
Reflections from the Classroom and Beyond: Imagining a Decolonized HCI Education

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Abstract

As the field of Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) increasingly engages with matters of social change for the Global South, more students from this region—seeking to use HCI for impacting their countries—emigrate to HCI programs in the Global North. In turn, this challenges the assumed targeted audience, intentionality, and pedagogical approaches of traditional HCI educational structures. Drawing from *Latin American decolonial thinking*, we reflect on our experiences as Latin American students seeking a graduate education in the United States. From there, we discuss paths for HCI educators and students to engage with the co-creation of pluriversal learning spaces that resist universal notions of *language*, *class content*, and *knowledge production*. As we build a more inclusive research community, these discussions become critical for imagining an HCI education aware of its social and political dimensions.

Author Keywords

HCI education, social change, decolonial thinking, Latin America

CCS Concepts

•Human-centered computing → HCI theory, concepts and models; Empirical studies in HCI;

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“Lo otro no existe: tal es la fe racional, la incurable creencia de la razón humana. Identidad = realidad, como si, a fin de cuentas, todo hubiera de ser, absoluta y necesariamente, *uno y lo mismo*. Pero lo *otro* no se deja eliminar; subsiste, persiste; es el hueso duro de roer en que la razón se deja los dientes”.- **Antonio Machado** en *Los apócrifos de Antonio Machado*

On Latin America The French coined this pan-ethnic term three centuries after the invention of the term America to distinguish Anglo-Americans (from then on called only Americans) from Iberian ones. Latin American/Latino then became descriptors for complex exclusion/inclusion (e.g., despite being from the Americas, Latinos are not considered Americans; in the U.S., however, Latinos are considered minorities together with African Americans) [39]

On North/South HCI literature uses these binaries to distinguish between affluent nations and communities often subordinated by them. These terms, however, do not always line up with geographical frames (e.g., while Mexico is in North America, it is often described as the Global South [14, 46]). Binaries can essentialize contrasted groups and erase similarities. Yet, following [15], we use them strategically to emphasize the experiences of those on the exploited side of the binary, even though that group constantly resists the binary itself.

Introduction

Worldwide, researchers and designers progressively see in the field of Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) a powerful discipline for unpacking how technologies can support social and economic development [19, 23, 32, 35, 40, 51]. As a result, students around the globe, but particularly those from the often deemed as “economically disadvantaged” Global South (from here on, just South), are increasingly interested in pursuing an HCI education [3, 28, 42, 53]. HCI knowledge production in the Global North (from here on, just North), however, tends to have a higher global impact¹. Many students from the South seeking to become researchers *for the South*, thus, emigrate to HCI programs in the North [54]. Such academic migration forces HCI education to revise the assumptions it operates on, namely its target audience, intentionality, and pedagogical approaches.

The field of HCI has growingly fostered discussions on the North and South relationship in terms of knowledge production and design practice [7, 18, 20, 34, 47, 52]. The community has produced a handful of theoretical lenses such as Postcolonial Computing and Transnational HCI, which problematize how HCI can understand and harness the flows of people, technology, and design practice from one region to the other [34, 47]. By sponsoring spaces such as Special Interest Groups, symposiums, and workshops for scholars working in the South [18, 20, 27, 49], the field is also continuously attempting to encourage knowledge production in the region. Some of these efforts have informed changes in HCI education, specifically informing the creation of class content and courses where students can explore how technology might work in South-centric contexts [1, 6, 28, 29, 31].

Despite increasing efforts, these educational strategies

¹In 2018, the papers published at CHI were cited 4426 times; the papers published at MexIHC only 3 [26].

still tend to position South-centric contexts at the margins of mainstream HCI. This, in turn, complicates the education of students *from the South* who seek to use HCI *in the South* while also impacting the field globally. HCI education faces, thus, the pressing need to explore approaches for effectively handling the diversity of students’ backgrounds and research goals [16]. In particular, it requires new approaches for helping the North and South to coexist and constitute each other in the classroom and beyond. As Latin American scholars who emigrated from Mexico and Ecuador to the United States (U.S.) for learning to conduct HCI research in our countries, we have experienced first hand the struggles of pursuing an HCI education *in the North for the South*. In this work, we share our reflections on the struggles we face to attain our academic goals. We aim at providing HCI education with insights on how to support a more inclusive field for research and practice.

