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Zúñiga, Víctor; Hamann, Edmund T.; and Sánchez García, Juan, "Students We Share Are Also in Puebla, Mexico: Preliminary Findings from a 2009–2010 Survey" (2016). *Faculty Publications: Department of Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education*. 357.
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Students We Share Are Also in Puebla, Mexico: Preliminary Findings from a 2009–2010 Survey

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Most accounts of American immigrants have tended to describe newcomers as emigrating from particular countries like Italy, Germany, or Poland. Yet, tremendous variations existed within national boundaries with some regions and districts experiencing intense bursts of emigration and others almost none at all.

John Bodnar, *The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America*

Increasingly, emigrants from Mexico to the United States are taking their children with them when they migrate. Additionally, children born to Mexican parents living in the United States may have dual US and Mexican citizenship. Later their parents may return to Mexico with their children who have now learned English and adapted to the US way of life. The US Supreme Court decision *Plyler v. Doe* allows

Published (as Chapter 11) in Harriet Romo & Olivia Mogollon-Lopez, eds., *Mexican Migration to the United States: Perspectives from Both Sides of the Border* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2016), pp 248-264.

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undocumented children living in the United States to attend US public schools through grade twelve, which means that when their immigrant parents return to Mexico or send their children back to Mexico to live with relatives, the children may have spent several years in US schools and may be unfamiliar with Mexican educational programs. Depending on their age and time in the United States, they may have been taught entirely in English and may be lacking in academic Spanish-language skills. Their return to Mexico creates demands in Mexican schools to identify those students and determine how to incorporate them into the Mexican educational system. This includes providing Spanish-language instruction and a national curriculum that varies significantly from the US instructional program. This chapter explores the effects on the Mexican educational system of the increasing numbers of these transnational students who have experienced schooling in both the United States and Mexico and presents data showing where they are concentrated in Mexico.

Findings from Mexican Schools in the States of Nuevo León, Zacatecas, and Puebla

In 2004 our research team began to observe, explore, and analyze the binational schooling trajectories of students attending public and private schools in Nuevo León and Zacatecas. Both states are characterized by a long history of international migration from Mexico to the United States and, perhaps a less-recognized phenomenon, from the United States to Mexico. Inhabitants of Nuevo León, Mexico, have been moving between Texas and Northeast Mexico since the second half of the nineteenth century. Historian Gonzalez Quiroga (1993) has chronicled kin networks linking cities, counties, and regions from that time. Based on family ties, migrants profited from trade opportunities in an emerging capitalist order. However, workers and families that participated in those migratory circuits constituted only a small proportion of the total population of Nuevo León. Indeed, Monterrey, Nuevo León's capital, has been better known for *pulling* international and internal immigrants to its metropolitan area than for *pushing* emigrants to the United States (Zúñiga 1993; Zúñiga and Sanchez 2010). The 2010 Mexican Population Census shows that 76,153 individuals left metropolitan Monterrey between 2005 and 2010 to go to other regions

of Mexico. During those years the Mexican census counted 133,647 individuals who came to metropolitan Monterrey from other regions of Mexico. Thus, the demographic gain for Monterrey was more than 50,000 people in that period. Between 2005 and 2010, 16,448 individuals left metropolitan Monterrey to migrate legally to the United States (0.4 percent of the population).

Zacatecas, Mexico, is another story. This Mexican state shares with Nuevo León an international migratory tradition dating from the nineteenth century. Zacatecas, however, is different in terms of the much higher proportion of its people who have lived and worked in the United States. Following the typology proposed by Durand and Massey (2003), Zacatecas is part of Mexico's central western region, known as the historical heart of Mexican migration to the United States. Today, half of the Mexican-born population in the United States was born in that part of Mexico (Durand and Massey 2003).

Based on our estimates, the basic school system in Nuevo León (mandatory from first to ninth grade) enrolled 10,500 transnational students in November 2004. This figure represented 1.6 percent of total enrollment. In turn, the Zacatecas school system registered 7,500 transnational students in November 2005, representing almost 2.4 percent of that state's total enrollment.

