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Mother-Adolescent Communication in Low-Income, Latino Families during Language Brokering: Examining the Theory of Resilience and Relational Load

Lisa M. Guntzviller[a] and Ningxin Wang[b]

[a]Department of Communication, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; [b]Department of Management and Organization, National University of Singapore

ABSTRACT

Low-English proficiency parents often have their bilingual children translate, called language brokering. Brokering can be stressful for low-income, Latino adolescents, who are already at-risk for depression. We tested the theory of resilience and relational load (TRRL) in a new context (in 100 low-income, Latino mother-adolescent dyads who engaged in language brokering) and extended TRRL by proposing security- and threat-based behaviors and appraisals can be represented by interaction goals. We examined mother warmth, mother brokering interaction goals of supporting and monitoring the adolescent, adolescent brokering feelings, and adolescent depressive symptoms. Mothers' support goal was a protective factor against adolescent depression, but only when adolescents also inferred mothers pursued this goal. Adolescent positive brokering feelings were also a protective factor, as when positive feelings were high, the positive association between negative feelings and depression was not present. Findings supported TRRL propositions about relational maintenance, security-based goals, emotional reserves, and mental health.

Latino/Latina (henceforth Latino) adolescents from low-income families experience various culturally related stressors, making them disproportionally at risk for poor mental health (Flores et al., 2002) including depression (Cespedes & Huey, 2008). One influential stressor for adolescents from low-English proficiency families is language brokering (Kam, Guntzviller, & Stohl, 2017; Kam & Lazarevic, 2014a, 2014b). Language brokering (also called brokering) is when bilingual adolescents or children with no formal training linguistically and culturally mediate for family members, often parents (Kam & Lazarevic, 2014a). Latino adolescents broker in various situations, including pressure-laden settings such as school, legal, and health locales (Katz, 2014; Valenzuela, 1999). A moderate body of research has examined why some adolescents experience better or worse language brokering outcomes than others (e.g., increased depression) based on myriad aspects of brokering that vary between adolescents (e.g., adolescent individual differences, parenting behaviors; see Shen, Tilton, & Kim, 2017 for a review). Based on their review, Shen and colleagues tentatively suggest that parenting behaviors may explain why adolescent outcomes vary, but theoretically-based research is needed to test these claims. Overall, scholars call for brokering research to move beyond descriptive and explorative studies and be strongly grounded in theory, specifically from a communication perspective based on parent-child interactions (Kam et al., 2017; Weisskirch, 2017).

The theory of resilience and relational load (TRRL; Afifi, Merrill, & Davis, 2016) provides an answer to these calls by theorizing how parent behaviors (in general and during language brokering) may influence

adolescent mental health outcomes through parent and child communication during stressful times (e.g., during language brokering). TRRL explains how close relationships function as a source of resilience and even help people thrive when confronted with adversity (Afifi, 2018). TRRL proposes that individuals develop resilience when their relational partners constantly engage in relational maintenance behavior, which builds positive emotional reserves and in turn, enables them to more positively appraise stressful situations. We advance language brokering research by utilizing TRRL to explain the underlying mechanisms by which adolescents are impacted by brokering. We focus on how a mother's behaviors may foster adolescent resilience, as Shen et al.'s review (2017) suggested parenting behaviors are a key factor in determining adolescent brokering outcomes.

Only limited research has tested TRRL (Afifi, 2018). Afifi et al. (2018) obtained initial support for TRRL in couples with Type I diabetic adolescent children and called for research to apply the theory to other family relationships and stressful situations. Our study therefore offers preliminary tests of key TRRL claims within a unique relational (i.e., mother-adolescent) and stressful context (i.e., language brokering). Further, we extend TRRL by incorporating interaction goals theorizing. Specifically, we examine how mother relational maintenance behaviors correspond with her security-based and threat-based interaction goals during brokering, and how mother and adolescent assessments of these interaction goals correspond with adolescent brokering emotions and subsequently depressive symptoms (see Figure 1).

TRRL and interaction goals

TRRL posits that positive relational maintenance is the primary mechanism through which couples or families become resilient and maintain positive relationships when stressed (Afifi et al., 2016). Individuals who engage in positive relational maintenance behaviors accumulate positive emotional reserves such that when they engage in stressful situations, they engage in more security-based and fewer threat-based communication behaviors and appraisals. Security-based appraisals and behaviors
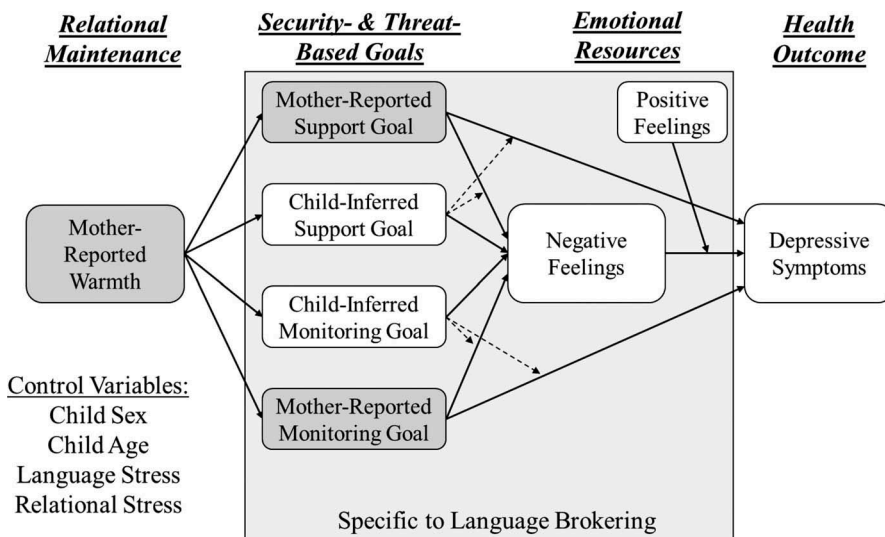
Figure 1. Study hypotheses and models.

