Using Critical Discourse Analysis to Understand and Facilitate Identification Processes of Bilingual Adults Becoming Teachers

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Our research focuses on bilingual adults enrolled in the Teachers for English Language Learners (TELL) program. TELL is a scholarship program whose goal is to increase the number of critically-minded bilingual educators in the state of Georgia in the United States. In this paper, we use critical discourse analysis to inform theoretical and practical implications in language education research. First, we examine how TELL scholars address linguistic and social inequities through discourses of competency and legitimacy, using critical discourse analysis to interpret social tensions in a group of these adults. Our analysis combines close discourse analysis of focus group interview data with the macro-theoretical approach of Foucault to understand the relationship between systemic influences (e.g., standardized, corporate testing) and the life world (e.g., having conversations in and about multiple languages) as these bilingual adults become bilingual teachers in Georgia.

Purpose

For several generations one has been able to live in large U.S. cities without speaking a word in English while also hearing English pronounced with the sounds and structures of immigrant languages. More recently, over the past decade, the concentration of newcomer bilinguals has shifted. Now, cities and towns in the Southeast and Midwest, relatively unaccustomed to addressing the
needs of immigrant populations, are receiving large numbers of newcomers, most of whom are Spanish speakers. Accompanying this change in demographics is an increased need for bilingual adults to service newcomer communities. This is especially so in public schools serving large numbers of newcomer students and families for whom English is a second language, and where teachers who speak additional languages are in short supply. Currently, there is a discrepancy between the small number of Latino/a teachers (4%) and the increasing number of Latino/s students (15%), many of whom speak Spanish as their dominant language (the number of Latino students in the U.S. is expected to increase to 25% by 2025; Souto-Manning, 2005).

The large cultural and linguistic mismatch between Latino students and their mostly monolingual, English speaking teachers can create problems for Latino students’ academic achievement and success (Souto-Manning, 2005), and indicates the need for teacher recruitment targeted at new immigrant populations. This paper reports on an ongoing study of one teacher recruitment program designed specifically to meet the basic recruitment need for more bilingual teachers in Georgia; and our discourse analysis probes the incumbent complexities of becoming a bilingual teacher within traditionally monolingual school systems and the greater U.S. social context.

Specifically, in the research reported here, we focus on the identification processes of bilingual adults enrolled in the Teachers for English Language Learners (TELL) program, that has two goals:

1. To ensure the success of the program as illustrated by the number of TELL scholars who successfully complete programs of certification in the state of Georgia between 2003–2008 (funding is available to support a maximum number of 55 bilingual adults).

2. To ensure that bilingualism becomes recognized as a resource for all students in Georgia schools by:
   a. Nurturing a growing support community for bilingual educators.
   b. Supporting and developing critical language awareness among all TELL scholars.
   c. Providing intellectual and rhetorical resources to combat widespread deficit orientations that discriminate against bilingual populations.

While goal one is the primary goal of the granting agency, the U.S. Department of Education, goal two is informed by our own concerns for the well-being of bilingual populations in Georgia schools and is more transparently ideological. Our combined knowledge and experience tell us that to ensure bilingualism becomes recognized as a valuable resource for Georgia’s students, it is not enough to simply place 55 bilingual teachers in the schools (though this would satisfy goal number one). We want to ensure these bilingual teachers are equipped with the discursive awareness and practices necessary to resist the erosion of their bilingual identity when submersed in Georgia’s traditionally monolingual schools.

In this paper, we use critical discourse analysis (CDA) to inform theoretical and practical implications in language education research. First, we examine how TELL scholars address linguistic and social inequities through discourses of competency and legitimacy, using critical discourse analysis to interpret social tensions in a group of these adults. Our analysis combines close discourse analysis of focus group interview data with the macro theoretical approach of Foucault to understand the relationship between systemic influences (e.g., standardized, corporate testing) and the life world (e.g., having conversations in and about multiple languages) as these bilingual adults become bilingual teachers in Georgia. It is our goal that participants can use local understandings of being bilingual to define themselves as both bilingual adults and bilingual teachers. However, in this paper, we describe how generic tests (like those produced by the Educational Testing System [ETS] to evaluate new teachers) and other standardized mechanisms threaten local definitions and uses of bilingualism. These standardized mechanisms reflect corporate processes through which these developing teachers define themselves as bilingual—or not. In what follows, we will discuss how these corporate definitions threaten local definitions and uses of bilingualism as a resource.

