies care, cultivates shared agency, and nurtures a learning ecology where every voice matters.

The authors of this paper were inspired by conversations and mentoring sessions held throughout the 2024 academic year. The authors first met in spring 2024, wherein Author 2,

an Iraqi student, enrolled in Author 1's first-year writing seminar class. At the beginning of the semester, Author 1, an Associate Professor of English, asked students to read the narrative titled, "Being Double", by Santiago Quintanar and respond to the following prompts:

1 "Write a journal entry about someone you befriended when others may have brushed your friend aside.
   1.1 How did you reach out to the individual, and what were the results?
2 Quintanar felt lonely and anxious as he began college in a new country with a new language. Write a narrative essay about a time when you felt like an outsider, lonely and anxious about making friends and fitting in." (McWhorter, 2024, p. 257)

Author 2 addressed the first prompt by journaling how she sat next to a new student both during class and at the lunch table to make her feel welcome. Author 2 acknowledged that she and the new student did not engage in much conversation, but they were able to communicate and make each other feel welcome via the exchange of gestures, smiling faces, greetings, and farewells. Author 2 responded to the second prompt by focusing on a story where she was the one who had feelings of being alone or like an outsider and a classmate reached out to her for support, provided contact information, and recommended that they remain in touch throughout the class.

Author 1: As the professor, many of my classes comprise of students from international backgrounds and/or whose first language isn't English, so this particular prompt is often the icebreaker narrative. Nonetheless, I develop many writing assignments that focus on getting to know students (Charles, 2024a). Because my classes underscore the concept of cultural exchange and community building through international conversational partners (Charles & Nazyrbekova, 2024), each assignment is meant to tap into how we practice inclusion and belonging. I start with a personal narrative that aims to learn more about my students and foster connections to understand where and how I can be supportive and extend care. The personal narrative asks students to write about who they are, the culture and/or community to which they belong, and how their community has shaped them both personally and professionally. Thus, engaging with Author 2 was a pleasurable delight and I looked forward to learning more about her story.

Author 2: My first impression of Author 1 was amazement as she introduced herself to the class; it was my first time being exposed to the idea of a doctorate's level of English education. At first, I was intimidated by the chances of my writing not being sophisticated enough for the curriculum. More broadly, I was vulnerable of my weaker English background as an Iraqi American. However, my worries faded as I realized my peers were in the same position as me; either having an international or multilingual background. The lessons we went through weren't only targeted towards understanding the English language but rather taking the foundations and pushing past to understanding inclusion and belonging within our communities. Many of the conversations exchanged during the class lessons felt more interconnected to the reality of the world than I had previously experienced. It was refreshing to discuss concepts that were relatable, like the influence of culture on a community; especially since I had recently returned from a trip to Baghdad, Iraq, to visit family that I had not seen for some time. I felt closure within the essays I wrote since it brought forth feelings of separation that occurred when I departed from my family members and country. Upon returning to the

U.S., I pursed a Mechanical Engineering degree with a minor in Mathematics. Recognizing that English was not my strong suit, I focused on what I understood most. Of course, after Author 1's class I became more open minded to the possibilities of sharing my voice via collaboration with her as my mentor. At first, I was hesitant since as an undergraduate, my level of academic professionalism had not reached its peak. However, through one-on-one conversations, I realized that my voice as an Iraqi American student was a valuable and unique perspective that could benefit from being heard.

2 Problem Statement

Traditional educational models in multilingual contexts historically perpetuate power asymmetries, linguistic hierarchies, and deficit-based narratives that marginalize students whose first language is not English. For example, teacher-student relationships frequently operate within hierarchical structures that privilege instructor authority over student agency or lecture-oriented classrooms rather than student-oriented classrooms, which might limit opportunities for genuine dialogue and co-construction of knowledge and learning. As a result, multilingual students experiencing pressure to Americanize their voices and conform to dominant linguistic norms, manifests into internalized deficit narratives and imposter syndrome. Another concern is that cultural differences in communication styles and educational expectations can lead to misinterpretations that disrupt trust and belonging are rarely examined through a lens of relational equity. This article seeks to address the problem by demonstrating how harmony, practiced as e-LOVE, can be enacted as transformative pedagogical practices in English language education, considering that these challenges call for pedagogical approaches that center liberation, openness, vulnerability, and equity while honoring students' full linguistic and cultural identities.

3 Research Objectives

This study counters teacher-student deficit-based narratives by demonstrating how duoethnographic practices, grounded in the e-LOVE framework and pedagogies of harmony can transform teacher-student relationships into sites of healing, empowerment, and co-learning. This study aims to examine the relational dynamics between teacher and student in English language learning settings through duoethnographic and demonstrate how harmony-centered approaches can foster healing and create inclusive learning environments in multilingual contexts. For that, we provide concrete examples and implications for teacher education programs seeking to integrate relational, harmony-centered pedagogies into their curricula and also illustrate how the e-LOVE framework (Liberation, Openness, Vulnerability, and Equity) can be enacted through reflective dialogue to promote healing. We do this by enacting duoethnography as both a research methodology and a pedagogical practice that embodies relational equity and love-centered education within pedagogies of harmony.

4 Pedagogies of Harmony

The pedagogies of harmony, as proposed by Yiu (2024) and Ho (2017), offer a culturally responsive paradigm that centers on interconnectedness, mutual respect, social cohesion, and reciprocal care. Emerging from East Asian philosophical traditions, particularly Confucian and Taoist notions of relationality, these pedagogies emphasize balance over authority, collective well-being over individual performance, and context-sensitive adaptation over rigid curricula. Yiu's (2024) study identified three core features of teachers' multicultural practices: whole-person education, inter-relational harmony of strengthening the collective school unit, and a school decision-making approach that pursues fairness through equal treatment. The study highlighted that visible pedagogical practices led to harmony in the learning environment, but invisible practices, such as addressing the different needs of students, were critical components of harmonious pedagogy as well. Similarly, Rahman (2022, p. 5) studied the role of multilingualism in fostering harmony, concluding that "multilingualism plays a significant role in establishing the principle of global citizenship by developing the spirit of tolerance and understanding and cultivating affection and love". Through our study, the teacher and student came together within a multilingual context to foster care and trust by expressing our feelings and understanding of experiences within academia. Thus, through duoethnography and the e-LOVE framework, we pedagogize a harmonious love.