Note. Mother-reported variables are gray and adolescent-reported variables are white. Model 1 = all solid arrows and two paths from the adolescent-inferred goals to depressive symptoms (not pictured). Model 2 = all solid arrows and the upper two dashed lines (representing the Mother-Reported by Adolescent-Inferred Support Goal interaction). Model 3 = all solid arrows and the lower two dashed lines (representing the Mother-Reported by Adolescent-Inferred Monitor Goal interaction).

involve approaching and viewing the stressful interaction through a positive mindset (Afifi, 2018), in which behaviors and attributions are driven by the desire to protect the relationship and facilitate positive adaptation with the partner (Afifi et al., 2016). Threat-based appraisals and behaviors prioritize protecting the self over the relationship and partner. Thus, when encountering stressful interactions, couples or families who continuously invest in their relationship are more likely to appraise and act in ways that continue to help validate their partner and the relationship, therefore reducing stress and potential detrimental outcomes. However, couples or families who do not have good relational maintenance are more likely to attempt to protect themselves during a stressful interaction, which may lead to appraisals and behaviors that damage the relationship or partner and have long-term consequences (e.g., poor personal and relational health; Afifi et al., 2016).

We propose that an interaction goals perspective can refine and complement TRRL propositions. First, Caughlin's (2010) framework of interaction goals in personal relationships provides a means of defining security-based and threat-based appraisals and communication behaviors. Interaction goals are desired end-states that one needs communication to achieve (Wilson, 2002). People can have multiple interaction goals for a specific interaction, and strategically communicate in the attempt to accomplish their goals (Wilson, 2002). TRRL's claims align with defining what is "security-based" by considering individuals' interaction goal: "When couples or families … have invested in their relationship, *their goal going into a conversation* about a relational stressor should often be to protect the relationship and their partner because they have shown they trust and value each other" (p. 8, emphasis added, Afifi et al., 2016). Similarly, "threat-based" can be defined by individuals' interaction goal: "If people have not maintained their relationship well over time … *The goal becomes* defending and preserving one's self from repeated attacks rather than protecting one's partner and the relationship" (p. 9, emphasis added, Afifi et al., 2016). In fact, Caughlin notes that when asking individuals in close relationships to assess their own and their partner's behaviors, particularly across multiple interactions, "the distinction between perceptions of goals and perceptions of communication behaviors will be somewhat arbitrary" because "interaction goals partly define the way individuals … think about relational behaviors" (p. 838). Thus, interaction goals distinguish whether an individual's approach to stressful situations is security- or threat-based.

Second, Caughlin's (2010) framework of interaction goals distinguishes between the two relational partners' perspectives. We assume that TRRL's security- or threat-based *behaviors* describe one's own actions and *appraisals* involve perceptions of a partner's behaviors. From an interaction goals perspective, individuals can report on their own pursuit of security-based interaction goals and their inference of whether the partner's interaction goals are security-based. In fact, individuals determine the meaning of a partner's communication behavior ("Why did she say that?") based their assessment of what interaction goals motivated that behavior ("She was trying to be supportive," Caughlin, 2010; Palomares & Derman, 2016). Ergo, individuals can report whether their own behaviors were security- or threat-based (by reporting on their own goal pursuit) and appraise whether a partner's behaviors were security- or threat-based (by inferring their partner's goals; see Palomares, 2011).

Finally, Caughlin's (2010) framework involves assessing interaction goals between close partners over multiple interactions. Couples or families who frequently engage in similar types of stressful interactions develop perceptions of how each individual typically behaves during these interactions, and therefore interaction goals typical for each person (Caughlin, 2010). TRRL notes that couples' communication and appraisals when stressed can take place across multiple conversations (Afifi et al., 2016). Thus, we posit that interaction goal tendencies (pursuit and inference) appropriately represent TRRL's concepts of security- and threat-based behaviors and appraisals when examining two close individuals' perspectives over multiple interactions.

Mother relational maintenance and security- and threat-based goals during brokering

TRRL states that positive relational maintenance behaviors impact security- and threat-based behaviors and appraisals during times of stress (Afifi et al., 2016). Relational maintenance is broadly defined as "prosocial, strategic, and routine or habituated" (p. 667) behaviors used to sustain a relationship, such as

communicating affection, engaging in shared activities, and expressing gratitude toward the other person (Afifi et al., 2016). Afifi et al. (2016) note that in parent-child relationships, partners' equal investment in the relationship is less consequential than in romantic relationships. Hence, rather than examining discrepancies between mother's and child's relational maintenance, we focus on the mother's maintenance behaviors. In general (not just during brokering or stressful situations), mothers' warmth toward the child has been associated with myriad positive outcomes for children, including better psychological adjustment, higher self-esteem, and self-efficacy (see a meta-analytic review by Khaleque, 2013). Parental warmth refers to parents' sensitive and loving behaviors (Baumrind, 1978), such as praising the child, making him/her feel better when something is wrong, and demonstrating the parent's love for the child. For Latino adolescents, higher parental warmth was associated with better parent-child relationship quality (Mogro-Wilson, 2008), suggesting that warmth is an important aspect of relational maintenance between mothers and adolescents.