In the spirit of engaged praxis, our research points to new ways to foster local identification processes among our participants, so that their bilingualism is fruitfully used as a resource within the local schools. Through our initial critique put forward in this article, we point to positive directions for new forms of bilingual identification specifically within the TELL program. The implications of our discourse-based understanding of social and linguistic inequities implicit in the interaction among our participants are threefold. First, because our analysis is built into formative program evaluation of TELL, our analysis directly influences the future of this bilingual teacher support program, and provides critical tools for participants to take up and use within school contexts potentially resistant to active bilingual participation. Second, because we are working in an increasingly common context (generally speaking, within multilingual populations), our research and practice have broad and practical implications for the role of critical discourse studies in the field of language education. Third, by grounding our analysis in both the face-to-face interaction of our participants and an understanding of how corporatized systems of classification enter into this realm, we offer theoretical and methodological implications about the possibility for critical discourse studies to inform and enact critical social change—to rise to the “emancipatory claims” of critical discourse studies more generally (McKenna, 2004).

Theoretical framework
To analyze TELL program efficacy in achieving both the concrete goal (55 bilingual teachers) and the more ideological goal (bilingualism as a resource) we
use methodology and theoretical frameworks of critical discourse analysis (CDA) to shape ways we formatively evaluate how TELL participants are experiencing their transition from bilingual adults to bilingual teachers and to explore the way prejudice emerges in conversation among TELL scholars. We build from the social theory of Foucault (1978) to understand how power in discourse influences identification processes. Then we look to CDA to analyze processes of bilingual identification and changes in identification in interactional context—looking at face-to-face talk and its relationship to Foucauldian discourses. Finally, we conclude with a discussion of Freire’s (1959) model where participants in a group progress from problem posing and dialogue to affect social action and change.

Foucault’s theory of power as perversively discursive provides a useful entry point into an understanding of the proliferation of discourses that surround bilingualism in the contemporary United States context. In The History of Sexuality, Foucault (1978) argues that sex talk wasn’t actually repressed during the Victorian era, but that the new sexual ethos spawned “an explosion of distinct discursivities which took form in demography, biology, medicine, psychiatry, psychology, ethics, pedagogy, and political criticism” (p. 33). This explosion of interested discursivities can be extrapolated to a discussion of many contemporary trends. Multifaceted discourses proliferate around issues, because these discourses serve the interests of those who control them.

“Bilingualism” in the United States is, similarly, creating an “explosion of discursivities.” For English speakers in the U.S., these proliferating discourses become a means to position oneself to access material goods and human resources, yet without embracing the practices or the people being discussed. Within the educational establishment, there tends to be much more talk about Spanish and Spanish speakers than talk in Spanish and with Spanish speakers. For example, institutions manage Spanish by chunking and labeling and isolating Spanish speaking newcomers within ESOL offices, ESOL textbooks, and by hooking them up with institutionally sanctioned bilingual ‘parent liaisons’. These systems then proliferate categories to scientize and dehumanize Spanish speakers, just as 17th century society proliferated discourses that scientized sexuality. As if by categorizing people—for example, as English Language Learners (ELLs), Limited English Proficient Students (LEPS), or as Fluent English Proficient Students (FEPS)—and enumerating pedagogical practice (5 easy steps to teach ESOL students, etc.), people and actions are controlled. Just as sex became “a police matter” so too language has today become something not to be enjoyed and appreciated, but to be managed.

Our goal is to understand these discursivities and use them to work toward social change. After all, as directors of TELL, to secure grant funding we used the broad term “bilingual” to label our potential participants, lumping them together as people ideally suited to serve the population of “English Language Learners” (ELLs) in our schools. By using systemic definitions that necessarily blur social boundaries, we were able to make a case that our participants will be ideal teachers for Georgia’s changing population. However, as researchers and social activists concerned with identity, we are also troubled by this false lumping, the diminishment of the potential power of a more multifaceted bilingual identification. Just as Foucault used his macro-discourse analysis to understand the spiraling and defining relationship between sex and power during the Victorian era, we draw on discourse to understand the relationship between bilingualism and power in the contemporary United States.