Pedagogies of harmony are a call to action for teachers to invite students to share their experiences and trust that they are in safe spaces. Dhungana (2024, p. 104) found that harmonious teachers remained calm and attentive, noting that "sharing smiles, using kind words, providing feedback, and giving listening ears to the students were perquisites for enhancing harmony". Harmony does not imply avoidance of conflict; rather, it demands sustained engagement with difference through a lens of empathy and shared responsibility, as shown in relational equity and inclusive pedagogies. Relational equity (DiGiacomo & Gutiérrez, 2016; Ruef & Shepard, 2022) and inclusive pedagogies (Leung, 2021; Zembylas, 2015) provide additional theoretical grounding for this study. These frameworks emphasize the importance of power-sharing, cultural responsiveness, and the recognition of students' full humanity in educational contexts. For example, Lanas and Zembylas' (2015) concept of "pedagogy of discomfort" acknowledges that ethical transformation requires confronting complicity and engaging with tensions rather than avoiding them. This approach is inclusive as it recognizes different experiences in the learning environment and also values those experiences through vulnerability, which is a type of LOVE pedagogy. E-LOVE extends the pedagogies of harmony by embedding love in cultural traditions that value co-existence, care, trust, and listening.

5 Elevated-LOVE (e-LOVE)

The L.O.V.E. framework introduced by Charles (2024b) articulates a vision for education anchored in Lifting others, Offering support, Valuing others, and Evolving self, through guiding principles. These four principles serve as a counter-narrative to traditional, transactional models of education by reframing teaching and learning as relational and ethical acts of care

and trust. Building on this foundation, we conceptualize elevated-LOVE, or e-LOVE, as another praxis of the L.O.V.E. framework in a real-world pedagogical encounter between a teacher and student. It moves beyond conceptual theorization into lived relational enactments that promote harmony and healing by bridging relations and restoring healthy relationships. Thus, it is important for teachers who seek harmony in learning spaces to consider ways in which they harness a method of L.O.V.E. in the classroom. For example, Dhungana (2024) studied ways in which Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) pedagogical approaches enhanced harmony in the learning environment through methods, such as joyful learning and valuing emotions, which all centered a loving pedagogy. These characteristics are positive traits that a caring teacher should possess, and this article leans into those characteristics by offering a rendition of reflective practice through duoethnography.

In the context of duoethnography, e-LOVE becomes visible through the dialogic unfolding of experiences, where both the teacher and student offer themselves as co-learners and co-creators of meaning. In this view, elevated Liberation denotes freedom from oppressive power dynamics and prescriptive roles in the classroom; elevated Openness implies a willingness to listen, risk discomfort, and engage in dialogue; elevated Vulnerability involves an ethical exposure of the self in order to build trust and authenticity; and elevated Equity demands the rebalancing of agency and power within co-learning relationships. Hasan pour Ghaleh and Hassaskhah (2024) explored how expressions of teacher love (e.g., empathy and encouragement) mitigated learned helplessness in female EFL learners. "Findings reveal that key elements of loving pedagogy, including kindness, forgiveness, and teacher student bonding, significantly reduce boredom and moderately address learned helplessness" (Hasan pour Ghaleh & Hassaskhah, 2024, abstract). In our study, these principles resonate strongly with the structure and ethos of duoethnography. E-LOVE signifies that co-learning and teacher-student relationship building requires an ethic of love at the forefront to be an effective pedagogical praxis.

5.1 Love as Pedagogical Praxis

Love as a pedagogical praxis means integrating reflection and action to transform co-learning spaces. This involves both classroom-level changes (e.g., designing translanguaging-friendly curricula, resisting standard English ideology) and broader advocacy (e.g., challenging English-only policies, promoting linguistic human rights, advocating for multilingual resources). Love, in pedagogical terms, has often been misinterpreted as sentimental or peripheral to serious learning. However, scholars like Ghiasvand, Seyri, and Taghizadeh (2025) have shown that through a loving pedagogy in the Iranian EFL contexts, emotions of safety play a crucial role in empowerment. Similarly, scholars like Barcelos (2022; 2025), Lanas and Zembylas (2015), Pacheco and Hamilton (2020), and Imad (2024) argue for love centrality in educational justice, especially in linguistically diverse and emotionally fraught spaces. Their works frame love not as emotional indulgence but as a political and ethical commitment to the humanity of learners. Love, in this framing, refuses dehumanization, attends suffering, and opens possibilities for transformation. Moreover, Barcelos (2022) situates love within language teaching as an act of recognition and validation,

particularly for students marginalized by linguistic hierarchies, by highlighting notions of critical revolutionary love pedagogy.

A critical revolutionary love pedagogy (CRLP) is a social political activity that involves

> acts of kindness, which aim at democratic justice and equity. Above all, the goal is towards humanization. In order to reach this goal, one needs to be committed to dialogue. This dialogue requires humility to listen, faith in others and mutual trust so that we can have knowledge of ourselves and others. The democratic social transformation necessary in a critical love pedagogy can only be possible if we are willing to give, to care and act with responsibility, respect, compassion, empathy, fairness and gratitude. In short, a CRLP is relational and it involves power relations (power with). This can only be done with ethics, patience and time. In addition, one must be willing to accept being vulnerable and engaging in critical reflective practice (Barcelos, 2022, p. 33).

Lanas and Zembylas (2015) speak to love's discomfort and how it requires teachers to face their own complicities and fears. In other words, transparency, trust, and relationships are critical components of love when attempting a harmonious pedagogy. Pacheco and Hamilton (2020) extend this by highlighting how love creates the conditions for ethical care and critical reflection. These perspectives help frame our understanding of duoethnographic dialogue as not merely reflective, but deeply ethical and harmonious. Love as a pedagogical praxis demands a sustained engagement with difference through a lens of empathy and shared responsibility.