Whereas warmth is a general parenting maintenance behavior across situations, we propose mothers may have security-based goals when specifically engaging in language brokering interactions. Security-based behaviors are driven by the desire to protect the partner during times of stress. Mothers may attempt to protect their child during brokering interactions by pursuing an interaction goal of showing the adolescent support. Mothers may attempt to make adolescents feel good about themselves when brokering by assuring adolescents they are doing a good job, expressing appreciation and pride in the adolescents' brokering skills, or telling adolescents to do the best they can when they are struggling (Morales, Yakushko, & Castro, 2012). Based on TRRL proposition four, mothers who report that they perform more general relational maintenance, such as warmth, should also be more likely to report security-based goal tendencies during brokering, such as pursuit of the support goal. Moreover, when mothers generally demonstrate warmth to adolescents, adolescents may be more likely to make security-based appraisals and infer the mothers have a support goal during brokering, as Latino adolescents report that warm, sensitive, and loving parenting behaviors convey validation and acceptance (Rohner, 2004). Thus, we propose that greater maternal warmth in general will be associated with an increased mother support goal specifically during brokering, as pursued by mothers and as inferred by adolescents.

H$_1$: Mother-reported warmth will be positively associated with mothers' reported pursuit and adolescents' inference of the mothers' support goal during language brokering.

A mother's goal of monitoring the adolescent during brokering may represent a threat-based goal. Threat-based behaviors do not attempt to protect the partner or relationship, instead they attempt to protect one's own self and interests. Because mothers have adolescents engage in language brokering to accomplish a task (e.g., open a bank account, solve an electricity bill problem), mothers may attempt to focus on and accomplish her own needs by controlling the adolescents' translation. Mothers may pursue the interaction goal of monitoring by insisting the adolescent translate everything from Spanish to English and vice versa, and by monitoring the accuracy of the adolescent's translation through her understanding of English and by comparing the length of the translated conversation (Morales et al., 2012). Mothers who have not built trust and positive emotional reserves toward the adolescent may prioritize their own interest during brokering by attempting to monitor the brokering process rather than attending to their child's needs while brokering (e.g., insisting the adolescent translate questions the adolescent could have answered rather than supporting the adolescent's judgement about what is important to translate; McQuillan & Tse, 1995). Additionally, when mothers enact less warmth, adolescents may be more likely to infer that mothers pursue the monitoring goal. Adolescent inference of the mother's monitoring goal may be a threat-based appraisal, as adolescents may view attempts to monitor and control their actions during brokering as a threat to their autonomy, a signal of mistrust, or a lack of confidence in adolescent language abilities. Thus, we propose that reduced maternal warmth will be associated with an increased mother monitor goal, both as reported by mothers and as inferred by adolescents.

H_2: Mother-reported warmth will be negatively associated with mothers' reported pursuit and adolescents' inference of the mothers' monitor goal during language brokering.

Adolescent brokering emotions and mental health as outcomes

Proposition five of TRRL posits that threat-based behaviors and appraisals deplete resources whereas security-based behaviors and appraisals augment resources (Afifi et al., 2016). TRRL conceptualizes resources as emotional, psychological, cognitive, and relational: We focus on adolescent emotions about brokering. Scholars proposed that a relevant way to conceptualize adolescents' brokering experience is through their emotions about brokering, such as their negative feelings (e.g., feeling frustrated, nervous, and overwhelmed with the responsibility; Shen et al., 2017; Weisskirch, 2007). Moreover, TRRL proposition eight posits that security-based behaviors and appraisals foster – and threat-based behaviors and appraisals diminish – mental health (Afifi et al., 2016). Language brokering is associated with adolescent depression, particularly when parents display threat-based behaviors (Hua & Costigan, 2012). Based on these TRRL propositions, we predict that mother-pursuit and adolescent-inference of mother support and monitoring goals will be associated with adolescent brokering feelings and depression.

H_3: The mother-reported and adolescent-inferred mother support goal will be negatively associated with adolescents' negative feelings about brokering and adolescent depression.

H_4: The mother-reported and adolescent-inferred mother monitor goal will be positively associated with adolescents' negative feelings about brokering and adolescent depression.

Although TRRL makes predictions about security- and threat-based behaviors and appraisals, it does not explicitly account for how the two individuals' perspectives may matter in relation to each other. Parents and adolescents often differ in their interpretations of the same conversation (Sillars, Koerner, & Fitzpatrick, 2005; Trees, 2005) and one individual pursuing an interaction goal does not mean the partner will accurately infer that goal (Palomares, 2011). Theorizing on goal inference (Palomares, 2011; Palomares & Derman, 2016) suggests that adolescents may experience the most favorable outcomes when they accurately infer positively-perceived mother goals (i.e., when both mother-pursuit and adolescent-inference of mother security-based goals, such as support, are high) and they accurately infer a lack of negatively-perceived mother goals (i.e., when both mother-pursuit and adolescent-inference of mother threat-based goals, such as monitoring, are low). From a TRRL standpoint, mothers' reported security- or threat-based behaviors may not matter for adolescent outcomes unless adolescents also appraise these behaviors as security- or threat-based. We therefore extend TRRL by examining if adolescent-inferred goals moderate the association between mother-reported goals and adolescent outcomes.