We reflect on our experiences through the lens of *Latin American decolonial thinking* [9, 17, 22, 25, 38, 43]. This epistemic project argues that coloniality did not go away with modernity; modernity cannot exist without reproducing the universal notions of knowledge and behavior imposed by coloniality [22, 43]. The only option left, thus, is *delinking* ourselves from modernity for “dejar de ser lo que somos” [stop being what we are] to create something new that welcomes contradiction and conflict [37, 38]. A handful of HCI researchers have used a decolonial mindset to explore how to move the field beyond Eurocentrism [4, 7, 8, 13]. As HCI students from Latin America, we resort to the ideas of Latin American decolonial thinkers as analytical tools for unpacking our ways of resisting universality in HCI education. Then, we discuss how HCI can support educational spaces that go beyond the North vs. South dichotomy.

Definitions

Colonialism vs Coloniality For Quijano, colonialism refers to Western imperial/colonial expansion from Europe to the Americas, Asia, and Africa. Coloniality is the underlying logic of all Western (From Spain to England to the U.S.) modern/colonial imperialisms [43].

Coloniality of Power A logic for global power that stems from Eurocentric modernity while sustaining it, subordinating local forms of knowledge to a single, universal reality [43].

Modernity and Coloniality For decolonial thinkers, coloniality is a necessary component of modernity. Therefore, it cannot be ended if global imperial designs in the name of modernity continue [37].

Pluriverse A decolonial way of looking at reality that contrasts with the idea that only a single reality—the universal reality—exists. In the pluriverse there are multiple reals entangled and connected, yet none intends to correct the other as a truer account of reality [25, 37].

Latin American Decolonial Thinking

Similar to postcolonial theories, Latin American decolonial thinking critiques Eurocentric universal forms of knowledge that promote the subordination of the periphery [5, 30]. Specifically, both approaches denounce how, in its goal to become “all knowledge”, Northern, Eurocentric knowledge “cannibalizes” elements of local knowledge it finds useful and subalternizes local knowledge under the heading of *culture, tradition, or belief*, leaving it outside of what is considered “valid” knowledge. By positioning itself in the “post” period of a linear view of time, however, postcolonialism is often critiqued for being caught in a universal notion of the world that reproduces colonial forms of power/knowledge [4, 24, 30, 45].

In contrast, Latin American decolonial thinking proposes to detach from the universal structure of knowledge altogether. Expanding the analysis of coloniality to include the earlier Spanish and Portuguese incursions upon the Americas, decolonial thinking proposes that coloniality is the inevitable, darker side of modernity [22, 43]. Striving for modernity, we keep reproducing the logic, and thus, the inequities of coloniality. To achieve real change, decolonial thinkers argue that we need to engage in an epistemic reconstitution: to begin thought from “ni lo uno, ni lo otro, sino todo lo contrario” [neither one, nor the other, but otherwise] [38, 43]. Rather than implying a fundamentalist anti-North critique, a call for knowledge that is “lo contrario” [otherwise] is a call for moving from a universe to a *pluriverse* [17, 25, 37] where contradicting ontologies and epistemologies can co-exist without needing to align with each other. Each of them can be valid and exist in *partial connection* with the other. Valid, however, does not mean better, and connectedness does not mean sameness [9, 17]. Such pluralistic view that seeks radical change is essential for rethinking how HCI educates researchers globally.

Particular notions of decolonial thinking illuminate our actions crafting decolonialist pluriverses during our HCI educational experiences. The way in which De La Cadena’s uses Strathern’s notion of *partial connections* [48] pushes us to reflect on our efforts for making sense of HCI knowledge and practice from the South to the North and back [17]. Anzaldúa’s *mestiza consciousness* sheds light on our attempts to secure valid spaces of participation within and beyond the classroom [9]. Mignolo’s *colonial difference* helps us realize our work resisting and transforming dominant forms of practicing HCI research [38]. From our experiences, we derive concrete actions for HCI educational structures to collaborate with us in our efforts to decolonize our process of becoming impactful researchers. We discuss these actions with the desire to strengthen HCI as a field that can contribute to social change.