The e-LOVE (Liberation, Openness, Vulnerability, and Equity) praxis operationalizes transformative English language education by addressing the unique dynamics of linguistic power, identity negotiation, and cultural navigation that language learners experience. Liberation in transformative English language education means freedom from standard language ideology that positions "native-like" English as the only legitimate goal, internalized linguistic shame and imposter syndrome, pressure to abandon home languages and cultures to succeed, and deficit-based assessments that measure correctness over communicative competence and creativity. Liberation enables students to claim their multilingual identities with pride, as Author 2 demonstrates by transforming from apologizing ("I'm sorry. English is not my first language") to recognizing her ability to transition from one identity to the next as a specialty. Openness requires language educators to examine their own linguistic biases, learn about students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds, invite authentic dialogue about language experiences, including discrimination and microaggressions, and remain vulnerable to having their assumptions challenged by students lived experiences. As documented in this study, Author 1's openness to learning about Iraqi cultural norms around hospitality and respect created conditions for repairing the harm caused by the "wait outside" incident. Vulnerability challenges the expert/novice binary that typically structures language education. When teachers acknowledge that they may not know students' home languages, may not understand all cultural contexts, and are themselves continuous learners, they model the very dispositions they hope to cultivate. Author 1's vulnerability of admitting uncertainties and positioning herself as co-learner created safety for Author 2 to express her own struggles with imposter syndrome and cultural navigation. Finally, equity in language education means recognizing that equal treatment (e.g., everyone speaks English) may perpetuate inequality,

and therefore, provide differentiated supports that honor students' linguistic and cultural identities. Our duoethnographic co-authorship exemplifies equity wherein an Iraqi American student's voice carries equal weight to a professor via power-sharing, which is deemed an act of transformative English language education.

6 Transformative English Language Education

Transformative English language education challenges deficit-based models that position multilingual learners as linguistically deficient, instead centering critical consciousness, identity affirmation, and liberation from linguistic oppression. By synthesizing foundational frameworks with contemporary scholarship on critical language pedagogy, translanguaging, and love-centered approaches (Barcelos, 2022; Pacheco & Hamilton, 2020; Sealey-Ruiz, 2021), we demonstrate how the e-LOVE framework constitutes transformative praxis that addresses the unique linguistic, cultural, and power dynamics inherent in English language education. Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) establishes language as fundamentally tied to power, consciousness, and liberation. Freire's concept of conscientização (critical consciousness) is particularly urgent in English language education, where global linguistic imperialism, colonialism's legacy, and English hegemony create conditions of oppression for speakers of minoritized languages. Critical consciousness in language education involves recognizing that English is not a neutral tool but is embedded within structures of power and understanding how linguistic hierarchies reproduce social inequalities. Central to Freire's conscientização is dialogue for not only language practice, but also as authentic communication that builds on existing knowledge, allowing learners to relate their learning to everyday experiences. As Freire emphasized, dialogue requires horizontal teacher-student relationships where multilingual learners are recognized as linguistic experts, bringing valuable translingual and transcultural knowledge to the learning space.

Jack Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory (1997) provides essential foundations for understanding how learners reconstruct meaning and identity. Mezirow defines transformative learning as an act of autonomous thinking and critical reflection on the assumptions in which our beliefs and habits are based. Within English language education, this meaning-making process requires understanding how language shapes one's identities, agency, and sense of belonging. For multilingual students in English-dominant contexts, it might consist of grappling internalized linguistic hierarchies positioning English as superior to home languages, experiences of discrimination or microaggressions based on accent, grammar, or fluency, conflicts between home and school language practices, and pressure to assimilate linguistically and culturally as shown in this study with Author 2's realization that "in Iraqi culture to indicate to someone that they should wait outside is extremely disrespectful" created a disorienting dilemma that required critical reflection on cross-cultural communication, power dynamics, educational authority, and respect. Mezirow (1997) also emphasizes that transformation requires learners to change their meaning schemes. In language education, this means critically examining and sometimes changing one's beliefs about linguistic competence, legitimacy, and belonging.

García and Wei's (2014) translanguaging theory offers a transformative reconceptualization of multilingualism that aligns with both Mezirow's meaning-making

emphasis and Freire's liberatory critical consciousness. Translanguaging refers to the dynamic bilingual practices whereby multilingual speakers draw upon their full linguistic repertoires to make meaning, rather than treating languages as separate systems. This transformative approach restructures how educators understand language learners. Thus, translanguaging pedagogy rejects monolingual ideologies by positioning students' home languages as legitimate resources and enabling authentic dialogue across linguistic boundaries, all the while supporting students' full identity expression. When Author 1 invited Author 2 to "write in Arabic" if more comfortable, she enacted translanguaging pedagogy that affirmed linguistic identity and disrupted English dominance.

Ginwright's (2018) healing-centered engagement framework extends transformative education by foregrounding well-being and restoration. For language learners who have experienced linguistic trauma, such as being punished for speaking home languages, ridiculed accents, tracked into remedial classes, or told they're not college material, healing is necessary for transformation. Hasanpour Ghaleh and Hassaskhah (2024) found that a "loving pedagogy" significantly reduces learned helplessness in language classrooms. Healing in English language education involves linguistic affirmation that repairs internalized deficit narratives, cultural recognition that validates students' backgrounds and knowledge systems, empathetic connection that transforms isolation into belonging, and storytelling that integrates difficult experiences into coherent narratives of resilience. For example, in our study, when Author 2 advocated for her Korean classmate facing exclusion due to limited English proficiency skills, she demonstrated how healing is relational, because when we are seen and valued, we extend that seeing and valuing to others.

In this way, Norris and Sawyer's (2012) duoethnography provides methodology particularly suited for transformative language education. The dialogic, collaborative nature of duoethnography enacts the very principles Freire and Mezirow advocate: sustained dialogue across difference, critical reflection on assumptions, trying new relational roles, and co-constructing meaning. For language learners, duoethnography offers the opportunity to claim voice, negotiate identity across languages and cultures, examine power dynamics, and produce knowledge rather than just consume it. Charles et al. (2025) demonstrate that duoethnography generates critical incidents of learning and teaching within multilingual spaces, positioning it as both research method and pedagogical practice. When integrated into language curricula, duoethnographic partnerships enable students to explore linguistic and cultural identities through sustained dialogue, practice academic discourse in low-stakes, relationally supportive contexts, develop critical consciousness about linguistic power, and transform from language learners to knowledge producers.

Transformative English language education, grounded in Mezirow's and Freire's foundational theories and extended through contemporary critical language scholarship, fundamentally restructures relationships between teachers and students, multilingualism, institutional power, and student agency. The e-LOVE framework operationalizes these principles through concrete practices by disrupting linguistic hierarchies (Liberation), cultivating cultural humility (Openness), modeling shared learning (Vulnerability), and enacting power-sharing (Equity). By employing e-LOVE and centering duoethnography as a harmonizing pedagogy alongside critical consciousness, transformative English language education creates conditions for healing from linguistic trauma and reaffirming multilingual identities through language policies and practices. This study demonstrates

that transformation in English language education is not merely cognitive or linguistic and that it is relational, emotional, political, and fundamentally tied to human dignity and collective liberation.