However, corporatized power is not the only discursive influence on processes of identification—people’s individual agency as well as the unfolding, contingent influences of face-to-face interaction also shape how bilingual identification occurs and can change. Building on Fairclough (2003), we’ve looked at three levels of bilingual identification: 1) Identification as Prepositioned (the lot we are dealt), potentially including factors like country of origin, bilingual experiences, or language proficiency; 2) Identification as a Result of Individual Agency: (individual will); and 3) Identification as Contingent on Interaction (co-construction).

At the level of face-to-face interaction, social processes influence what the individual’s agency and prepositioned identities can come to mean within a local setting. While widely circulating, corporatized discourses and prepositioned identities, as well as the actions of individual agents, are all relevant, these influences are mediated by the kinds of responses that emerge. There is constant, interactional negotiation between how one’s identity is positioned by structuring discourses, by one’s own agency, and by one’s need to be a competent communicator in any interaction. This interactional mediation can have unplanned for effects. This is why close analysis and understanding of the linguistic resources available to participants can inform our understanding of identification processes as much as an understanding of predatory macro structures (including demographic labels) or motives behind individual agency.

Our goals have been to identify and critically understand circulating discourses, individual agency, and their relationship to face-to-face processes of bilingual identification in order to foster effective educational futures for the bilingual teachers in TELL and the schools in which they will be working. These goals are consistent with a Freirean (2000) liberatory pedagogy which builds from individuals’ lived experience to understand how best to confront colonizing ideologies and practices. According to Freire (1987), “a progressive pole requires democratic practice where authority never becomes authoritarianism, and where authority is never so reduced that it disappears in a climate of irresponsibility and license” (p. 212). We believe the authority which results from a critical discourse analysis must be combined with liberatory pedagogy in order to move from a theory of distance toward a scholarship of praxis which is deeply engaged in social change in real world contexts. Thus, the aim of our CDA work with TELL scholars is first and foremost to identify those problems charged with political significance in the lives of bilingual educators and the students and families with whom they will work. This foundation
will provide opportunities to create what Freire (2000) called cultural circles within which to engage in a dialogue of critique that includes problem posing and problem solving among bilingual educators in the U.S.

**TELL program description and focus group method**

Since the TELL program first advertised its financial ($5000 scholarships), academic and professional (various workshops and consultations, career placement, classroom observations), and social support (holiday parties, focus group meetings), we have, at the time of this study, accepted 33 TELL scholars, an acceptance rate of 60.9%. By 2008 we hope to have successfully recruited and supported a total of 55 certified, bilingual teachers. Selection to the TELL program is based on a lengthy interview process that includes the following:

1. A written and oral assessment of scholars' abilities in English and another high-need language (high need as based on census data in the state);
2. An oral interview about scholars' experiences and interests in K-12 public education;
3. College transcripts (at least two years college credit from an accredited institution is required by the U.S. government grant program); and
4. Proof of legal U.S. residency (as required by the grant program).

Our assessment is that all accepted TELL scholars are highly qualified candidates for teacher certification—many of whom are already working in the schools as uncertified teachers, paraprofessionals, or bilingual parent liaisons. In those underpaid and unstable job positions, many TELL scholars are already providing much needed educational, cultural, and linguistic services. However, TELL scholars' language fluency in English and their second language range from native-like proficiency to proficient but non-native production (i.e., speaking with an accent or making minor but consistent errors in grammar or spelling in either language). The admissions process has assumed that—over the 5 year duration of funded program support—accepted TELL scholars will have the required linguistic and academic skills to achieve teacher certification.

Our analysis draws from focus group interviews with TELL participants to begin to answer questions about bilingualism, identity, and power. At the time of this study the TELL program was in its second year (out of five) and had 33 bilinguals from 16 different countries and territories, and six different languages seeking teacher certification (see Figures 1 & 2). Most TELL scholars (94%) had Spanish as a first, second or additional language (n = 31). One TELL scholar in this study was bilingual in Brazilian Portuguese and English with proficiency in Spanish. Another trilingual TELL scholar was a certified Spanish teacher in her home country of Czechoslovakia. Two TELL scholars were fluent in high need languages other than Spanish: one Arabic-English bilingual and one Japanese-Korean-English trilingual.

![Figure 1. Country of birth](image_url)

As long as TELL scholars are pursuing certification, the program requires scholars to attend a 90 minute focus group meeting every semester to report their progress toward certification including application and entry into a credentialing program and/or completion of necessary coursework and required education exams (e.g., TOEFL, Praxis, GRE). These meetings provide valuable feedback to the program in terms of how well it is serving TELL scholars' needs and areas for program improvement. The meetings also serve as social and academic support for scholars who share their challenges, accomplishments, strategies, experience, and camaraderie.