RQ_1: Will the adolescent-inferred support goal moderate the relationship between the mother-reported support goal and adolescents' negative feelings about brokering and adolescent depression?

RQ_2: Will the adolescent-inferred monitor goal moderate the relationship between the mother-reported monitor goal and adolescents' negative feelings about brokering and adolescent depression?

RQ_3: Will the indirect effects between mother-reported warmth and adolescents' negative feelings about brokering or depression, as mediated through mother-reported goals, be moderated by adolescent-inference of that goal?

Adolescent positive brokering emotions as a moderator

TRRL proposition seven states that the depletion of emotional resources will impact mental health. Consistent with this claim, negative feelings about language brokering have predicted increased adolescent depression (Kam & Lazarevic, 2014b). TRRL notes that negative emotions tend to be more impactful than positive emotions, but that positive and negative elements have independent, rather than opposite, effects (Afifi et al., 2016). Similarly, positive and negative feelings about language brokering are not mutually exclusive and children can simultaneously have positive and negative brokering feelings (Morales et al., 2012; Weisskirch, 2007). Adolescents can simultaneously be frustrated and overwhelmed by brokering while also feeling a sense of pride and self-worth from their brokering experiences (Morales et al., 2012). TRRL draws from the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001), which states that positive emotions broaden, whereas negative emotions shrink, one's range of thoughts and actions. Positive emotions can "undo" the negative impact of negative emotions, therefore fostering resilience (Fredrickson, 2001). Positive feelings about language brokering may therefore mitigate the impact of negative brokering feelings on depression. Overall, TRRL argues that accrued relational maintenance allows individuals to be more security-based and less threat-based (Afifi, 2018; Afifi et al., 2016), which reduces experienced stress (e.g., negative emotions) and ultimately promotes better health. Thus (see also Figure 1 for all hypotheses):

H_5: Adolescents' positive brokering feelings will moderate the association between their negative brokering feelings and depression, such that as positive feelings increase, the negative association between negative feelings and depression will decrease.

H_6: The indirect effects from warmth or goals on adolescent depression, as mediated through adolescent negative feelings, will be moderated by positive feelings.

Method

Participants

Participants included 100 mother-child dyads. Eligibility requirements were that mothers were Spanish-speakers with a bilingual (English and Spanish) child who had language brokered for their mother at least once. Families were predominantly Mexican-heritage (n = 95) and approximately 100% below the poverty line or lower (i.e., were low-income). Adolescents were 12 to 18 years old (M = 14.12, SD = 1.89) and included daughters (n = 58) and sons (n = 40, missing = 2). Many adolescents were born in the United States (n = 63); those born outside of the United States (n = 37) had lived in-country for an average of 9.32 years (SD = 3.32, range = 2 to 15). Of their siblings, the participating adolescent often brokered the most for their mother (n = 80) and started brokering between ages three and 15 (M = 8.47, SD = 2.52). Mothers were between 26 and 56 years old (M = 39.38, SD = 6.42) and mostly born in Mexico (n = 95; United States n = 2; Venezuela n = 2; Dominican Republic n = 1). On average, mothers reported living in the United States for 15.64 years (SD = 5.96, range = 4 to 37 years) and had an 8th grade education (ranging from no education to completing college).

Procedure

Participants were recruited in dyads (and compensated $25) by two bilingual university extension employees. Mothers and children were separated when filling out the survey. Children could take the survey in Spanish or English; only two children chose Spanish. The child survey was written at a Flesch-Kincaid 8th grade reading level and a bilingual assistant was present to answer any questions. The mother survey was written in Spanish at an 8th grade reading level. Given the low education level of mothers and their unfamiliarity with surveys, the bilingual assistant sometimes read the survey to the mothers at the mothers' request. A university institutional review board approved the study as ethical.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics and pearson bivariate correlations.

		Range	M(SD)	Alpha	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	A_Sex	(1 = male, 2 = female)	-	-	-										
2	A_Age	12–18	14.18(1.89)	-	−.03	-									
3	A_RelStress	1.00–6.80	2.88(1.54)	.79	−.08	.14	-								
4	A_LangStress	1.00–7.00	3.38(1.88)	.79	−.23*	.05	.25*	-							
5	M_Warmth	2.25–5.00	4.56(.56)	.76	.06	.19†	.34***	−.01	-						
6	M_Support	1.00–5.00	4.42(.65)	.84	−.05	.13	.03	−.15	.29**	-					
7	A_Support	2.14–5.00	3.75(.62)	.82	−.03	.04	−.06	−.09	−.08	.02	-				
8	M_Monitor	1.60–5.00	4.17(.74)	.80	−.04	.17†	.12	.06	.23*	.52***	.13	-			
9	A_Monitor	2.20–5.00	3.69(.69)	.81	−.08	.00	.05	−.17†	.11	.04	.23*	.19†	-		
10	A_NegFeel	1.00–3.29	2.17(.52)	.78	.03	.04	.35***	.08	.15	.04	−.31**	.00	−.06	-	
11	A_PosFeel	1.80–4.00	3.15(.50)	.79	.01	.13	−.02	−.13	.13	.09	.38***	.14	.27**	−.42***	-
12	A_Depress	0.00–18.00	1.95(2.84)	.84	.12	.01	.16	.12	.06	−.03	−.26**	.01	−.04	.26**	−.05