7 Research Approach

Our research approach aligns with our commitment to understanding the teacher-student relationship as a dynamic, co-constructed phenomenon shaped by cultural contexts, power dynamics, and trust. We position ourselves as both researchers and participants, rejecting the notion of objective distance in favor of reflexive engagement. Our approach is informed by critical pedagogical theories that challenge oppressive power structures and advocate for education as a practice of freedom. By centering love, care, and harmony as legitimate scholarly concerns, we contribute to the growing body of works that refuses the false binary between rigor and relationality. This approach necessitates ongoing reflexivity regarding our positionalities: Author 1, an Associate Professor of English with institutional authority navigating educational systems, and Author 2, an Iraqi American undergraduate navigating multilingual identity and educational systems. These positions are not fixed but continually negotiated through our dialogic process.

7.1 Research Design

Our research design is inspired by the duoethnographic method. Duoethnography, as articulated by Norris & Sawyer (2012), is a dialogic and collaborative research method that explores lived experience through the co-construction of narrative. Rather than seeking objectivity or distance, duoethnography centers the relational space between participants who engage in iterative dialogue to interrogate shared and divergent experiences. This method is particularly powerful in educational contexts where positionality, culture, language, and identity shape learning spaces. In this study, duoethnography is used to explore the teacher-student relationship as a site of both learning and liberation. The method allows for a reflexive interplay between the voices of both participants, revealing how relational equity and pedagogies of harmony are enacted in real time. By engaging in open-ended, reflective dialogues, we are not merely collecting data but practicing the very principles we seek to elevate – Liberation, Openness, Vulnerability, and Equity.

7.2 Research Questions

To endeavor this project, we posed the following research questions:

1 What are the relational dynamics between the student and teacher in multilingual settings?
2 How do harmony-centered approaches foster healing in a multilingual setting?

3 How might e-LOVE prioritize harmony, reciprocal engagement, and healing in the classroom?

These questions emerged organically from our ongoing mentoring relationship and classroom interactions. Author 2's initial writing assignments (responding to prompts about friendship, belonging, and being an outsider) sparked conversations that revealed both challenges and possibilities in multilingual English language education. Author 1 recognized patterns in these conversations that aligned with her L.O.V.E. framework. Through mutual agreement, we decided to formalize our dialogue into a research partnership, with both authors contributing to question formulation based on what we wanted to understand about our shared experience. The research questions serve multiple purposes: (1) to understand and articulate the relational dynamics we experienced but had not fully examined, (2) to contribute to scholarship on transformative pedagogies in multilingual contexts, (3) to provide concrete examples for other educators seeking to enact love-centered, harmonizing approaches, and (4) to document our own transformation through the research process itself. Both authors answer these questions through our duoethnographic dialogues.

7.3 Ethical Considerations

A key dimension of duoethnography is its vulnerability. Thereby, the duoethnographic method does not treat participants as subjects but as mutually respected co-authors. Throughout our dialogue, we remained attentive to asymmetric power relations inherent in teacher-student relationships, by actively working to flatten hierarchies through listening and shared authorship. For example, throughout the dialogue Author 1 uses her first name rather than her professional title. Moreover, because openness and vulnerability are central to this work, we adopted what we term an ethic of care-in-dialogue, which is a methodological stance that treats disclosure as a relational risk and a gesture of trust. This ethic mirrors the e-LOVE framework, wherein vulnerability is not exploited for data but protected as a site of meaning-making and healing.

7.4 Sampling Technique

This study employs purposeful sampling, a non-probability sampling technique appropriate for qualitative research seeking in-depth understanding of a specific phenomenon. Purposeful sampling allows researchers to select participants based on particular characteristics relevant to the research questions (Palinkas *et al.*, 2015). According to Palinkas *et al*. (2015, p. 2), "Purposeful sampling is a technique widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources". Our sampling was guided by the following criteria:

- Relational Proximity: The authors established an authentic teacher-student relationship with sufficient depth to generate meaningful reflective dialogue.

- Multilingual Context: A multilingual teacher and student whose linguistic and cultural background positioned them to speak on issues of language identity, belonging, and educational equity.
- Willingness to Engage Openly and Vulnerably: Participants commitment to honest and reflexive dialogue about challenging experiences and power dynamics.

This sampling approach aligns with the duoethnographic method's emphasis on relational depth and situates researchers as participants. Thus, this study involves two participant researchers who constitute the complete sample.

7.5 Participants

Participant-researcher (Author 1)

Author 1 identifies as an African American woman, native speaker of English, raised Christian within primarily English contexts. She is also an Associate professor English, who teaches a broad range of courses, such as foundation of language study, sociolinguistics, first-year writing seminar, and advanced ESL. Author 1 occupies a position of institutional power as a professor and published scholar. This power cannot be erased but must be continually negotiated and co-publishing with a student is one way to examine this relationship. She brings expertise in pedagogy and theory while recognizing Author 2 as an expert in the lived experience of navigating English education as a multilingual student. Author 1's transformation through this research involves developing humility and learning to share authority. As the professor who taught the first-year seminar course, where the relationship began, Author 1 provides the teacher's perspective on enacting e-LOVE pedagogy and her willingness to engage vulnerably, acknowledge power dynamics, and position herself as co-learner rather than authority makes this duoethnographic relationship significant.

Participant-researcher (Author 2)

Author 2 identifies as an Iraqi American woman, nonnative speaker of English, raised Muslim (wears Hijab) and speaks Arabic. She was born in Iraq, immigrated to the U.S., learned English as a child, and still maintains transnational connections through family, language, and culture. She attended U.S. public schools from elementary through higher education. Author 2 occupies a position of power as a multilingual engineering student who holds U.S. citizenship, access to higher education, and family support. Her transformation through this research involves reaffirming linguistic identity and respect, developing critical consciousness about systemic power dynamics, and positioning herself as a knowledge-producer rather than a knowledge-receiver. Author 2 provides the student's perspective on experiencing linguistic hierarchies and cultural navigation. Her Iraqi American identity offers specific cultural knowledge about communal values, respect practices, and multilingual identity that challenges the U.S. academic norms, and her willingness to share vulnerable experiences and engage in critical analysis of systems makes the research possible.

7.6 Research Instruments

Our duoethnographic process is guided by a series of emergent prompts drawn from shared classroom experiences. These included:

- Prompt 1: Reflections on moments of conflict or misunderstanding.
- Prompt 2: Narratives of care, risk-taking, and breakthroughs.
- Prompt 3: Conversations about language identity and belonging.
- Prompt 4: Instances of vulnerability in feedback and assessment.