Through these workshops we have been learning about the diversity in our bilingual group. Some TELL scholars were completing their B.A. for teacher certification, some pursuing a Master's degree, and others had nearly completed certification programs (in the U.S. or abroad) and were only a few courses away from certification. Some TELL scholars were married, others were not. Some had young children at home, others did not. Some were born with U.S. citizenship, others were not. Thus, while all TELL scholars were defined by the program and themselves as "bilingual, pre-service teachers," they varied in the language they spoke, their oral and written proficiencies in those languages, their place on the path toward certification, their social histories and their personal and professional lives.
We have collected over 15 hours of audio-recorded data from focus groups and taken extensive field notes. This paper analyzes discourse from two focus groups with six and eight participants, the majority of whom (12/14) were Spanish-English bilinguals.

Figure 2. TELL participants as identified by language of most confidence.

This paper analyzes transcripts from year one focus group meetings when participants were asked to describe how and why they decided to become bilingual teachers as well as their impressions and needs from the TELL program. Our focus group procedure is based on the assumption, following our theoretical foundation, that participants' stories and conversational exchanges about those stories provide a window into their identification processes. We were concerned not only with the facts of their historical trajectory that brought them to the TELL program, but also with the way these stories were told. Therefore, rather than deriving analytic categories from a massive data set, this paper represents our methodology's priority to start at the single case level of analysis (Sealey & Carter, 2004). By starting with single cases of conversational narratives told within the small discussion groups, we are able to investigate the complex, interlocking variables affecting processes of identification among these developing teachers. Analysis of their conversational narratives provides empirical evidence of the multiple influences—individual will, pre-existent demographic labels, momentary group feedback, including the feedback of the interviewers—that shape participants' identities as bilinguals.

Findings

Our initial focus groups have yielded data which allow us to investigate specifically how pervasive corporate structures (including commonly used demographic labels), individual agency, and the contingent effects of face-to-face interaction all play a role in identification processes in this group. Excerpts below exemplify how each level of influence plays a role in TELL participant identification. By analyzing how these factors influence identification processes specifically within this group, we have identified a locally relevant set of concerns with which to plan practically oriented critical interventions (to be discussed in detail in a later section) in the TELL program. Our initial findings follow.

The corporatization of bilingualism

The corporatization of bilingual identity has become increasingly apparent in focus group discussions, which, to our surprise, often veered off into lengthy discussions of testing and the varied levels of being "bilingual" or "Latino" within the group. We use the term "corporatization" to describe and understand how systems of defining bilingual identities parallel global organizational trends regarding other more tangible resources. In the contemporary world market, for example, the distribution of traditionally local resources like water have fallen under the control of multinational corporations. Rather than people seeking their own water locally, or looking to the local government to provide this necessity, multinational corporations have taken control of the storage and distribution of this resource, defining on their own terms both the quantity and quality of water, who will have access, and for how much, and for how long (Barlow & Clarke, 2002). The same trend has also showed itself lately with the corporate production of toll roads, where corporations, rather than the government or the concerns of local citizens, define the terms of road building—where they go, how they are built, and who pays and profits from them. This kind of corporatization of resources is resonant with Foucauldian discursive systems of control. This kind of corporatization is also infiltrating educational systems (cf., Owens, 2004), and, specific to our case, the definition of what a bilingual teacher is. For the bilingual teachers discussed here, the corporate influence becomes manifest through systems of testing and evaluation defined by the Educational Testing System (ETS; 2004a). Rather than local communities defining what a relevant form of bilingualism is, the ETS defines it generically and thus regulates what counts as a bilingual resource, and ultimately, whose needs bilingualism will serve.