Reflexivity and Commitment

The reflections we present in this work describe our personal experiences; we do not seek to generalize the HCI educational experience of all members of the South in the North. We talk from where we stand; that is, as HCI researchers-in-the-making who share both a history of Iberian colonization and the goal of becoming HCI researchers for our countries. Our goal is not to disregard the efforts that our instructors and colleagues have done to connect with us and our interests. However, we aim at raising awareness to the broader HCI education community about the need for exploring how to integrate multiple forms of knowledge when building such connections. The diverse nature of the work we cite in this paper reflects this commitment [44]. We do not write these experiences lightly; gathering the courage for articulating our thoughts on this matter has taken years. Lastly, we do not try to discourage others from emigrating to the North for educational purposes.

Partial Connections

“via a relational form conceived as intrinsic to the entities that I bring to the fore, *partial connections* enable the analysis of how they appear with each other and at the same time, remain distinct.” [17, 48]

Reflections on Translating HCI Knowledge

Getting our feet into the HCI literature has entailed translation challenges, indeed of language but also of knowledge grounding, and perceived applicability. Although recent feminist, social justice, and solidarity perspectives in HCI value pluralism [10, 21], HCI education still struggles to facilitate classroom experiences where non-Northern students can easily develop and pursue their interests.

Pragmatically to us, digesting the body of work necessary for participating in the HCI and related communities has involved coping with issues of language which often encompass some surface level problems like a limited vocabulary (particularly if compared to some of our colleagues who spoke English as a first language). However, the nuanced interpretations required by most academic readings in the area were the actual complications. Fully understanding the concepts presented to us in class and in readings required a deep translation, not only of the words and terms but of the deeper meanings in ways that made sense to us. Referencing De La Cadena, these translations—which will never mean exactly what was meant by the authors—became our *partial connections* with the HCI community. While realizing that worlds are not the same, we learned that we can still communicate, always accepting that our mutual understanding is full of gaps [17]. Without this explicit frame of mind, however, becoming familiar with the HCI vocabulary took time and self-doubt as we tried to understand theories and practices without acknowledging the value of our *partial connections* to the material.

Translating Meaning

All of us experienced our introductory HCI courses in the U.S. in the form of seminar sessions. Students in these classes were required to read and discuss HCI, CSCW, Ubicomp theories and methods on various related topics.

In time, each of us came to realize that the grounding for these papers was critically disconnected from our experiences growing up in Latin America. Most of these papers build on certain assumptions about the cultural context, infrastructure, and values of both the users and the place where the research was developed. Therefore, our first contact with HCI felt foreign: those papers reflect a reality that did not seem genuine to our personal experiences.

In discussing these issues with peers, we noted that other non-Latin American students from the South sometimes shared our perspectives on the validity of some scenarios in their home country. We would sadly and symbolically shake our heads at how the realities of our populations made some propositions entirely futile. Marisol's experience exemplifies this struggle:

My thinking, and more importantly, my perception of what was feasible, relevant, and even desirable technology- and socially-wise, was entirely shaped by my experience growing up in Ecuador, a country where street crime is pervasive. Thus, instead of appreciating the learning and social benefits of augmented reality games such as Pokemon Go, I could only think of the risks of playing it outdoors in a country where street crime is commonplace and people can be easily shot only for refusing to give up their belongings.

At the moment, HCI education in the North is centered almost exclusively on a Northern context that considers work in the South as existing in the borderlands. Students are trained to work in this Northern context even when their focus of interest lay outside. Adriana's case shows the non-commensurate efforts we have had to undergo in order to properly build our *partial connections*:

Realizing that what I was learning at school felt foreign and strange was relatively easy. Finding ways to put it in words, to understand the reason for that feeling, and more importantly, what to do with that feeling has been challenging. As I moved forward with my degree, I found out about HCI4D [Human-Computer Interaction for Development] and ICTD [Information and Communication Technologies and Development], which aim to address issues and face the challenges that were more similar to my own background. Translating the knowledge I am acquiring into the context of Mexico while conducting research, has been my approach to make mine the foreign knowledge of HCI.