Variables starting with "A_" are reported by the adolescent. Variables starting with "M_" are reported by the mother. Alpha = Cronbach's alpha. RelStress = Relational Stress. LangStress = Language Stress. Support = Mother Support Goal. Monitor = Mother Monitor Goal. NegFeel = Adolescent Negative Brokering Feelings. PosFeel = Adolescent Positive Brokering Feelings. Depress = Depressive Symptoms.

†$p < .10$, *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$

Measures

Full measures (in both Spanish and English) and confirmatory factor analysis fit are available on the first author's personal website. Internal reliability is reported in Table 1.

Mother-reported warmth

Mothers reported on their parenting style in general, not just during brokering (e.g., "I make my child feel better when something is wrong," "I praise my child"). The four items were adapted from Rodriguez, Donovick, and Crowley (2009) and measured on a 5-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*).

Mother support goal

Children and mothers reported on the mothers' support goal when the adolescent was translating between the mother and an English-speaker. Adolescents and mothers assessed mother emotional support and encouragement (e.g., "It is important to my mom [me] that she [I] shows me [my child] support when I am [s/he is] translating,") and support for child autonomy (e.g., "My mom cares about giving me some independence when I am translating") on a 5-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*). Although some items overlapped between the adolescents' seven-item and the mothers' four-item scale, some differed (see Guntzviller, 2016 for further measurement details about these data).

Mother monitor goal

Children and mothers reported on the mothers' monitor goal when the adolescent was translating between the mother and an English-speaker. Adolescents and mothers assessed the mother's desire to have adolescents translate exactly ("My mom wants me [I want my child] to translate exactly what she says [I say], regardless of what I think she should say [my child thinks I should say]," "My mom cares about me [I care about my child] translating everything that the English-speaker says into Spanish, even if I [my child] could have just answered in English.") on a 5-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*). Some items overlapped between the adolescents' and the mothers' five-item scales, but some differed (see Guntzviller, 2016 for further measurement details about these data). We reran analyses using identical items for the mother-reported and child-inferred support and monitor goals and results did not differ.

Adolescent brokering feelings

We created five items to assess adolescents' negative feelings while brokering (e.g., "I don't like to translate," "I am nervous when I translate.") and used five items from Buriel, Perez, De Ment, Chavez, & Moran's (1998) language brokering scale to assess positive feelings (e.g., "I like to translate," "I feel good about myself when I translate for others"). All feeling items were measured using a 4-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 4 = *strongly agree*).

Adolescent depression

The short version of the Child's Depression Inventory (CDI) was used to evaluate adolescents' depressive symptoms (Allgaier et al., 2012). The short CDI consisted of 10 items that used the prompt "Pick the one that best describes your feelings." Adolescents chose one of three answers (e.g., "I am sad once in a while," "I am sad many times," "I am sad all the time"), which respectively indicated lack of depression (weighed as zero), moderate depression (weighed as one), and severe depression (weighed as two). The weighted scores were summed to create the CDI score, with higher numbers indicating greater depression.

Covariates

Eight items were created for the current study to assess two different types of stress that may occur during language brokering. Items started with the stem, "When translating IS stressful, how often is it stressful

because … " and were measured on a 7-point scale (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *very much*). Relational stress included five items about stress related to parent-child relational dynamics and role expectations (" … your mom expects too much of you"). Language stress included three items that represented vocabulary, linguistic, and informational difficulties during brokering (" … you don't know how to say something in Spanish").

Results

Minimal data were missing (1.71%) and expectation maximization imputation was used. Descriptive statistics and correlations are reported in Table 1. Child depression, also referred to as depressive symptoms, was used as a continuous variable, but Allgaier et al. (2012) noted that a total score of three or more indicates depression. Of the 100 adolescent participants, 29 were depressed according to this criterion (19 females, nine males, one unreported sex).

All analyses were conducted with PROCESS v3 (Hayes, 2018). For all analyses we removed three multivariate outliers and included adolescent sex, age, relational stress, and language stress as covariates. First, we ran a mediated moderation model that simultaneously tested H_1-H_6 using a customized PROCESS model 80 (see Figure 1 and Table 2). This Model 1 included mother-reported warmth predicting mother-reported and adolescent-inferred support goals (H_1) and monitor goals (H_2), mother-reported and adolescent-inferred support goals and monitor goals predicting adolescent negative feelings (H_3 and H_4, respectively), and adolescent negative feelings predicting adolescent depression as moderated by adolescent positive feelings (H_5). The model also tested for indirect effects and whether the indirect effects were moderated (H_6).