The penetration of corporate discourse into processes of bilingual identification among TELL scholars is illustrated in the repeated reference in all our focus group data (and in more impromptu discussions and e-mail exchanges) to tests, to concern for passing tests, and to the capacity of tests to define participants as competent or incompetent to be bilingual teachers. This concern persists to the
Individual agency resisting prepositioned or structurally defined bilingual identities

While corporate systems, like those ETS distributed internationally to define "bilinguals," affect how participants in our study identify themselves as bilingual or not, our participants also bring pre-defined statuses to our focus group discussions. In other words, while tests further define them, our participants all enter the discussion as "prepositioned" in some way—as indicated by our descriptions of them as "participants" and most graphically in our positioning of them in the "country of birth" pie chart. They all bring certain language proficiencies and experiences as bilinguals to the table. This representation of their identities as prepositioned is very useful for us as TELL managers. For example, pie charts (like Figure 1) power-up our presentations, federal reports, and future grant proposals by providing quick snapshot views about TELL.

However, through discourse, individuals have agency and often assert identities that contrast or enhance others' perception of them as "prepositioned" or determined in some way. Imagine a pie chart that could talk back—explaining for example that a "slice" from Czechoslovakia is also a woman, fluent in Czech, Spanish, and English. To illustrate multiple identities of a single individual we use a Talking Pie Chart (see Figure 3). This talking pie chart is based on what Glória Anzaldúa, a scholar from the Southwestern United States, described as the multiplicity of identities she and members of her family can variably choose to take up in discourse: "Si le preguntas a mi mamá, ¿Qué eres? te dirá, 'Soy mexicana.' [If you ask my mother, "what are you?" she'll say "I'm Mexican"] My brothers and sister say the same. I sometimes will answer 'soy mexicana' [I'm Mexican] and at others will say 'soy Chicana' o 'soy tejana' ["I'm Chicana" or "I'm Texan"] (Anzaldúa, 2000, pp. 319–320).

So, in discourse, individuals are not locked within one segment of a pie chart—or one corporatized designation like "ESOL" or "LEP." Rather, identification processes afford a roving self-labeling. Within our own focus groups, individuals (just like Anzaldúa and her family) take up variable levels of individual agency in how they identify with particular "prepositioned" identities by affiliating with different labels for themselves. For example, in the following interaction, one participant, Sara, originally from Cuba, and Zeta and Bertha, both from Puerto Rico, argue the term "Latino" does not include people from Spain.

Although Praxis I is not designed as a test to indicate bilingualism (the ETS website (2004b) describes it as a valid measure of "basic skills in reading, writing, and mathematics"), the group used this as a standardized indicator validating Juan as legitimately "bilingual." On mention of this test, Miriam from Czechoslovakia and Liona from Columbia displayed admiration and congratulations for Juan's achievement, but also began to mention their own anxieties and obligations regarding test-taking and bilingual competency. This excerpt illustrates what occurred repeatedly in this group: a standardized test, designed for all teachers, became a discourse through which the group defined their bilingualism relative to one another. The discourses surrounding bilingualism, proliferated through a lucrative testing industry, became a parameter by which bilingualism was defined. In turn, local understandings of the bilingual skills needed for teachers, and careful conversations about what each of them needed to succeed in Georgia's bilingual classrooms, were underemphasized in favor of rankings generated by nationally produced, generic assessments.
Rob: Even French can be considered Latinos.

Like Anzaldúa, who variably identifies herself as chicana, mexicana, tejana, raza, etc., Rob and Myra assert new possibilities for identities. In contrast, Sara insists these labels are static and pre-positioned, appealing to the authority of the dictionary—in which Myra asserts, she has “too much faith!”

**Excerpt 2: Latinos are... (continued)**

Sara: But that's how, that's how is is in the dictionary, you know, when they say- when it was mentioned “Latinos” it was you know it was just this, it was not including Spain.

[And with the Hispanic it was]

Myra: [You put too much faith on the of that dictionary!]

All: Laughter

So, circulating discursive practices spawn different language labels and shape what individuals can claim as their identity. And individuals, at will, can decide which authority they can appeal to in order to make a case for one or another kind of identification. Clearly, these participants are social agents who can create and change things (including definitions of “Latino”), even in the shadow of authoritative sources and standardized forms like the Praxis I and that dictionary. As TELL scholars asserted their identities they negotiated between corporatized structures and individual agency.

Definitions of who is or is not bilingual may always be partially defined by institutional labels, standardized tests, or reference sources. However, individuals, at will, can decide which authority they appeal to in order to make a case for one or another kind of identification. Our findings confirm the possibility for individual resistance to pre-positioning. And, as we will discuss in conclusion, agentic identification will be a vital resource for TELL scholars in their futures as bilingual teachers. However, asserting an identity is not simply a matter of negotiating between corporatized, predatory structures and individual agency.