The transnational students we interviewed in Nuevo León mainly had US school experiences in Texas, although many other states were also represented. Most transnational students in Zacatecas named California as the US state in which they attended school. Other US states in which transnational students from Zacatecas attended school were Nebraska, Georgia, Massachusetts, Maryland, Wisconsin, and Oregon. The preponderance of Texas as destination or origin for Nuevo León transnational students is notable; more than 66 percent of them had lived in Texas and only in Texas. Very few had lived in California (6 percent), and a small proportion had attended schools in new destinations of Mexican immigration (Zúñiga and Hernandez-Leon 2005), such as Georgia, Alabama, or North Carolina. In contrast, 40 percent of transnational children and adolescents from Zacatecas had been enrolled in schools in "new Latino diaspora" states (Hamann and Harklau 2010) with very few in Texas schools (16 percent). In sum, both Nuevo León and Zacatecas school systems have been receiving students from American schools recently, but the population clearly differed in terms of the geographic distribution of students' prior US school experiences.

Transnational students in Nuevo León typically had lived with their parents and siblings in both the United States and Mexico, while in Zacatecas we found much more geographically dispersed families, families “divided by borders” (Dreby 2010), and families with more complex stories of separation and deportation. Some of those stories had tragic endings that impacted the students’ life courses (C. Suárez-Orozco and M. Suárez-Orozco 2001; Zúñiga and Hamann 2008; C. Suárez-Orozco, M. Suárez-Orozco, and Todorova 2010).

Transnational students in Zacatecas also had longer US school experiences than those from Nuevo León. We employed two indicators for measuring the length of children’s school experiences in the United States: the number of school years spent in the United States and the percentage of school years in the United States as a proportion of the student’s total years of schooling. The first indicator can be misleading because the number of school years spent in US schools is a function of the age of the student, while the second better conveys the impact of the schooling on each side of the border. Thus, utilizing the second indicator, we found that half of the transnational students in Zacatecas had completed more than 30 percent of their school trajectory in the United States, compared with a third of students in Nuevo León. In other words, 66 percent of transnational students in Nuevo León had studied mainly in Mexico, but only half of transnational students in Zacatecas had completed most of their studies in Mexico.

With a clear understanding of the Nuevo León and Zacatecas cases, not just from our 2004 and 2005 school visits but also from subsequent years of scrutinizing data collected from these states, as 2010 approached we were aware that important pieces of the US-Mexico migration story were missing. Puebla, for example, was representative of the kind of Mexican state that our collected data did not describe well. Puebla and other states in the southern region of Mexico, such as Oaxaca and Guerrero, did not participate substantially in international migration during most of the twentieth century. Moreover, unlike Zacatecas and Nuevo León, Puebla has a considerable indigenous population and a much more complex and heterogeneous school system. We were aware of studies by Binford (2003), Cortina and Gendreau (2003), and Smith (2003, 2006) that focused on Puebla. Their research, however, concentrated on a specific subregion of the state or offered limited quantitative information.

To expand on what we had learned in Nuevo León and Zacatecas, in November 2009 we began collecting data on transnational students in a third Mexican state, Puebla. Funded by the Programa de Educación Básica sin Fronteras (Subsecretaría de Educación Básica, Secretaría de Educación Pública), the research team surveyed a representative sample of 18,829 students enrolled in 214 schools in Puebla and found 110 students with transnational school experiences. Additionally, in the spring of 2010 we returned to several Puebla schools and conducted in-depth interviews with transnational students and their teachers. The interviews yielded valuable information regarding students' education experiences, comparisons between Mexican and American schools, and migration dynamics. From these interviews we compiled more than five hundred pages of stories and descriptions illustrating the complex and rich trajectories of transnational students.