These prompts served as generative starting points for recursive dialogue. The dialogues were conducted in a reciprocal and iterative format, allowing each of the participants to respond, revise, and re-engage with earlier reflections and layers of meaning. Rather than privileging one narrative over the other, the duoethnographic method honors polyvocality, that is the coexistence of multiple truths, and resists the urge to collapse complexity into a singular interpretation.

7.7 Data Analysis

Our data analysis process mirrors the collaborative, reflexive nature of duoethnography itself. Rather than applying predetermined coding schemes, we engaged in dialogic analysis, which is a process of co-constructed interpretation that honored both voices and remained attentive to power dynamics (Norris & Sawyer, 2012). The analysis unfolded through the following iterative phases:

Phase 1: Author 2 individually reflected and shared her response to the provided prompts, noting themes or patterns. Then, Author 1 responded to Author 2's experience reflectively and with words of encouragement, moments of resonance, and connections to theoretical framework.

*Phase 2: B*oth authors came together to share individual interpretations, interrogate assumptions and blind spots, and negotiate meaning through continued dialogue. We examined how our lived experiences illuminated and extended the theoretical frameworks of e-LOVE and pedagogies of harmony.

Phase 3: Through recursive engagement with the data, our results reveal emergent themes in response to our research questions: power dynamics and shared authority, cultural misunderstandings and repair, vulnerability and trust-building, liberation through linguistic affirmation, and healing through relational care.

7.8 Ethical Transparency

We prioritized ethical transparency by making our interpretive process visible in the manuscript, including lengthy excerpts of our original dialogue, allowing each voice to speak for itself, and acknowledging limitations within perspectives. This ethical approach aligns

with the e-LOVE framework's emphasis on liberation, openness, vulnerability, and equity all the while extending these principles from pedagogy into research practice.

8 Results

As mentioned earlier, we situate duoethnography within the praxis of a LOVE framework to demonstrate how reflective dialogue becomes both the medium and message of a harmonizing pedagogy. Rooted in e-LOVE, we seek to amplify the ethic of care-in-dialogue, show a cultivated shared agency in teacher-student relations, and nurture a learning environment where our voices are positioned equitably. Within this section, we address our writing prompts through a dialogic process:

Prompt 1: *Reflections on moments of conflict or misunderstanding*

Author 2:

One of my most memorable experiences was with a professor whom I still respect, however had a minor misunderstanding with. I was scheduled to take an exam in his office, but when I arrived at the appointed time, I found that his door was open with no one inside. Searching the hallway, I saw him a few steps down the hallway, having a discussion with another professor. Once I asked him where to go, he replied, "wait there", which I assumed was his office since he indicated that as the meeting location. As I sat in the guest seat for nearly 10 minutes, I heard his footsteps enter the room. He sat down, and I felt an uncomfortable look by him in my direction. I mentally questioned if it was related to my hijab. However, I highly doubted it due to the number of previous interactions I have had with him being respectful. He proceeded to inform me that sitting in his office was highly inappropriate and unprofessional. I opened my mouth to apologize due to the confusion of his earlier instructions to wait, but I was then interrupted by his remarks about how I should have waited outside his office the whole time.

The professional rapport I had established between the professor and I was abruptly disrupted by the simple remark made which altered my perspective of the educational authority standard. This was because in Iraqi culture to indicate to someone that they should wait outside is extremely disrespectful. The statement entirely dehumanizes the person by treating them like a dog, i.e. since only dogs wait outside in Iraqi culture. Following the conversation, I silently contemplated the degree of intent meant to be portrayed in an offensive form. I finally came to the realization that no malicious acts were directed towards me. Rather, the narrative of his words was told incorrectly, and it reminded me of Freire's (1970, p. 71) quote, "Education is suffering from narration sickness". If the professor had informed me in the beginning to wait outside his office door rather than explain to me afterwards, then I would have experienced different emotions. I would have perceived this interaction as a more respectful approach culturally and a more efficient way of drawing boundaries. As educators, I believe their role is to translate what they want to say into a form that is understood by the students. If their words are narrated in a way a student cannot understand, then the meaning could be lost, and misunderstandings occur. Words translate differently for every person, and

equity enables us to recognize that each student requires unique treatment respective to their background and culture.

Author 1:

Author 2, thank you for sharing this powerful heartfelt reflection. I hear the pain in your words, and I want you to know that your experience matters. While this is a moment of personal discomfort, it is also a lens into broader issues that affect so many students' educational experiences in unfamiliar power structures. What happened to you in that brief exchange with your professor was more than just a misunderstanding; it disrupted a connection you had valued and one that felt respectful. When the tone of that relationship shifted so abruptly, it wasn't just a change in interaction, but a rupture in trust and a shaking of your sense of belonging. That's not a small thing, especially in a space where you're expected to grow and learn. Your insight into how language and culture intersect in educational spaces is profoundly important. As educators, it is our responsibility to ensure that students feel seen, heard, and dignified in our classrooms. Therefore, recognizing each student's background and needs and meeting them where they are with intention and care is an important approach. Your reference to Paulo Freire is striking. When teachers become mere transmitters of knowledge without creating room for dialogue, miscommunication and disconnection occurs. As an educator and professional, the willingness to check how our actions and words land with our students, especially those whose lived experiences are shaped by multiple layers of displacement, difference, or marginalization, are crucial. Please know that your voice is valid and necessary. I encourage you to keep reflecting and questioning the systems you are a part of; it reflects your commitment to equity, inclusion, and fairness in education.

Author 2:

Author 1, I more than appreciate your response to the reality of students navigating the educational system and how our voices need to be heard. The respect I carried for the professor was still profound. However, as you stated, a rupture in trust and a shaking of my sense of belonging led to feelings of not belonging. Unfortunately, in numerous cases, my peers and I have faced unintentional microaggressions or discrimination by educators who carried well-intention. Most instances occur from ill-informed role models rather than malicious intent, which does give reassurance to students, including me, that through communication and dialogue, misunderstandings can be resolved.