Mestiza Consciousness

“is developing a tolerance for contradictions, a tolerance for ambiguity.... Not only does she sustain contradictions, she turns the ambivalence into something else.... That third element is a new consciousness ... and though it is a source of intense pain, its energy comes from continual creative motion that keeps breaking down the unitary aspect of each new paradigm.” [9]

Looking for plurivocal perspectives can enhance our interpretations of HCI literature, which is deeply nuanced by Northern perspectives among the chorus. Finding *partial connections* between these various strands of knowledge can be a valuable activity, pointing to rich descriptions of appreciable differences between groups of people.

Translating our Identity

As in our disclaimer, we have each enjoyed different privileges that have allowed us to move from Latin America to the North. In many ways, those privileges mean that other students and faculty in the North see us as non-authentic members of the South. We are “ni de aquí, ni de allá” [neither from here, nor from there]. We are not *Americans* but neither are we struggling immigrants, poverty-stricken, refugees, or members from other communities that ICTD and HCI4D work addresses.

Our mentors and peers in the U.S. have often characterized us as belonging to a *global educated elite*. Their translation of our identity often leads them to conclude that we

are more like them than like the populations we study. This is neither completely false, nor completely true of course. However, in an effort to understand us, they usually focus more on our similarities with them, running the risk of disregarding our individual perspectives. De La Cadena warns us about this, inviting us to analyze these misunderstandings in translation “to make otherwise visible the mutual excess and, if possible, what makes them such” [17]. Being able to embrace this level of analysis on our identity can be important both for our advisors and ourselves to leverage our differences for connecting rather than for separating.

Reflections on Participating in HCI Classrooms

How students participate in a classroom, interact with their classmates, and understand the topics discussed in class are key factors that define them later as researchers. Our distinctive kinds of differences from dominant, Northern-centric realities, however, tended to position us at the margins of class conversations, which each of us resisted in different ways. Gloria Anzaldua’s epistemic notion of *mestiza consciousness* resonates well with our experience [9]; finding herself at the margins of existing categories of thought, she proposed the *mestiza consciousness* as a consciousness of duality that allows for contradictions and ambiguity to turn into a third, pluralistic space of participation, beyond oppositional thinking.

Drawing from Anzaldua’s proposal, we are able to reflect on our attempts to break from the North vs. South dichotomies that keep us at the margins. In the experiences we share, we acknowledge the differences that emerge in HCI classrooms and unearth how we leveraged those differences to secure participation. Further, we reflect on the relations of power and knowledge that determine which topics are intellectually prioritized in current HCI educational spaces.

Different Forms and Norms of Expression

Language, as well as cultural norms for interaction, were two, often intersecting differences preventing us from feeling like we belong to a Northern HCI classroom. Our Latin American upbringing taught us to use language in ways that would always reflect respect towards figures of authority (e.g., using “usted” instead of “tú” when talking to a teacher). Although English does not remark on these differences, we continue doing so, translating in our heads these honorifics for some people like our mentors and advisors. Inherent in this unspoken recognition is a fear of being disrespectful by disagreeing with those figures, never to rebuke. Adding to that is the fact that English is not our first language; expressing our thoughts in this language demands an extra effort from our side, regardless of our level of comfort with it. In contrast, our peers raised under Northern-centric practices often had no problem communicating their ideas: they not only had no issues with language but also seemed more assured of their perspectives and thrived under those circumstances that, we feel, would be disrespectful to navigate.