Mother-reported warmth was positively associated with the mother-reported support goal ($B = .34$, $p < .001$) and monitor goal ($B = .26$, $p = .05$), but not with either adolescent-inferred goal. Thus, hypothesis one was partially supported, as warmth was positively associated with mother-reported support, but not with adolescent-inferred support. Hypothesis two was not supported, as it predicted a negative association between warmth and monitor goals, and warmth was *positively* associated with the mother-reported monitor goal and not associated with the adolescent-reported monitor goal. Hypothesis three, predicting support goals would be negatively associated with negative feelings and depression, was partially supported for adolescent-inferred support: the adolescent-inferred support goal was negatively associated with adolescents' negative feelings about brokering ($B = -.25$, $p = .005$). In contrast to hypothesis four, neither the mother-reported nor adolescent-inferred mother monitoring goal was associated with adolescents' negative feelings or depression. Hypothesis five predicted that adolescents' positive feelings about brokering would moderate the association between negative feelings about brokering and adolescent depression and was supported, as the interaction added 4.6% explained variance to depression. Brokering negative feelings were only positively associated with depression when adolescents reported positive feelings at or below 3 on the 4-point scale, which was 52% of adolescents. For these adolescents, as positive feelings decreased, the positive association between negative feelings and depression became stronger (see Figure 2).

Hypothesis six proposed that the indirect effects between warmth or goals to adolescent depression would be moderated by positive feelings. Hypothesis six was supported only for the indirect effect of the adolescent-inferred support goal on depression (index of moderated mediation = .47, 95% CI [.001, 1.20]). When adolescent positive feelings were at or below 3, greater adolescent inference of the mother support goal was indirectly associated with less adolescent depression (through reduced adolescent negative feelings). However, when adolescents reported positive feelings about brokering, this indirect effect was not present. Although not specifically hypothesized but in line with TRRL, moderated mediation was also present between adolescent-reported relational stress and depression (index of moderated mediation = -.22, 95% CI [-.52, -.01]). When adolescent positive feelings were lower, greater adolescent relational stress was indirectly associated with greater adolescent depression (through increased adolescent negative feelings).

We ran a second and third customized PROCESS model 80 to examine RQ_1-RQ_3. These two customized models were identical to Model 1 except Model 2 also included the RQ_1-proposed interactions

Table 2. Direct and moderated results.

	Mediators Level 1				Mediator Level 2			Outcome		
	M_Support	A_Support	M_Monitor	A_Monitor	Negative Feelings			Depressive Symptoms		
	Same results for all three models				Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
A_Sex	−.17†	−.04	−.02	−.20	.09	.09	.09	.33	.31	.36
A_Age	.01	.01	.04	.00	.00	.00	.00	.06	.09	.06
A_RelStress	.03	−.02	.05	.02	.12**	.12**	.12**	.26	.31†	.27
A_LangStress	−.05†	−.03	.02	−.08*	.00	.00	.00	.06	.04	.07
M_Warmth	.34***	−.06	.26*	.10	−.03	−.03	−.03	−.33	−.25	−.33
M_Support	-	-	-	-	.17	.15	.17	−.46	−.79	−.43
A_Support	-	-	-	-	−.25**	−.24*	−.25**	−.36	−.24	−.41
M_Monitor	-	-	-	-	−.06	−.06	−.06	.09	.17	.06
A_Monitor	-	-	-	-	.00	−.01	.00	−.19	−.32	−.18
A_NegFeel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.07†	.94†	1.05†
A_PosFeel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.11	.02	.11
A_NegFeel*A_PosFeel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	−1.99*	−2.04*	−1.96*
M_Support*A_Support	-	-	-	-	-	−.14	-	-	−2.01*	-
M_Monitor*A_Monitor	-	-	-	-	-	-	.06	-	-	.31
R-Squared	*.25****	*.02*	*.11†*	*.07*	*.23***	*.24***	*.23***	*.18*	*.23**	*.18*

All coefficients are unstandardized. All three models were run with centered variables. See Table 1 for abbreviations and Figure 1 caption for an explanation of model differences.
†$p < .10$, *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$

between the mother-reported and adolescent-inferred support goal, and Model 3 included the RQ$_2$-proposed interactions between the mother-reported and adolescent-inferred monitor goal (see Figure 1 and Table 2). For the first research question, the mother-reported and adolescent-inferred support goal interaction was significantly associated with depression (added 4.8% explained variance) but not with negative feelings. The mother-reported support goal was negatively associated with depression only when adolescent inference of the support goal was high (i.e., adolescent-inferred mother support goal was above 4.15 on the 5-point scale, which was 21% of adolescents; see Figure 2). For the second research question, the interaction between mother-reported and adolescent-inferred monitor goals was not associated with negative feelings or depression.

Research question three asked if the indirect effects between mother-reported warmth and adolescents' negative feelings about brokering or adolescent depression would be moderated by adolescent-inferred goals. The indirect effect from mother-reported warmth to adolescent depression through the mother-reported support goal was moderated by the adolescent-inferred support goal (index of moderated mediation = −.68, 95% CI [−1.66, −.01]). When adolescents inferred the mother support goal was highest, greater maternal warmth was indirectly associated with less adolescent depression (through the increased mother-reported support goal). When adolescents did not infer a high mother support goal, warmth was not indirectly associated with depression.