**Identification as contingent on face-to-face interaction (co-construction)**

Individuals have multiple co-existing identities as illustrated by the talking pie chart (Figure 3). However, individuals rarely assert their identities in isolation. Rather, “talking pie charts” are more apt to be in conversation with others, defining oneself in real-time interaction with others in ways that shift and change. Identification, achieved through and influenced by the local moment-by-moment interaction in a group, is illustrated by the Conversing Pie Chart (Figure 4). In conversation, claiming “soy mexicana!” like Glória Anzaldúa does, is subject to infinite possible interactional effects. One response might be “right on!”—constructing this label, in interaction, as a liberatory identification. On the other hand, one might respond to “soy mexicana!” ["I'm Mexican"] with enthusiasm, “soy Mexicana también!” ["I'm Mexican too!""] but also “Why are...
you so angry?" or "Tú, no te entiendo" ["You, I don't understand you"] or any number of possible moment-to-moment responses.

![Figure 4. Conversing pie chart](image)

Always, in interaction, one's identification is mediated by the kinds of responses that emerge. There is constant, interactional negotiation between how one's identity is prepositioned by structuring discourses, by one's own agency, and by one's need to be a competent communicator in any interaction. This interactional mediation can have unplanned for effects. This is why close analysis and understanding of the linguistic resources available to participants can inform our understanding of identification processes as much as an understanding of predatory macro structures or motives behind individual agency.

To illustrate such moment to moment contingencies, we return to Excerpt 1. Throughout his story, and before reaching this Praxis juncture, Juan had made multiple storied references to his own struggles, known to be common to the group—troubles with finding time, money, and the English skills necessary to enter a teacher certification program in the United States. Juan's disclosure that he passed the Praxis I test continued a list of the many hurdles he had to stride to simply be admitted to a program. Nevertheless, despite his own repeated attempts to spin his own accomplishments as humble in origin, his subsequent disclosure that he took and passed the PRAXIS I test is received with multiple, unpredictable responses, which shape his identity as very distinct from the others in the group.

While delivered in a neutral tone:

**Excerpt 1: I Did Praxis I By The Way (Revisited)**

Juan: I did Praxis I by the way.

Miriam: Oh you passed?

Juan: Yeah.

And as an impressive accomplishment:

Miriam: Oh, congratulations.

Juan’s Praxis remark is also taken up as a challenge that others need to rise to:

Delores: I have to get ready for that.

And as an accomplishment that distinguishes him from the others present:

Liona: **But you, you, you, are /bi lın' gual?** [Spanish accent, emphasis on second syllable] Are you /bi lın' gual?**

And one that even leads (arguably) to one-upmanship in the group, as Miriam then corrects Liona's pronunciation:

Miriam: "/BAI/ lingual" [emphasis on the standard English pronunciation of the first syllable]

The result, un-foretold to everyone, including Juan, is that, in this interaction, Juan stands out as an individual who is constructed in discourse as superior to the others in the group, one who is more bilingual than they are, and one who has easily mounted obstacles that are going to be very difficult for the others.

We can see, most apparently, through the shift in pronouns ("I did Praxis" and "You, you, you are bilingual") that Juan becomes identified as one who stands apart from the group and, as the one who is most TRULY bilingual, and certainly more legitimately so than Liona who, with Miriam, insists on demarcating Juan as having a distinct ability— "you speak Spanish and English very well."—despite his denials.

**Excerpt 1: I Did Praxis I By The Way (Continued)**

Juan: I wasn't that

Miriam: Yeah,

Juan: I wasn't that totally bilingual, I mean I (sigh)

Liona: Yeah, you speak

Juan: I-

Liona: Spanish and English very well

Miriam: yeah Spanish and English

Liona: This is my problem

And, in conclusion to Juan's story, and a simultaneous preface to her own story, Liona highlights Juan's strength as her problem. His humility, and his
narrative nods to the common struggles of the group have been overshadowed by his excellence in passing of the Praxis I, a test which has distinguished him as more truly "bilingual" than his peers—peers who were formally considered and were in fact selected for participation, based on their designation as "bilingual." In this case, passing the Praxis I and having more standard pronunciation in English led to defining some TELL scholars as more or less bilingual than others, despite the fact that all were selected for the program on the basis of their designation as "bilingual."