Adriana’s case illustrates how the support from faculty can foster spaces for researchers like us to embrace a *mestiza consciousness*:

Just the cognitive load of being in the classroom was stressful for me. I had to follow the discussion of my classmates while taking notes and think of ideas or questions to make. Also, I did not feel in my skin when speaking English; every time I had to speak in public, I felt like my heart sped up, and my face turned red. However, this changed when my master’s advisor Lynn Dombrowski made an effort to support learning environments that were more tolerant of differences. Recognizing that more than

half of the students in the classroom were non-native English speakers, my advisor encouraged us to organize and express our ideas in our native language before translating them into English. Further, she would allow for students to ask support from others who spoke the same language.

Through her advisor’s support, Adriana was able to *delink* from the English vs. Spanish binary that kept her from participating. As such, her advisor created the opportunity for Adriana to start engaging in a type of *mestiza consciousness*. Dr. Dombrowski allowed for Adriana to see value in contradiction and ambiguity when expressing herself, thus changing her views on participation and interaction with others, and fostering plurality.

Different Interests

Beyond forms and norms of expression, we found that our interests—and therefore, the discussion topics we found valuable—greatly differed from those of students and instructors in Northern-centric classrooms. Given our goal of becoming impactful researchers for the South, bringing our South-related topics to the forefront of the class conversation was of utmost relevance. Marisol’s experience illustrates the efforts that entail engaging a Northern-centric classroom in such Southern-centric conversations. That is, to help others consider participating in a space inspired by a *mestiza consciousness*.

As part of my commitment to strengthening HCI in Ecuador, my home country, I have always made an effort to engage my classmates in discussions about Ecuador or Latin America in general. For a long time, though, I failed. Reflecting back, I now see that the topics I suggested for discussion often were just too

distant for a non-Latin American audience to feel entitled to comment (e.g., the safety issues that a sharing economy entails for users in Latin America). With time, however, I realized that the only way to bring a classroom to the South was by moving away from a South vs. North dichotomy. Following my advisor's suggestion, I learned more about how others (both Latin American and Northern-centric writers), discussed Latin America. This helped me rephrase how I talk about Latin America to a non-Latin American audience.

Marisol developed a tolerance for conflicting views from which different forms of participation could emerge. The question remains, though: How can HCI instructors and other students also consider this type of consciousness?

Colonial Difference

“the irreducible colonial difference—the difference between center and periphery, between the Eurocentric critique of Eurocentrism and knowledge production by those who participated in building the modern/colonial world and those who have been left out of the discussion [...] making visible the variety of local histories that Western thought, from the right and the left, hid and suppressed.” [36]

Reflections on Producing HCI Knowledge

Given that most impactful HCI literature is produced in the North, Northern-centric perspectives end up defining what a relevant and interesting HCI research topic is, what methods to use for exploring it, and how to write and talk about it [44]. For the three of us, such a systemic lack of exposure to other views complicated our opportunities to generate knowledge that could impact our Southern contexts.

Recognizing coloniality as a prevalent force that produces and reproduces the subordination of Southern-centric knowledge, Walter Mignolo proposes the notion of *colonial difference* [38] to describe spaces where oppressing and resistance forces operate, producing a plurivocal view of knowledge. That is, a view that leverages different forms of knowledge—including North-centric perspectives—to create something new. By looking at the *colonial difference* within our experiences producing HCI knowledge, we identify the different spaces we have crafted to decolonize our

research, from the way we convey knowledge to the way we see and describe our participants and apply research methods to learn from them. From there, we suggest spaces for HCI education to foster spaces for decolonizing HCI knowledge production.

Conveying Knowledge

Marisol's experience exemplifies our struggles to resist dominant views of valid HCI knowledge.

After four years of striving to “pass” as a native-English writer, I decided to revise my end goal. Focusing on English so much made me feel increasingly distant from my Spanish writing abilities, and ultimately, distant from my own Latin American identity. With my advisor's support, I decided to make the conscious effort of allowing for English and Spanish to coexist. As long as the meaning is clearly conveyed, I now allow for my Spanish-thinking brain to shamelessly shape my English writing. I also changed my views on typos. I no longer see them as shameful errors but as markers of an identity I should feel proud of.

By resisting dominant views of language, Marisol found a way to react within the *colonial difference*. When reviewers complain about her typos, however, she still wishes HCI would engage in a broader conversation about language.