Discussion

We examined the theory of resilience and relational load (TRRL; Afifi et al., 2016) as a framework for understanding how Spanish-speaking mother-adolescent dyads from low-income families engaged in language brokering in ways that foster adolescent resilience. We extended TRRL by examining propositions within a mother-child relationship (rather than for romantic partners) and by using interaction goal theorizing to conceptualize security- and threat-based behaviors (goals reported as pursued by mothers) and appraisals (mother goals as inferred by adolescents). Specifically, we examined mothers' general warmth as a relational maintainence behavior, mothers' goal for supporting adolescents during brokering as a security-based goal, and mothers' goal for monitoring adolescents during brokering as a threat-based goal. In line with TRRL, our findings indicated that mother support goals during brokering and adolescents' positive feelings toward
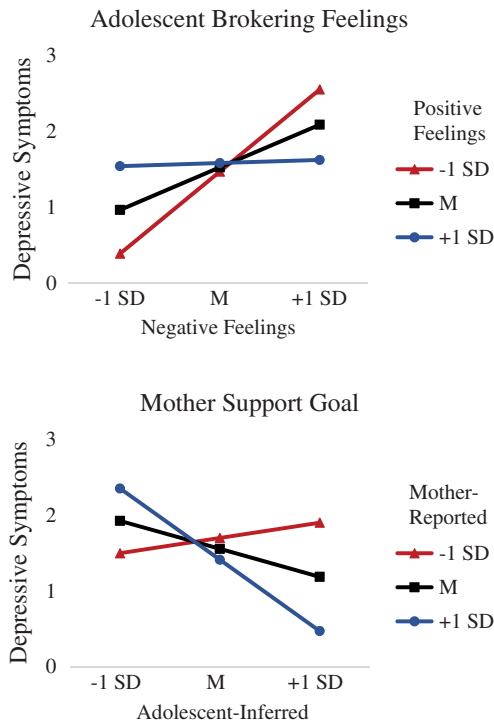
Figure 2. Interaction effects on adolescent depressive symptoms.
Note. Predictor and moderator variables displayed at the mean (M) and one standard deviations (SD) above and below the mean.

brokering are factors that protect adolescents from the negative mental health effects of brokering. Moreover, mother warmth was indirectly associated with reduced adolescent depression, but only when both adolescents and mothers agreed mothers pursued support goals. Against predictions, the monitoring goal did not perform as expected and may not be a good proxy for threat-based goals. We discuss each finding and its implications in turn.

Mother support as a protective factor: goal inference and pursuit

Integrating an interaction goals perspective and TRRL, we used adolescent-inference of mother support goals during brokering as indicative of adolescent security-based appraisals. Consistent with TRRL, which posits that security-based appraisals foster resilience and prevent depletion of emotional resources, our findings supported the protective role of adolescent support goal inference. The adolescent-inferred mother support goal was associated with reduced adolescent negative feelings toward brokering. These findings also corroborated brokering research, which suggests that parent-child communication may shape adolescent brokers' language brokering outcomes (Shen et al., 2017). Given the stressful nature of brokering, an unsupportive parent-child relational context likely impedes adolescents' coping and makes them more susceptible to the undesirable consequences of brokering. Children's perceptions of parental alienation (Kim, Hou, & Gonzalez, 2017) and lower levels of parental support (Weisskirch, 2013) were linked to adolescent brokers' negative beliefs about brokering, such as viewing brokering as a burden and lacking brokering efficacy. Our findings indicated TRRL can be a helpful theoretical framework to explain how adolescent appraisals of parenting goals are associated with their brokering feelings and mental health.

We also examined how mother-reported support goals functioned as a proxy to her security-based behaviors and how mother-reported goals mattered in conjunction with adolescent-inferred

goals on adolescent depression. The mother-reported support goal was negatively associated with adolescent depression, but only when adolescents inferred the mother support goal. Moreover, greater maternal warmth was indirectly associated with reduced adolescent depression through increasing the mother-reported support goal, but only when the adolescent-inferred mother support goal was highest. Therefore, when adolescents appraised mothers' goals as security-based, mothers' intentions to enact security-based behaviors (which presumably lead to security-based behaviors) were associated with better adolescent mental health. Potentially, mother-reported security-based behaviors may not matter unless adolescents also appraise these behaviors as security-based. Brokering is a dyadic communication process in which both parent and child perspectives matter (Kam et al., 2017; Weisskirch, 2017). Our findings indicated that TRRL propositions may also need to be considered from a dyadic perspective for some situations. In short, our findings provided evidence for TRRL propositions that security-based appraisals help manage stress, but also extended TRRL theoretical claims by distinguishing between mothers' and adolescents' perspectives and by indicating that adolescents' security-based appraisals may be required for mothers' security-based behaviors to foster adolescents' resilience against depression.

Positive feelings as a protective factor: interaction with negative feelings

Our findings suggested that another important source of resilience for adolescent brokers is their positive feelings toward brokering. For adolescents, positive and negative feelings about brokering can co-exist (Kim et al., 2017). Our findings indicated adolescents' positive feelings about brokering moderated the association between negative feelings and adolescent depression, such that negative feelings were associated with more depression only when adolescents did not report high levels of positive feelings. These findings aligned with broaden-and-build theorizing (Fredrickson, 2001), on which TRRL is partially based. Brokering research has indicated that negative feelings corresponded with poorer outcomes and positive feelings corresponded with positive outcomes (Shen et al., 2017; Weisskirch, 2007), but the impact of both types of feelings need to be examined simultaneously rather than in isolation. In line with TRRL, adolescent accumulation of positive feelings about brokering (i.e., positive emotional reserves) may counter or eliminate the damaging impact of negative brokering feelings on their overall mental health. Additionally, although not hypothesized, when positive feelings about brokering were lower, adolescent-reported relational stress (i.e., brokering stress stemming from parent-child relationship dynamics and role expectations) was related to more adolescent depression through increased negative feelings about brokering. This moderated mediation was consistent with the TRRL proposition that individuals with depleted emotional resources are more vulnerable to the stressfulness of the situation. In short, our findings supported TRRL claims that emotional resources influence mental health and that accrued positive emotional resources can protect against the effects of negative feelings or situational stress.