International Migration and the School System in Puebla: A Quick Picture

The public school system in Puebla, Mexico, has 2,925 elementary schools (*primarias*, first to sixth grade) and 1,726 junior high schools (*secundarias*, seventh to ninth grade) that enrolled almost one million students during the 2009-2010 school year. In this section we present data from a subsample of students in the fourth to ninth grades ($n = 11,998$). Younger children (grades first to third) were usually unable to respond to even basic questions included in the survey, such as where they had lived in the United States. Although the number of transnational students in Puebla proved relatively small, we were surprised when almost half of the 18,000 students we surveyed reported that they had at least one member of their extended family (uncles, cousins, nephews, etc.) residing in the United States at the time of our survey. This meant that the United States was a part of a huge number of students' everyday lives because they often received news, gifts, or phone calls from across the border, or *el otro lado*. When we focused more narrowly on nuclear families, 20 percent of our survey respondents reported at least one core figure living, studying, or working in the United States. The percentage of internationally divided families in Puebla (almost 20 percent) was greater than in Nuevo León (8

Table 1. International family dispersion of students in elementary and junior high schools in Nuevo León (2004), Zacatecas (2005), and Puebla (2009)

<i>Family members living in the United States at the times of the survey</i>	<i>Puebla</i>	<i>Nuevo León</i>	<i>Zacatecas</i>
Father	8.2%	4.5%	15.9%
Mother	2.1 %	0.6%	1.6%
Siblings	9.6%	2.9%	16.7%
Any nuclear family members	19.9%	8.0%	34.2%
Other family members: uncles, aunts, cousins, nephews, etc.	48.0%	39.6%	61.8%
None	33.4%	53.3%	29.2%

Source: Subsample of students 4th-9th UDEM-CONACYT survey 2004, Nuevo León = 10,063 students; UDEM-CONACYT survey 2005, Zacatecas = 7,619 students, and UDEMPrograma de Educación Básica sin Fronteras survey 2009, Puebla = 11,998.

Note: Totals exceed 100% because some categories are not mutually exclusive.

percent), but below that of families in Zacatecas (34 percent) (see Table 1). These figures might overestimate the number of divided families because some of the students may belong to the same family.

About 25 percent of students matriculated in schools in Puebla reported having had contact with transnational students or peers who had school experiences in the United States. Unlike what we observed in Zacatecas, the nontransnational (mononational) students in Puebla seemed to be building borders, dividing themselves from their transnational peers. Many mononational children stated: “They [students with school experience in the United States] are different from me.” They grounded this claim on a variety of arguments: differences in the manner of speaking, access to technologies or goods, wealth, money, and even skin color. One student who had never left Mexico wrote, “They speak a strange language, they are blond, that is why one calls them ‘gringos,’ and they have more money than us.” In the same line, another mononational student said, “They act differently from us, they have a different accent, a different Spanish.” One more mononational child insisted that transnational students were arrogant and carried themselves as if they were superior to mononationals, “When they arrive here [in Puebla] from abroad they feel superior, and when someone wants to talk with them, they ignore us.”

As might be expected, language barriers and differences in experiences are the most important dividing characteristics between

transnational students and their mononational peers. Often, Puebla students with no school experiences in the United States considered that transnational students did not speak Spanish well. They had ample reasons for concluding that their transnational peers were not sufficiently proficient in Spanish. Some pointed to accents, others to the fact that transnational students mixed English and Spanish. Language as a dividing factor in elementary and junior high schools in Puebla is probably related to the reality that transnational students returning to Puebla have had longer school trajectories in the United States than students returning to Nuevo León and Zacatecas, a finding we discuss further below.

Language was not the only issue that divided transnational and mononational students. Mononational students in Puebla conceptualized American schools as institutions where Mexican children were not welcome. They imagined that Mexican children were mistreated, discriminated against, or abused there. The word choices that some Puebla mononational students used to describe American schooling were surprising, such as “racism,” “discrimination,” “hate,” “illegal,” and other similar notions. Their discourse in interviews reflected negative perceptions about American schools without particular references or evidence. In contrast, transnational students in Puebla described their experiences in American schools as stories of success, learning, good relations with peers and teachers, and fruitful activities. In Zacatecas, we did not detect the negative perceptions regarding the treatment of Mexican children in the United States prevalent among mononational students in Puebla (see Table 2).