Seeing and Describing Participants

For Adriana, universalistic views of HCI concepts and values complicated her ability to develop a decolonial understanding of their participants. Adriana, who studies how Mexicans use social media to combat systemic crime, struggled to recognize the value of her participants' practices and their context.

The dissonance between HCI's description of online civics participation and Mexicans' practices led me to see my participants through a lens of lacks and deficiencies. I felt really uncomfortable with this view. This discomfort led me to explore more out there, and then I found assets-based literature. This new knowledge gave me a completely different understanding of my participants. I finally was able to see Mexico as a place of knowledge and my participants as skillful civics practitioners.

She now explores how to use this new perspective to offer HCI a more pluralistic understanding of civics.

Conducting Research

While our advisors have been a great support, learning to conduct research for the South has been particularly difficult. Specifically, the dominant narrative of broader impact and soundness of methods has been hard to challenge. In his work designing for connecting Latin American families at a distance, for example, Javier found himself in a position of having to justify to the research community why his target group was enough for producing valid knowledge.

Reproducing Northern-centric views, some members of the research community expressed concerns that my studies' results would not apply to a broader audience and requested me to recruit more Northern, White, participants to contrast my findings. My advisor supported me all along, helping me craft written justifications for my decision. However, I felt at a disadvantage; why do I have to justify my target audience when other Northern-centric researchers do not?

Resisting universal ideas of how methods should be used has also required us to engage in solitary self-reflection, often leading to academic isolation and anxiety.

When planning to conduct Participatory Design (PD), Marisol also realized traditional PD methods (e.g., storyboarding and paper prototyping) would not work with Latin American immigrants, a historically disenfranchised population.

I needed to come up with new, culturally-relevant methods that would be unassuming and yet, engaging. I held long conversations with my advisor about the protocol I would follow. However, deciding how culture would shape my methods was entirely on me. After all, my advisor is not familiar with the Latin American culture. I could not stop feeling anxious about what gave me the right to represent all Latin Americans and their diverse cultures. Also, how could I be sure that my understanding of how to factor in culture would not endanger the soundness of my research?

Discussion: Decolonizing HCI Education

As the field of HCI increasingly engages with communities outside of the Global North and with matters of social change, the community has invested efforts to value knowledge obtained through very different epistemic commitments [7, 10, 11, 21]. The amalgamation that HCI offers in terms of participatory methodologies and a breadth of lenses for analysis has indeed facilitated our learning experiences. Therefore, we acknowledge that the HCI and related communities already foster some of the values necessary for the creation of decolonial learning spaces. Yet, an increasingly pluralistic approach in HCI classrooms can better prepare researchers and practitioners for the global challenges ahead of them.

Our experiences describe our struggles as students moving from the South to the North with the goal of becoming HCI researchers *for the South*. In particular, they reflect our struggles dealing with three universalities in North-based HCI classrooms: *language*, *class content*, and *knowledge production*. These three elements regulate our participation in the HCI community, shape our identity as researchers, and determine the spaces we occupy now and the ones we aim to occupy in the future. From our experiences, we suggest that HCI instructors and students in these classrooms who wish to resist these universalities continuously reflect on how the values they promote align with students' backgrounds, experiences, and goals. We now discuss suggestions for HCI classrooms to consider for engaging in such reflections. While these actions mostly apply to issues of HCI education in the North, we believe some can also inform HCI learning spaces in the South.

About Language

Language is the means and medium by which we understand the world and construct values, meaning, and knowledge [12].

Language Justice

The right that everyone has to communicate in the language in which they feel most comfortable [2].

Translanguaging

The deployment of a speaker's full linguistic repertoire without regard for adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of national and state languages [41].

Language

Our experiences with language influence our understanding, participation, and practice within the HCI community because our language identity is at the center of how we understand, communicate, and exchange ideas [12]. Our experiences highlight the different efforts we have made to resist English as the universal notion of how to participate in HCI classes as well as to convey impactful HCI knowledge. Either through the support of instructors or driven by our own discomfort, we have managed to craft pluriverses where multiple languages coexist, imperfectly, but usefully.

