“WE SPEAK THE LANGUAGE OF CHANGEMAKERS”:
CRITICAL PEDAGOGIES AND TRANSFORMATIVE MULTILITERACIES IN A
COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE BEYOND ESL

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Abstract

As educators face the challenge of preparing students for local and global citizenship in societies marked by such cultural and linguistic complexity that researchers have labeled them “super-diverse” (Blommaert & Rampton, 2011; Vertovec, 2007), older models of English as a Second Language instruction that aimed at the assimilation of non-English speakers into English-dominant societies are giving way to a new wave of pedagogical approaches including multiliteracies (New London Group, 2000) and pluriliteracies (Lin, 2013; Taylor & Snoddon, 2013) that recognize—and create citizens who recognize—the value of linguistic diversity, the necessity of critical linguistic awareness, and the possibility for linguistic inclusion and transformative change. My research investigates the meaning-making practices and identities of linguistically-diverse youth engaged in transformative multiliteracies pedagogies (Cummins, 2009) at an international seminar on youth leadership for social change. In an alternative international education setting, this study explores what is possible in terms of pedagogy, practice, and policy when we move beyond “ESL”/ “Native English Speaker” to include the plurilingual and multimodal resources, identities and practices of all participants.

This study takes a critical approach to language and literacy pedagogy (Morgan & Ramanathan, 2005; Janks, 2010; Norton & Toohey, 2011), multilingualism (Blackledge & Creese, 2010; Alim 2010), plurilingualism (Lin, 2013), and language learning (Norton & Toohey, 2004). In addition, this investigation takes a community of practice approach to learning and competency (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1999) and a social practice approach to identity (Norton, 2000, 2013) and language (Pennycook, 2010a; Blackledge & Creese, 2010).
This critical ethnography (Anderson, 1989; Carspecken, 2001; Talmy, 2010a) draws on a small stories (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008) narrative approach and a Bakhtinian (1981) discourse analysis to investigate the communicative practices and identity positionings of linguistically diverse youth. Video ethnography (Heath, Hindmarsh, & Luff, 2010) and interview as a social practice (Talmy, 2010c) were used to approach the rich discursive practices of the community as the participants engaged in activities that encourage and explore diversity, access, power, and design—the four interconnected elements of Janks’ (2009) critical literacy framework.
Preface

This thesis is the intellectual property of its author, Kimberly Meredith. The research was approved by UBC’s Research Ethics Board, certificate H09-02706.

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Transcription Conventions

steps right  non-linguistic mode (gesture or sound)
()  overlaps with previous utterance
[  two speakers’ talk or gestures overlaps at this point
{  one speakers’ talk and gesture overlap at this point
=  no interval between turns (‘latching’)
?  interrogative intonation
(2.0)  pause (silence and/or stillness) timed in seconds
(,)  small untimed pause
aw:j:y  prolonged syllable, sound, or movement
why  emphasis or stressed word or syllable or gesture
REALLY  word/gesture noticeably stronger than surrounding talk/gestures
°yes°  word/gesture noticeably softer than surrounding talk/gestures
<I have to>  words/gestures noticeably faster than surrounding talk/gestures
heh heh  laughter syllables
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A special thanks to the Pearson and PSYL community for sharing your stories and for being the change-makers that you are.
This thesis is dedicated to all the change-makers seeking to be heard. Keep speaking your language of change.

This is also for Madu: you remind me everyday that English is limited, words are not everything, and change is both possible and necessary.
Chapter 1: Critical Pedagogies, Multiliteracies and a Community of Practice