Adolescents' security-based appraisals may be particularly important when adolescents have *not* accrued positive emotional reserves (i.e., when positive feelings about brokering are lacking). The indirect effect of the adolescent-inferred mother support goal on adolescent depression via negative feelings was conditioned upon adolescents' positive feelings. The adolescent-inferred mother support goal was associated with less depression through reduced negative feelings when positive feelings were low. When positive feelings were high, the indirect effect was not significant. This result indicated that adolescents may still experience resilience when only one of the protective factors is present (i.e., when they have either accumulated positive feelings about brokering *or* infer mother security-based goals).

Theoretical implications

In extending TRRL to account for dyadic perspectives by employing interaction goal theorizing, we made a conceptual distinction between the mother's own security- or threat-based goals and the adolescent's appraisals of mother goals. Our findings indicated that interaction goals related to support are a useful

means of conceptualizing security-based behaviors and appraisals but that monitoring interaction goals may not closely align with TRRL's conceptualization of what is threat-based. No significant associations emerged between mother-reported or adolescent-inferred monitoring goals and any adolescent outcome. Past brokering research has indicated that adolescents who perceived their parents to be controlling experienced depression when they brokered more frequently (Hua & Costigan, 2012). However, perhaps adolescent perceptions of monitoring as an interaction goal are mixed, with some adolescents viewing it as intrusive and thus threat-based while others view it as normative or even as helpful if they are less confident in their brokering abilities. For all adolescents to view the appraisal as threat-based, the mother goal may need to be reconceptualized as maternal attempts to control adolescent brokering at the expense of adolescent independence. Examining the juxtaposition between a mother's identity goals for herself and the adolescent may be informative for both interaction goal and TRRL theorizing. Threat-based behaviors and appraisals may be made when mothers pursue their own identity goals and neglect or undermine goal pursuit related to adolescents' identity. We did not originally design the support and monitor goal variables to test TRRL concepts, although our study variables and context fit the TRRL framework; thus, alternative ways of conceptualizing or defining interaction goals in line with security- and threat-based propositions should be explored.

We also tested how relational maintenance behaviors were associated with the goals mothers pursued during language brokering. In line with TRRL predictions that mothers engaging in more maintenance behaviors are more likely to engage in security-based behaviors, we found that mother-reported warmth was positively associated with her support goal. However, contrary to TRRL propositions that relational maintenance should reduce threat-based behaviors or appraisals, mother-reported warmth was *positively* associated with the mother-reported monitoring goal during brokering. Latina mothers may view exerting parental control over a child as a culturally normative part of parenting (Rodriguez et al., 2009), therefore a mother's monitoring goal may not be a good representation of a threat-based goal, as we noted above. Additionally, mother-reported warmth was not significantly associated with adolescent inference of either mother goal. Potentially, adolescents perceive relational maintenance behaviors differently than the mothers, and only adolescent-reported relational maintenance behaviors would align with adolescent security- or threat-based inferences. In their test of TRRL, Afifi et al. (2018) only examined wives' behaviors on wives' outcomes, husbands' behaviors on husbands' outcomes, or an objective measure of behaviors (i.e., an intervention). Because our data was self-report, we did not have objective measures of behavior (e.g., observed maternal warmth behaviors). TRRL predictions may only hold with objective measures of relational maintenance behaviors, within the same individual's perception of behaviors and subsequent outcomes, or when examining the interaction of both partners' reports of behaviors, as we found for goals. Our focus on goals also limited our data's generalizability in that we excluded behaviors reported or inferred as used in the attempt to achieve goals (e.g., how mothers attempted to support adolescents during brokering). Future TRRL research may consider how predictions are dependent on how variables are measured (observed or reported) and participant role.

Practical implications for fostering adolescent resilience

Our findings may inform interventions aimed at facilitating adolescents' resilience as they cope with language brokering. Mothers' support during brokering may be an important source of resilience. Mothers may want to show support to their children by praising them for their assistance (Guan & Shen, 2015), which is more likely when mothers display general warmth in the relationship. However, adolescents also need to realize their mother's intention to be supportive to experience beneficial outcomes. A supportive parent-child relationship during brokering and a warm family environment – that is perceived as such by all family members – may be crucial for adolescent brokers' development of resilience. Brokers' positive feelings also served as a protective function. Having positive feelings toward brokering may mitigate the detrimental effects of negative feelings and experienced brokering stress, by preventing negative experiences from progressing into more concerning mental health conditions like depression. For example, culturally-grounded interventions could focus on Latino families' cultural

emphasis on interdependence between family members and enhance language brokers' pride as they offer meaningful help to their parents, even during stressful times. When it is not possible to cultivate adolescent positive feelings about brokering, adolescents' inference that their mother is supportive during brokering may still mitigate negative mental health effects.

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