Table 2. Perceptions of treatment accorded to Mexican students in US schools (respondents with no US school experiences)

<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Students in Puebla</i>	<i>Students in Zacatecas</i>
Bad	49%	28%
The same as here (Puebla/Zacatecas)	32%	43%
Good	19%	29%
Total	100%	100%

Source: Subsample of nontransnational students 4th-9th UDEM-CONACYT survey 2005, Zacatecas = 7,396; and UDEM-Programa de Educación Básica sin Fronteras survey 2009, Puebla = 11,913.

The legal status of transnational children and their parents may have influenced the children's perceptions of school. We did not ask the children if they resided in the United States as authorized migrants or not. However, it seems likely that a few of the students we met in Puebla were unauthorized when they were in the United States and/or in mixed-status families. Therefore, their US experience (or their parents' experiences) might have been haunted by the prospect of deportation. Because we did not ask about immigration status, we have little information about students in that cohort or about their family members who might have experienced deportation. What we do know is that US schools tend to be remembered fondly by students in the study.

Where Are the Transnational Students in Puebla?

Children and adolescents ages six to fifteen who have completed part of their schooling in Mexico and part in the United States make up the majority of transnational students in Mexico. In our samples we found a few students older than fifteen (sixteen to nineteen), but they represented just a small proportion of the total (1.5 percent). Previous research has shown that transnational educational experiences are not simple. They are accompanied by language transitions and discontinuities (Panait 2011), curricular gaps and ruptures (Hamann and Zúñiga 2011), multiple literacies (Guerra 1998), family geographical dispersions (Zúñiga and Hamann 2011), teaching mismatches, and hyphenated or transnational ethnic identities (Vandeyar 2011). All these experiences are increasingly emergent phenomena that are evident in Mexican and American schools.

During their stay in the United States, transnational students are usually classified according to their English proficiency and racial or ethnic identities. US schools identify immigrant children as beginner, intermediate, or advanced English-language learners (ELLs), and, for purposes of measuring achievement and identifying achievement gaps, they are also classified as Hispanic or Latino students. They are rarely characterized as migrants or sons and daughters of migrants. The definition of *migrant* is most frequently used in US public schools to identify children who move from one place to another following parents who are engaged in agricultural activities throughout the United

States. The US federal government provides funding to boost educational and support services for these migrant children and to ensure that school records are transferred among the US schools they attend.

The US Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, contains major statutory provisions that apply to the Migrant Education Program.¹ Although originally targeting children whose parents were migratory agricultural workers, the category was expanded to include children whose families have relocated for other types of work, such as meat-packing. In any case, the US school system rarely considers migrant children as transnational students. For the most part, according to American educational desegregation requirements and Title VII bilingual education policies, language acquisition and racial and ethnic taxonomies rather than transnational experiences often dictate categories for student programs. Thus, as a result of the US school system's guidelines to classify students as migrants, those who might have experienced schooling in both Mexico and the United States might not be identified as such.

Although a more elaborate taxonomy of transnational students is described in Zúñiga and Hamann (2009), from our surveys for this study we identified four types of transnational students. A first group includes students who were born in Mexico, accompanied their parents or others to the United States, attended American schools, and then returned to Mexico and enrolled in the Mexican schools where we found them. This group constitutes the most common category (60 percent). Generally, the students started their schooling in Mexico and then went to the United States before returning to Mexico. In some cases, however, children arrived in the United States when they were very young, so that they began their schooling in American schools even if they were born in Mexico.