The responsibility of exploring how to craft and navigate such linguistic pluriverses, however, has been mostly ours only. Further, the feasibility of those spaces to exist within high-impact HCI venues, such as CHI and CSCW, depends on how tolerant the HCI research community is towards other forms of expression and languages. Making efforts to foster tolerance for language contradiction at the class-

room level could eventually change how these high-impact venues operate, enabling different languages to participate in how research is reported and presented.

Specifically, we propose that HCI learning spaces draw from *language justice* and *translanguaging spaces* initiatives for shifting power dynamics so that diverse languages can be seen as a source of knowledge rather than a hassle. Besides allowing students to express their thoughts in their native language—like Adriana's advisor does, instructors can motivate students to write in English while using forms of expression and grammar rules from their native languages. That can help the classroom with learning about the reasons behind differences (e.g., in Spanish, the Oxford comma is frowned upon). Further, instructors can choose—or ask students to propose—literature originally written in students' native language. Even if there is no English translation for the proposed work, students can work collaboratively in making sense of it. Altogether, these activities can help harness the *colonial difference* between English and other languages to create spaces for a type of *mestiza consciousness* to evolve so that different languages can be seen as a source of knowledge.

Class Content

Through proposals such as the living curriculum [16], HCI education has made several efforts to diversify the topics of discussion and experiences that instructors, students, and practitioners are exposed to [16, 28]. While valuable, most of these efforts have focused on raising awareness for students and practitioners to acknowledge and respect cultural differences [20, 33]. Our experiences suggest that more efforts are needed for encouraging students to harness such diversity in their HCI learning process. For example, many HCI courses now include ICTD topics. As our reflections unearth, however, that does not mean that HCI classrooms are always willing to discuss ICTD-like topics or

Living Curriculum

A class curriculum that addresses the multidisciplinary and ever-evolving nature of HCI, thereby responding to changes in technological trends, user types, and use contexts [16]

to bridge connections between dominant HCI topics and the experiences from Southern students. In our case, we each learned to build *partial connections* on our own.

Drawing both from our experiences and from HCI efforts for an education that can impact cross-cultural contexts, we invite HCI educators and students to reflect on the topics they discuss in the classroom and how they discuss them. In particular, we suggest for them to leverage and emphasize all students' experiences, allowing them to build connections across these experiences. For example, to build a *living curriculum*, an instructor can first ask students to share their personal experiences with others. Based on those conversations, each student can choose a topic that is foreign to them, research it, and present it to the class. From there, the class can discuss how presenters are translating the meaning of concepts and contexts, and how and why some translations work while leaving something behind. Further, they can discuss what those ever-existing differences can mean for HCI research, globally.

Knowledge Production

As the HCI field increasingly engages with Southern-centric contexts, the community has begun to revise universal conceptions of what it means for research topics and methods to be valid. Most of the work has centered around exploring how cultural norms influence the research field and the application of universal principles, globally [27, 33, 49]. However, this examination has taken place primarily in the space of HCI practice, and it has been less discussed in HCI education. Our reflections highlight the issues we have faced when learning how to produce, evaluate, and integrate knowledge capable of moving from the margins to the center of the HCI community.

Specifically, having to constantly justify our research topic and audience as well as bearing the responsibility for adapting our research methods, increased our insecurity about

the validity and relevance of our work. This, in turn, has prevented us from sharing our participants' recruitment practices and the culturally-appropriate protocols we follow with the wider HCI community. Similarly to [50], we believe that the design and deployment of technology should be locally accountable, and this begins with HCI education. In particular, HCI instructors can do more to encourage all students to see value in how they make a case for their research focus as well as selection and adaptation of their methods. To this end, instructors can propose research and design projects that locate students in contexts of practice culturally distant to them. In doing this, students will be able to analyze the *colonial differences* they experience approaching these contexts. That is, to explore what forces of power their methods represent, and how different participants resisted these forces. Further, what aspects of their actions would the universal idea of soundness in HCI research validate, which would it reject, and how can researchers from the North and the South resist?

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