Beyond ESL

1.1 Introduction

In an era of rapid change and increasing diversity, our classrooms have become complex multicultural communities functioning in many ways as microcosms for the changing world. Our students bring with them an ever-increasing diversity of semiotic resources with which they construct meaning and self. As a result, it has become ever more important that we as educators seek ways to tap into these and worlds of identification and signification that are meaningful to the individual learners in our communities (Pennycook, 2010b). At the same time, our role is to work with our learners to build a supportive community where all members can expand their sense of the possible in terms of access to semiotic resources, diverse identities, and imagined futures (Norton, 2000, 2013; Norton & Toohey, 2011). Our students bring with them not only a diversity of languages and meaning-making abilities, but also a diversity of knowledge and awareness of the global challenges that concern them (Luke, 2004b; New London Group, 2000). As a self-described “peace educator,” it is always my hope to inspire my students to see themselves as competent communicators, active community members, and agents of social change. However, at times I found that the diversity overwhelms rather than inspires, the global injustice depresses rather than motivates, and attempts at critical pedagogy bring apathy rather than action.
I have had the privilege to work with several global educational communities (Pacific Rim Intercultural Camp \(^1\), Peace Boat \(^2\), Pearson Seminar on Youth Leadership \(^3\)) explicitly built on embracing diversity, strengthening community, and inspiring egalitarian social change. Pedagogical spaces such as these are not perfect, but strive to be democratic and socially just: their design challenges the deterministic view that the system controls individual experience and instead aims to create a new culture of alternative pedagogical approaches, identities, and communicative norms. From my observation, lived experiences in these communities are pedagogically inspirational and afford unique opportunities to investigate the discursive practices that are both creative of and created by a diverse culture of social awareness. These distinct communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1999, 2012) are discursively rich fields of re-creating identities, re-evaluating linguistic resources, and re-imagining future possibilities. They are spaces that question societal and cultural norms including power relations, social structures, relationships, and identities. Communicative norms—including the dominance of English—are also open for re-envisioning, with significant implications to notions of what it means to be communicatively competent. This study seeks to document, describe and analyze the pedagogical and discursive possibilities that exist for linguistically diverse participants in an alternative space outside the mainstream educational norm. Confronted by similar pedagogical challenges of diversity faced by mainstream Canadian schools but unbound by certain curricular and social limitations, ethnographic explorations into the Pearson Seminar on Youth Leadership provide unique insight into multilingual and plurilingual (Beacco & Byram, 2007; Coste, Moore, & Zarate, 2009; Lin, 2013; Taylor & Snoddon, 2013) educational possibilities beyond “ESL.”

\(^1\) http://pric.org/
\(^2\) www.peaceboat.org
\(^3\) http://www.psyl.ca/
1.1.1 A note on terminology

As noted by Cummins and Early (2011), “a wide variety of terms have been used to refer to students whose home language differs from the dominant language of the society, which is typically the primary language of instruction in schools,” and these terms are “loaded with ideological connotations and these have been hotly debated in the academic literature” (p. xv). Academics, policy-makers, educators and learners themselves have contested the use of various terms. Following Cummins and Early (2011), I have decided “to reflect the shifting identity locations of students and their communities by employing a variety of terms” (xvi). When citing academic literature, I mirror the usage of the original author, so “English as an additional language,” “English as a second language,” and “English language learner” are all used within such contexts. When not citing another’s work, I have opted to use “English language learner” (ELL). Although this term is also contested on the grounds that it defines students “by what they lack, namely adequate proficiency in English” (Cummins & Early, 2011, p. xv) and it is debatable when someone stops being labeled a “learner” and simply becomes a legitimate “user” of English (Cook, 1999), I have elected to use this term (as well as terms that identify the participant’s most fluent language, such as “Japanese-dominant” or “English-dominant”) as it reflects the official policy change in BC from the term “ESL” to “ELL” after recommendations of the Immigrant and Refugee Youth Summit 2011:

The need for a name change was raised repeatedly by youth at the 2011 Summit, as many feel that naming the course “ESL” suggests that English is their second language, when it might be their third or fourth. As well, youth said, the name does not reflect or
acknowledge their diverse backgrounds and personal circumstances (Representative for Children and Youth & Vancouver Foundation, 2011). This leaves the now out-dated term “ESL” available to represent policies and pedagogy that do not “reflect or acknowledge [the] diverse background and personal circumstances” of the learners. In the same document, it was reported that the youth “shared an interest in modeling inclusion at school instead of segregation through ESL” and said that “ESL classes felt like a form of segregation” (p. 8). It is this segregated view of “ESL,” explored more in this chapter and throughout the dissertation, that I refer to when I write of a community of practice “beyond ESL.”