A second group of students were born in the United States, began their schooling there, and some years later came to Mexico for the first time in their lives. These two types of students represented about 30 percent of the total transnational school population in Zacatecas and Nuevo León. Those born in the United States are legally binational, with American citizenship because of their birthplace and Mexican

1. Also known as Education of Migratory Children, Title I, Part C. (US Department of Education 2004). For text of the act, see <http://www.ed.gov/esea>

citizenship conferred from their parents' nationality. A third type of transnational student included children who spent part of the school year in the United States and part in Mexican schools every year. These students were exceptional and represented a very small fraction of our samples.

Finally, we need to consider the children who are transnational, but not transnational students. In this case we are referring to children who were born in the United States but did not attend American schools because they returned with their parents to Mexico at an early age. Due to their dual nationality and transnational history, they have a high probability of returning to the United States and enrolling in American schools (according to their own expectations as recorded in our surveys). They are candidates for becoming transnational students at a later stage in their lives. Moreover, their perception of the school system in Mexico may differ from that of their classmates, as these students can more tangibly consider how or whether what they are learning in their Mexican classrooms would affect their potential future in the United States (Zúñiga and Hamann 2013).

We found students from all four of these categories in Puebla. According to our estimates, there were about six thousand transnational students in Puebla attending elementary and junior high schools in 2009-2010. Students with previous schooling experiences in the United States represented a mere 0.6 percent of the total Puebla elementary and junior high student population of 966,000 students. The proportion of transnational students in Puebla is significantly smaller than the proportion of such students in Nuevo León and Zacatecas but consistent with the information we have about regional variations in international migration intensity in different Mexican regions. In fact, Puebla is considered a region of low international migration intensity compared with Zacatecas, Guanajuato, Michoacán, or Jalisco. At the same time, Puebla has a short Mexico-US migration history, even if Smith (2003) found residents from Puebla or Poblanos who arrived in New York during the 1940s. Those individuals and families were exceptions and pioneers and did not represent a regular and mature migration network from Puebla to New York.

The migratory flow from Puebla to the United States is young compared with the migrations from Zacatecas and Nuevo León. The latter two states represent Mexican regions with more than a century of history of international migration. The intensity and length of their

respective migratory histories explain much of the difference in the proportion of transnational students in the schools in these three states.

Especially in the case of Puebla, we must also pay attention to huge internal variations. Indeed, if we focused on some portions of the state, it would seem that Puebla had practically no transnational students at all, while if focusing on other regions, the profiles would be closer to those of Nuevo León and Zacatecas. The percentage of transnational students in Puebla as a whole does not reflect the reality of the different regions in the state. Puebla has 217 municipalities. In our representative sample of schools and students, we collected information from 98 of those municipalities and were able to identify regional differences and confirm the findings of other scholars (D'Aubeterre 2000; Marroni 2000; Binford 2003; Smith 2003; Marroni 2006; Cordero Díaz 2007; Cota-Cabrera et al. 2009; Mancillas and Rodriguez 2009) who report that international migration from Puebla and Oaxaca to the United States has its roots primarily in a micro-region referred to as the Mixteca. Our conclusion is corroborated by research in New York and California that identified the origins of Mexican newcomers (Velasco Ortiz 2002; Smith 2003, 2006; Cornelius et al. 2009).

Among the ninety-eight Puebla municipalities included in our sample, we found transnational students in only thirty-five. Moreover, 50 percent of these transnational students were enrolled in schools located in municipalities in two specific regions: Izúcar/Atlixco and the Mixteca Poblana (see Table 3). It is worth noting that the proportion of transnational students in the Mixteca Poblana is very similar to the proportion found in Zacatecas. In turn, the region of Atlixco/Izúcar, which is slightly northwest of the Mixteca, has a percentage of students with previous school experience in the United States comparable to that of the Nuevo León school system.