Discussion

The examples given here are meant to illustrate the intertwinedness of corporatized, macro-discourse level definitions, self-definitions asserted through an act of individual will, and the contributions of interactional contingency. Juan's mentioning of his Praxis test touched off a chain of identifications among the others. Similarly, definitions of "bilingual" and "Latino" led Sara and Myra to a dialogue that allowed other participants to uphold and contest static identity and legitimacy. Both these negotiations about definitions of bilingualism and Latino membership exemplify a tension we want to explore further. On the one hand, there is a need for participants to succeed, distinguish themselves, and become exemplary bilingual teachers based on systemic judgements of their value to education. On the other hand, each needs to find solidarity within public discourses that are often homogenizing and alienating toward bilingualism, and recognize the different kinds of bilingual competencies and Latino identities available to themselves and their future students. We draw theoretical and pedagogical implications from this level where potential for practical transformation exists.

We find that the co-constructed conversational narrative (Ochs & Capps, 2001) between Juan, Miriam, and Liona furthered the dissemination of an institutional discourse that limited access to multiple understandings and critical meta-awareness (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999). Considering the intertwining of texts and contexts, an idea that is corporatized and marketed by a particular institutional discourse (such as the Praxis Test of basic teacher skills) may have many "understandings" (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999, p. 67); that is, different people see the same issue differently. For this to happen, however, participants must understand that an issue can yield multiple understandings, which greatly depends on the individual’s location in society. Being critically aware of these multiple understandings allows individuals to appropriate language to their own purposes and resist being colonized by it (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999).

This is a first step toward what Freire (2000) termed conscientização and toward engaging in the concrete critical research which CDA seeks to accomplish.

Freire (1959) first described conscientização [conscientization] as it took place among the illiterate Brazilian poor. These Brazilians participated in adult literacy programs where reading the word was connected to reading the world: where real-life questions of power and oppression (such as widespread alcohol-...
process will foster social transformation so that TELL teachers develop real voices and leadership roles in schools, challenging and transforming definitions of who is and is not fully bilingual, fully Latino, and full members of a given educational community.

Conclusion

CDA illuminated discourses of bilingualism and power in negotiations of bilingual identity. In each case, we identified points of tension regarding competency and legitimacy. We found bilingual identity was a status attained through institutional sanctions that were also, at times, contested. Foucauldian discursivities and individual agency affected processes of bilingual identification in this group. However, for us, the most important site of identification for critical praxis is at the level of embodied practical engagement. At this level, the relationship between people, identity and power is most flexible. There is a vital need for consciousness-raising about the interactional moment-to-moment identity work that takes place in face-to-face conversation where there is potential on the one hand for further division; on the other, for re-engagement with unity and support among diverse prepositioned identities in present and future interests. For this reason we have chosen to use Boal’s (1979) *Theatre of the Oppressed* as a method to “rehearse for the revolution” (p. 141) within a network of support. Networks of support among critically minded bilingual educators are vital to future bilingual teachers who will work in public school environments often hostile to bilingual identity (Cahnmann & Varghese, 2003).

This meta-awareness would allow bilingual adults to have a relationship of appropriation (in resistance to colonization) with language (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999) and to use CDA to identify, problematize, take a stand, and engage in social action to change their situations and those of bilingual youth, while challenging the corporative parameters by which bilingual identity is often measured/defined. This approach emphasized more fully in our current phase of research (Cahnmann, Souto-Manning, & Rymes, 2005) is about people making sense of their own world, instead of living in the world that some corporation or anyone else is making sense of on their behalf.

Future research and critical praxis in the TELL program will illuminate how CDA can be used to inform programs that support and prepare bilingual educators, especially those who identify as linguistic, cultural, and/or racial minorities. As mentioned, in carrying out the task of promoting conscientization (Freire, 2000) among TELL participants, we have designed future focus group discussions applying principles of Boalian Theatre to address politicized topics identified in our research such as test taking comparisons and bilingual identity in a critical way. Future studies will analyze these new dialogues, continuing to provide direction to our program and to other programs addressing the professional development and support of bilingual educators in contexts that privilege monolingual orientations and static, rather than variable, identifications. We hope to expand the linguistic and critical discourses available to bilingual teachers and critical bilingual leaders in the future.

Note

In Spanish the term *Latino* is used to refer to both males and females. We also use the word *Latino* throughout the paper, but begin with *Latina/o* in recognition of both genders in English.

References