Prompt 2: Narratives of care, risk-taking, and breakthroughs

Author 2:

One example reflecting a narrative of care comes from cowriting this very duoethnographic with Author 1. When I was invited to participate in providing my narrative of the pedagogies used within the educational system and how transformative improvements could be made, I was more than willing to bring awareness to the cause. However, doubt had stifled my confidence as a writer due to my international roots. A high case of imposter syndrome had sprouted in my mind. Throughout my years in the educational system, a common apology that came out of my mouth was "I'm sorry. English is not my first language". For any

grammar errors I made or incorrect analogies, I would lower the value of my words due to my cultural standing. So, when writing this article, I decided that through extensive research and attempting to understand material on my own that I could be of greater use. In a way, I attempted to Americanize my voice and change my own perspectives regarding the e-LOVE framework to match the scholarship. However, I realized that the authenticity of my voice was lost due to the embarrassment of not wanting to reach out to Author 1 for help. I wanted her to have faith in the student she selected to co-author the article with and be viewed as capable in her eyes. Due to the lack of communication, I ended up overworking myself on topics that were not relevant to the duoethnography because I was confused. Author 1 was able to proactively assess my confusion, and she reached out to me first. During our conversation, she explained the process of the writing style and how it was okay to reach out if I didn't understand something. Moreover, she told me, "If you feel more comfortable writing in Arabic then feel free to do so." The insertion of that phrase made me realize that the whole point of my role is to provide my point of view from my standing as an Iraqi American student. Through careful guidance, I was able to return to the right track and write my narrative with the reality the readers deserve. In my opinion, the duty of an educator is to take initiative and engage with students in a culturally aware manner, which means analyzing situations and resolving matters that come with the authority of being called professors. Adding on, this does not exclude the student's role to advocate in a respectful way of their needs and perspectives. By demonstrating proactive e-LOVE, communication skills by both the teacher-student relationship exhibit a harmonic performance within the educational dynamic.

Author 1:

Thank you for sharing your deeply honest narrative, Author 2. I feel honored to hear that you highly revere my insights, and the feelings are mutual; I care. Your story is a testament to what it means to navigate education through the lens of e-LOVE. Your shared experience is an example of what happens when someone chooses to show up fully, even in moments of uncertainty. The internalized pressure to Americanize your voice speaks to a broader systemic issue in education, where linguistic differences are too often treated as a deficit. Your willingness to name that pressure and how it influenced your writing process reflects a liberatory act that reclaims your narrative as valid and worthy. Your vulnerability in acknowledging fear and imposter syndrome is not a weakness but a strength, because it reveals how equity is more than access to opportunity, is about being met with care and understanding. My invitation to write in Arabic was a moment of openness. I wanted to affirm your identity and dismantle the myth that academic legitimacy only comes in one language or form. Ultimately, I understand it as your breakthrough in finding your way back to the project and realizing that you never had to leave your truth to begin with. Embrace that you are both a participant in this study and also a co-creator of a more just, inclusive, and liberatory process, and you are welcome.

Prompt 3: *Conversations about language identity and belonging*

Author 2:

I am grateful that my experiences have broadened the awareness of what impression the education system has left on multiple students' minds. The exchanges we have made

only further my confidence that my opinions and emotions are validated by a credible professor such as Author 1. Hence, highlighting that there is a potential for improvement by utilizing the e-LOVE framework for both the professor and students. Reflecting on many classroom occurrences, there are instances of conflict that arise between students due to poor environmental circumstances. For example, I can recall a college experience where I was assigned teammates to present research with while having a restricted time frame. We were given the choice to collectively kick out any student that we didn't see fit to work with us. There was an international student from South Korea whose English was limited, and she did not perform well with memorization. Issues quickly arose amongst my teammates, and they all urged the opportunity to fire her since the professor had given us the option. Luckily, she was not excluded from the group due to my disagreement with the team's vote; I felt that I was the only student who understood her situation. The fact that even the professor recognized that her English was a slight hindrance in our presentation and functionality made me recognize that all the odds were not in her favor. There was no policy in place that accommodated students whose first language was not English. In the end, I sat with her for hours helping her prepare for the presentation, which she excelled in. This situation proved the resilience that she carried despite the unfavorable circumstances. In this case, no one was at fault for her mistreatment, but rather it was a flaw within the overall education system, such as how the initial response to many conflicts is to ignore or get rid of an issue rather than find a solution. It is so deeply rooted that students and professors find themselves unintentionally taking part in toxic relationship dynamics.

Author 1:

Thinking about our conversations regarding identity and belonging, I am reminded of Sealey-Ruiz (2021) notions of critical love that reasserts the need to affirm students' identity by creating a learning environment of trust, an ethical commitment to care, and a culture of equitable expectations. Your message radiates a profound and courageous form of e-LOVE in that it recognizes humanity first, even when it seems like systems fail to. When you offered your teammate time and support, you offered her a place to belong and the chance to be seen beyond her English proficiency. In a system that so often rewards speed, fluency, and performance over connection, you chose compassion over compliance. You saw through the veneer of fairness that justified her exclusion and named what was truly happening: a systemic failure, not an individual one. In refusing to let her be fired, you didn't just advocate for her; you disrupted a cycle of erasure that is not so uncommon for minoritized students. Your decision to sit with her was an act of kindness and an ethic of care through a labor of equity. You reminded her, and maybe even yourself, that no one should have to earn their right to be included. The way your own memories surfaced in that moment shows that we are called to act not just for others, but also for versions of ourselves. That loneliness you recalled is real and sometimes painful, yet you transformed it into a collective uplift. In that moment, e-LOVE shows up as action, as memory, and as resistance to the subtle acts of exclusion.

Author 2:

Author 1, it had felt so common to me to choose compassion over compliance since those are the standards I had grown up with. With no better way to state it, in a system that so often

rewards speed, fluency, and performance over connection, I believe the U.S. standards praise individualized achievement over inclusive togetherness, as iterated in the concept of the 'American Dream' that values meritocracy (Libre Texts). In Iraqi culture, people are rewarded based on cultural standards and teamwork rather than accomplishments. An example of this is the community activities, such as yowm al watani (اليوم الوطني: National Day), which is a version of Independence Day for the Iraqi citizens on October 3rd. The National Day celebrations compare drastically to the U.S. standard of July 4th, where the celebrations are kept very individualized or within their own families. In Iraq, we value the community, especially the workers of the village, such as engineers and labor duties for supporting us throughout the years' struggles. On National Day, free food from every neighbor and restaurant owner is shared amongst strangers and workers, for example. The streets are filled with vendors and families providing for one another, as a remembrance of how teamwork and having humanity towards others is what allows us to strive as a community.

Prompt 4: *Instances of vulnerability in feedback and assessment*.