Transnational Students in Puebla

In this final section we analyze and discuss four preliminary findings that constitute unique traits of Puebla transnational students. First, students in Puebla, unlike those in Zacatecas, were enrolled primarily in schools in California (28 percent) and New York (22 percent). The remainder went to schools in Arizona, Colorado, Georgia, Minnesota,

Table 3. Geographical concentration and dispersion of transnational students in the state of Puebla

<i>Region</i>	<i>Number of Students surveyed</i>	<i>Number and proportion of Transnational students</i>	<i>Municipalities included in the region</i>
Sierra Norte Huauchinango	2,745	4 (0.1 %)	Zihuateutla, Cuautempan, Xicotepec, Chignahuapan
Sierra Nororiental	2,553	2 (0.08%)	Zapotitlán de Méndez
Valles de Serdán	2,218	11 (0.5%)	Cañada Morelos, Tecamachalco, Quecholac, Guadalupe Victoria
Region of Puebla City	5,683	21 (0.4%)	Domingo Arenas, Puebla, Tepeaca, San Pedro Cholula, Cautlancingo, Juan C. Bonilla
Atlixco-Izúcar	1,974	28 (1.4%)	Izúcar de Matamoros, Chietla, Atzala, Atlixco, Tlapanalá, Tepexco, Tulcingo, Tepeojuma, Tilapa
Mixteca	1,339	32 (2.4%)	Huehuetlán el Chico, Tepexi de Rodríguez, San Jerónimo Yayacatlán, Jolalpan, Xayacatlán de Bravo, Acatlán, Axutla
Tehuacan-Sierra	2,317	12 (0.5%)	Tlacotepec, Tepanco, Ajalpan, Negra Zinacatepec
Total	18,829	110 (0.6%)	

Source: UDEM-Programa de Educación Básica sin Fronteras Survey 2009, Puebla = 18,829.

North Carolina, Texas, Washington, and Florida, but in very small proportions. The limited number of destinations illustrates how the Puebla migratory network is less mature and not as strong as networks connecting other parts of Mexico with the United States. Thus, Poblano migrants, comparatively, lack the contacts, knowledge, and resources that Zacatecanos have accumulated through several generations of migration.

Second, we found that transnational students in Puebla spent relatively more time in American schools than students in Nuevo León and Zacatecas. For most of them, the years of schooling in the United States were proportionally more extensive than the years enrolled in Mexican schools. For example, only 25 percent of students in Nuevo León studied half or more than half of their school years in the United States. In Zacatecas, 32 percent of the students studied half or more than half of their school years in the United States. In Puebla, we found

that more than 50 percent of transnational students had spent a greater amount of time in US schools than in Mexican schools. Indeed, Poblano transnational students were more Americanized than those we met in Zacatecas. The relative importance of American schooling as a proportion of total schooling for transnational students in Puebla might help explain why they were considered “different from us,” a reaction from students who had not experienced life in the United States, which we discussed earlier in the chapter. The proportion of years in American schools without doubt also influenced Puebla transnational students’ self-declared language proficiencies: 57 percent of them claimed to be bilingual in Spanish and English, and none of them indicated that they spoke another language besides Spanish or English. In contrast, mononational students in Puebla mirrored the multilinguistic landscape of the state’s school system: 13 percent of fourth-through-ninth-grade students reported speaking an indigenous language at home different from the dominant Spanish language. They spoke Nahuatl, Mixteco, Totonaco, Popoloca, Otomf, and other languages.

Third, we learned that a high percentage of transnational students in Puebla belong to internationally divided families. Half of the students had lived separated from their fathers, and 25 percent of them had lived separated from their mothers. As Dreby (2010) has pointed out, the issue of families divided by borders is clearly linked to fragmentation, school failures, and complex kin networks. As a consequence, grandparents, particularly grandmothers who become caretakers of children left behind when parents migrate, play new roles associated with the globalization of working-class people in regions of Mexico such as Puebla and Oaxaca.

At this preliminary stage in the analysis of the Puebla data, we can say, first, that our findings confirm quantitatively the issue of divided families that Dreby (2010) has observed ethnographically. Second, results show that divided families are much more characteristic of certain regions and locales than others. Data collected in Nuevo León and Zacatecas indicated deep regional differences, but not the pattern of family division. Thus, high-frequency separation of nuclear family members is a trait associated not with international migration in general but rather with some strategies or conditions that were more common in Puebla (Zúñiga 2015).

Finally, we found that a large number of transnational students in Puebla identified themselves as Mixteco, not as Mexican, not as

American, and not as Mexican American. Although ostensibly an indigenous identity, Mixteco was a cultural or ethnic identity privileged by those who were born in the United States, in comparison to transnational children born in Mexico, particularly in the state of Puebla. In contrast to our observations in Nuevo León and Zacatecas, very few Poblano transnational students identified with the label Mexican American and none identified themselves as American. We recognize that the meaning of these patterns of identification cannot be explained by our surveys. It is necessary to analyze the interviews in more detail to explore why students in Puebla preferred a local/regional/ethnic/cultural Mixteco identity instead of national identities such as American or Mexican or dual identities such as Mexican American.

Conclusion

Our research demonstrates that some of the students that the United States and Mexico *share* are also in Puebla. These transnational students are mostly from very specific areas of the state of Puebla, and, furthermore, the locations of their US experiences also seem to be particular to California and New York City. Most of these transnational students are bilingual and have acquired a number of “American” traits as a result of their length of stay in American schools. We estimate there are six thousand transnational students in Puebla, and although they represent a small fraction of the state’s total enrollment, an important proportion of them are Americans by birthplace. Due to their dual nationality, they can imagine their adult lives in both countries.

The strongest finding of this preliminary analysis is not that we found the students we share in Mexico, but that they are geographically dispersed and concentrated in certain Mexican schools and regions across the country. Thus, if we want to have effective educational policies to welcome transnational children and improve their schooling conditions in Mexico, we need to develop maps showing the concentration patterns. Furthermore, addressing the needs of transnational students requires attention to their experiences as migrants. As noted by Zúñiga and Hamann (2014, 11), children negotiate and

experience their transition from one country to another in “different and complex ways.” Making sense of transnational students’ needs requires further attention to the reasons behind their return or migration to Mexico and children’s perceptions of the changes in their lives and their futures (Zúñiga and Hamann 2014). Policies aimed at reintegrating or incorporating transnational children should consider how children experience, make sense of, and negotiate migration at the macro (legal status, economic conditions, job availability), meso (regional and community), and micro (family and individual) levels (Zúñiga and Hamann 2014, 3).

Transnational students are not simply “all over” Mexico; they are in specific regions and locales. This conclusion suggests a useful parallel with what Valdés, Capitelli, and Alvarez (2011,6) noted about the United States in their book *Latino Children Learning English*: “Across the country [in the United States], 70 percent of young English language learners are being educated in 10 percent of all elementary schools.” Valdés, Capitelli, and Alvarez (2011) concluded that these figures demonstrate the extent of segregation that children of immigrants experience in American schools. Valdés (2001) also found that segregation often meant that Spanish-speaking students did not learn English because they had few interactions with English-speaking students. Our research adds that nothing different is happening in Mexico. In Mexico there are also high concentrations of transnational children in specific regions. In the United States, language differences may highlight the hypersegregation faced by children of immigrants in American schools. In Mexico, language differences also influence transnational children’s incorporation experiences. Irrespective of the terminology we use, the consequences are similar. *They are the students we share.*

Acknowledgments — This paper was originally presented at the Bilateral Perspectives on Mexican Migration Conference organized by the University of Texas at San Antonio Mexico Center, March 3 and 4, 2011, San Antonio, Texas. Anabela Sánchez, an associate professor of sociology at the Universidad de Monterrey (UEM), was in charge of the survey coordination in Puebla. The team of researchers is especially thankful for her valuable and professional assistance, as well as for the support offered by Lizbeth Hernández Sierra and Leticia Herrera Fuentes in Puebla and Blanca Cruz in Monterrey.

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