Since I have experienced these outside societal perspectives in Iraq where their values of achievement and reward are flipped, I believe that humanity is a priority since it allows for community growth. Education is set to move past the U.S ideologies of hierarchy-based accomplishments, which is an iteration of e-LOVE where humanity is put above all else as a priority. I recall my early adolescent years when my speech was considered a hindrance during educational presentations. My voice lacked confidence, and I had pronunciation issues of stuttering. I traveled from one classroom to the next where each speech assessment would differ from the previous one. It felt as if my audience was a new country with different customs every time I transitioned to my next teacher. There were no universal standards to lean on, so I was moved to speech therapy due to the vulnerability of never knowing what my next feedback assessment would read. I blamed my origins of not being born and raised on the standardized English language, with an understanding that somehow my Iraqi American identity was holding me back from performing properly or at the same level as other students. Eventually, I learned that there was no perfect assessment to base my fears on, and it was simply that I needed to adapt to each learning environment.

As an Iraqi American, my specialty is having to transition from one identity to the next to please my targeted audience. For example, when I encounter an Arabic speaking international student, I tend to switch from my English identity to my Arabian one. I have gained confidence through what I had once considered a hurdle or setback. When I had concerned myself with my speech issues, I found that it was rooted in my vulnerability of not being understood and the fear of my words being less valued because of my origins. I dreamed of the opportunity to be seen past language efficiency because it liberates students like me from the structural separation that occurs in the classroom due to our language backgrounds. Frequently, students confine themselves to what they find to be reassuring, such as grouping with others in close relation to their own communities, both culturally and religiously. The reality of the situation is that no interconnectedness is being achieved

through this outdated thinking. Thus, e-LOVE practices are crucial as a means of preventing a toxic cycle of structural separations.

Author 1:

Thank you for sharing, Author 2. I appreciate your feedback as I continue to draft and contemplate ways in which I demonstrate vulnerability in my own writing, provide feedback to students, and develop assessments each semester. One thing for sure is that there is no one-size-fits-all approach, and I am sorry to hear that you had to experience feelings of isolation due to your language background and abilities. The different ways of learning, seeking feedback, and administering assessments will always be an ongoing pedagogical approach, and sometimes a challenge, in need of improvement to meet the diversity of students' needs. Your narrative reminds me that there are also structural issues within the educational system that impact students' understanding of success and failure. This underlying factor certainly exacerbates our need for e-LOVE practices as educators, and it also makes me ponder strategies that are critical for inclusive teaching and fostering communities of belonging. Needless to say, a harmonizing pedagogy that captures the voices and experiences of students, like you, are a great place to start.

9 Discussion

At the intersection of theory and practice lies the dialogic encounter where the principles of the e-LOVE framework take tangible form. In our narratives, dialogue emerges not simply as a research tool, but as a transformative pedagogical act. Each moment of exchange becomes a site where liberation is enacted through listening, openness is practiced in the presence of discomfort, vulnerability is shared intentionally, and equity is nurtured by honoring each other's experiences as equally valid. For instance, in one of our exchanges, a discussion about a misinterpreted classroom comment unfolded into a deeper reflection on cultural expectations, emotional safety, and linguistic confidence. Rather than resolving the incident with explanation or defense, the dialogic process invited pause, reflection, and a reworking of relational dynamics that exhibited a pedagogy of harmony; elevated-LOVE is not an abstract construct but a harmonizing pedagogy. Below we address our research questions:

1 *What are the relational dynamics between the student and teacher in multilingual settings?*

The relational dynamics between the student and teacher in multilingual settings are deeply layered, shaped by power, culture, identity, and the shared goal of communication and learning. These relationships can either foster empowerment and belonging, or reinforce exclusion and silence, depending on how they are cultivated. For example, this paper being coauthored between a professor and an undergraduate is one example of pursuing equitable measures of power dynamics in epistemology. Through our duoethnography, we observed the active performance of e-LOVE: liberation - moments where hierarchical teacher (Author 1) authority was intentionally diffused, empowering the student (Author 2) to steer parts of the conversation or critique teaching practices; openness – the sharing of personal narratives and teaching struggles positions both participants as co-learners; vulnerability – honest accounts

of self-doubt, fear, and cultural dissonance that reveal the emotional labor of language learning and teaching; and equity – dialogues where mutual adjustments were made to ensure understanding and shared authorship. These practices show how relational harmony is an ongoing negotiation of trust enacted through dialogue, care, and humility, which leads us to address our second research question:

2 *How do harmony-centered approaches foster healing in a multilingual setting?*

Harmony-centered approaches foster healing in a multilingual context by creating spaces where students feel seen, heard, and valued. These approaches are grounded in relational care, mutual respect, and collective well-being, which are essential for addressing harm caused by language and cultural-based marginalization. Within multilingual settings, harmony-centered pedagogies are an essential part of a student's learning journey. For example, students being invited to use their home languages in the classroom affirms their whole person and creates spaces of trust. Harmony-centered classrooms emphasize cooperative learning over competition, but competition can be motivating if students are encouraged to co-create those competitive learning spaces. When multilingual students are placed in affirming peer groups, supported in scaffolding their thoughts, and engaged in dialogic learning, they experience classroom relationships as restorative rather than evaluative allowing everyone to contributes and learn.

By creating spaces for students to share their experiences and emotions, especially around cultural and identity, harmony-centered classrooms become spaces of storytelling, truth-telling, trust, care and empathy that transpires into healing (Ginwright, 2018). Multilingual students are often asked to conform or assimilate, but a harmony-centered approach invites students to express themselves fully and asks teachers to model vulnerability and listen actively to foster trust. Harmony-centered pedagogy integrates diverse cultural knowledge systems, practices, and perspectives, so that when students see their histories and traditions reflected and respected, it repairs the harm of erasure. It also helps all students regardless of background, expand their worldview, and practice intercultural humility, all of which can lessen cultural conflicts and misunderstandings. Harmony-centered educators use restorative practices, such as circle dialogues or reflective journaling to process tensions and restore relationships. This helps students build develop communication skills empathetically and through a lens of care. Harmony-centered approaches acknowledge speed and "correctness" but focus on growth and effort as a way of gauging success. This redefinition of success reduces pressure and shame for multilingual learners, allowing them to heal from deficit-based narratives and feel pride in their educational journey.

3 *How might e-LOVE prioritize harmony, reciprocal engagement, and healing in the classroom?*

When viewed through the e-LOVE framework, coupled with harmony-centered training, pedagogy becomes less about delivery and more about relational becoming. Harmony emerges when students are not forced to conform to dominant linguistic norms but instead are provided differentiated supports that honor their cultural and linguistic identities. This fosters a dynamic of inner peace, belonging, and empowerment. Liberation invites learners to see themselves as knowledge-makers whereas openness enables space for multiple ways of expressing oneself. Openness invites authenticity, not assimilation. And vulnerability

transforms fear into courage. When teachers model vulnerability, such as admitting their own struggles, showing humility, and creating space for emotion, they build both relational safety and equity. Equity restores balance, allowing all voices to coexist in dignity and via empathy. Empathy requires more than niceness but actionable measures for understanding a student's journey, which leads to aspects of healing. Healing begins when students feel seen, heard, valued, and respected, allowing them to reclaim the joy and purpose of learning and both the teacher and student to be transformed through an ethic of care. In this co-learning model of well-being, learning is not an individual ascent but a mutually respected and collective journey where each voice shapes and reshapes the other. The learning space thus becomes both a mirror and a map that reflects the relational dynamics already present in pedagogical spaces and offers pathways for intentionally cultivating equity and healing for transformation.

10 Conclusion

This duoethnography inquiry offers a reimagination of classroom relationships that shifts from hierarchical, performance-driven models to ones rooted in a harmonizing praxis of relational equity and care. By foregrounding the principles of e-LOVE, the study affirms that the learning environment can be both an academic space and a relational ecology where healing and equity thrive through transformation. Educators are invited to reconceive their role not solely as knowledge transmitters but as facilitators of relational harmony, where authority is exercised with humility, and student voices are treated as co-constitutive of the learning process. This shift invites discomfort as it requires rethinking traditional teacher-centered classroom dynamics and relationships to open space for mutual relationships to grow. Duoethnography, traditionally viewed as a qualitative method, emerges here as a harmonizing pedagogy. When embedded into the curriculum, such as through co-writing and reflective dialogues, it can foster empathy through shared vulnerability, heighten collective well-being, surface invisible dynamics of power relations, and promote collaborative meaning-making, particularly in multilingual and intercultural settings. This methodology enables classrooms to become living laboratories of love and learning, where theory and lived experience coalesce, and where both teachers and students are authors of their own pedagogical narratives.

This study acknowledges a few limitations that future research might address: Despite our efforts to flatten hierarchies, Author 1 held evaluative authority (e.g., deciding which frameworks are most suitable) and institutional credibility (e.g., being the professor/advisor). Duoethnographic practices call for significant time investment (e.g., writing-intensity) from participants that can lead to unsustainable emotional labor. Also, this study centers the experience of one Iraqi American student and one Professor, so it cannot be universalized across all contexts nor for every multilingual student. Future research would benefit from exploring different demographics and teacher-student relationships to test the vast effectiveness of the e-LOVE framework. Moreover, this study relies on the emotional readiness and self-reflective analysis of the participants, which can vary widely and shape the depth of the dialogic study. Nonetheless, the richness of the relatable exchanges opens availability for multiple interpretations across diverse backgrounds, which is a strength of the duoethnographic method. The contexts (e.g., asynchronous writing in spaces of comfort and

virtual meetings to dialogue) in which the study takes place influences the unique expression of harmony within the e-LOVE framework, reminding us that these findings are nonuniversal. Thus, a need for further research on diverse perspectives regarding harmony through an e-LOVE framework is crucial. Despite these limitations, this dueoethnographic study provides valuable insight into a teacher-student relational dynamic that can lead to transformative educational possibilities for future research in English language education.

By practicing e-LOVE within duoethnographic dialogues, we enact and model the very dispositions needed for harmonic communities to thrive in linguistically diverse contexts. In practice, this might look like listening with care across differences rather than managing diversity. Also, reciprocating vulnerability rather than performative inclusivity by having a shared agency rather than control over knowledge production in scholarship. These dispositions are especially critical in a globalized world where relational ethics are essential for effective communication. In terms of implication measures for teacher education programs, this study offers a concrete framework to prepare educators. By integrating duoethnographic as a method and incorporating the e-LOVE framework, harmony-centered training can:

- Equip teachers to foster inclusive and affirming classrooms.
- Encourage reflexive teaching grounded in vulnerability and liberation.
- Challenge dominant narratives that separate emotional labor from professional rigor.

By grounding our dialogue in the e-LOVE model, we demonstrate how liberation, openness, vulnerability, and equity can be enacted within educational spaces. This duoethnographic inquiry has illuminated the transformative potential of practicing love as a relational ethic and pedagogical stance. At the heart of this work is a call to reimagine education as a space of harmony, where learners and educators are interconnected beings co-constructing meaning and collective well-being. Through duoethnography, we witnessed how love-centered pedagogies cultivate spaces where power is shared, voices are honored, and differences are embraced. The integration of pedagogies of harmony with relational equity and inclusive practices moves us toward genuine transformation. In such classrooms, care is embedded in the curriculum, dialogue is a medium of growth, and love is the methodology of liberation.

As educators face challenges across educational landscapes, this study offers a hopeful and rigorous response to teaching and learning rooted in relational ethics, dialogic vulnerability, and collective flourishing. Thinking ahead, future research might entail expanding e-LOVE duoethnographic research with longitudinal studies to explore partnerships across diverse contexts and track relationships overtime to understand long-term impacts across changing contexts. To effectively track progress might entail a call for quantitative approaches of developing instruments that measure relational equity, survey student perceptions, and correlate practices with outcomes. This may also tap into comparative studies of investigating how e-LOVE manifests across cultural contexts, disciplinary areas, online vs. face-to-face environments, different age groups, etc. Pedagogically, future suggestions might entail curriculum redesign that integrates e-LOVE across content areas. This would also necessitate student-led initiatives that empower students to co-create projects and welcome spaces for support groups where every voice is heard. Similarly, institutional transformation might entail preparing leaders to champion concepts of e-LOVE across campus. Through e-LOVE,

we find not only a framework but a way forward – toward equity, toward healing, and toward pedagogies of harmony and beyond.

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Authors' Contribution

The conception of this study and research approach was led by the first author. Data generation, reflexive dialogue, and analysis were conducted jointly through a duoethnographic process. Author 1 led the theoretical framing and provided mentorship throughout the project, while Author 2 developed reflexive narratives and contributed experiential analysis. Both authors participated in drafting, reviewing, and revising the manuscript and approved the final version. The authors share full responsibility for the work.

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The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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The authors declare that Microsoft M365 Copilot was used exclusively for language clarity. The tool did not contribute to ideas, analyses, or interpretations; all scholarly content remains the authors' original work and responsibility.

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