1.2 The Need for Pedagogical Approaches Beyond “ESL”

In classrooms across Canada and around the world, educators face the challenge of preparing students for local and global citizenship in societies marked by such cultural and linguistic complexity that researchers have labeled them “super-diverse” (Blommaert & Rampton, 2011; Vertovec, 2007). Older models of English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction that aimed at the assimilation of non-English speakers into English-dominant societies no longer serve the needs of our learners or our educators. When participation in a classroom community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1999, 2012) is defined by fluency in standard English alone, English language learners may struggle to find legitimacy and voice (Duff, 2002; Morita, 2004; Norton, 2000). For example, in her classroom ethnography of identity and language learning in a contemporary high school, Duff (2002) found that “some (dominant) voices and not others are valued and heard. Some [linguistically dominant] students create constructive social and academic networks with other students and staff both inside and
outside of class. Yet others [English language learners] are silent, marginal, and apparently disconnected and disengaged from peers, curriculum, activities, and discourse in the mainstream” (p. 290). Similarly, Morita (2004) found in university classrooms that English language learners often felt “ignored” or “marginalized” in an English-dominant classroom community, especially when the topic of discussion precluded their background knowledge (p. 589). In these situations, teachers reported finding it difficult to accommodate for the needs of English language learners “without slowing down the rest of the class” (Morita, 2004, p. 589).

In places where English language learners are removed from mainstream classrooms for ESL instruction, students have reported feeling “segregated” into a class that is a “waste of time” (Representative for Children and Youth & Vancouver Foundation, 2011). Meanwhile, there are also consequences for the “rest of the class”—the so-called “linguistically privileged” students—as investment in second language learning declines (McPake, Johnstone, Low, & Lyall, 1999) and intercultural understanding is constrained. Writing from a UK context, Pollmann (2009) comments that only the most economically privileged members of society gain valuable intercultural capital due to restricted access to out-of-school experiences living abroad and extensive extra-curricular foreign language courses. The linguistic capital in our learning communities has never been greater; yet we as educators are missing opportunities to capitalize on it: Cummins et al. (2005) articulate “the bizarre scenario of schools successfully transforming fluent speakers of foreign languages into monolingual English speakers, at the same time as they struggle, largely unsuccessfully, to transform English monolingual students into foreign language speakers” (p. 586). Arguably, under older models of ESL instruction, all students are losing opportunities to broaden their cultural and linguistic resources and the community of practice.

As boundaries between languages dissolve (Pennycook, 2010a) and possibilities for diverse linguistic practices and identities increase, these older models of English as a Second Language instruction are giving away to a new wave of pedagogical approaches including multiliteracies (New London Group, 2000) and plurilingualism (Beacco & Byram, 2007; Coste et al., 2009; Lin, 2013; Taylor & Snoddon, 2013) that recognize—and create citizens who recognize—the value of linguistic diversity, the necessity of critical linguistic awareness, and the potential for linguistic inclusion and transformative change. Superdiversity, for example, is a perspective that sees “complexity, hybridity, ‘impurity’ and other features of ‘abnormal’ sociolinguistic objects as ‘normal’” (Blommaert, 2014, p. 3). Similarly, in the conclusion to her study of how English language learners negotiated participation and identity in English-dominant academic communities of practice, Morita (2004) makes a profound re-visioning statement:

Given the increasingly international nature of academic communities, the view of L2 learners simply as linguistic or cultural minorities may no longer be adequate or productive. By the same token, native-speaking students or even instructors are not simply the dominant group, target, or norm, but groups of peripheral participants who also need to be socialized into increasingly heterogeneous communities (p. 599).

This notion raises numerous questions to be explored: if membership in a community of practice is marked by participation in the discursive practices that identify that community (Lave & Wenger, 1991), what are the discursive practices that mark a multilingual, critically multicultural community of practice? What is the instructor’s role in socializing both themselves and their learners into this heterogeneous community of practice? If neither native-speaking students nor
even instructors are considered the target or norm of a heterogeneous community, who or what is? What pedagogical practices are effective in re-defining the norm in a multilingual, critically multicultural community? In his often cited article (see for example, Goldstein, 2007; Tierney, 2006; Rogers, Marshall, & Tyson, 2006), Luke (2004b) addresses some of these questions and proposes a parallel re-visioning of teachers and teaching in such heterogeneous communities of practice. Luke asks, “what if we envisioned as part of our re-thinking of democratic education a reconstruction of teachers and students as world citizens, thinkers, intellectuals, and critics and within this context, as national and community-based subjects?” (p. 1430). At the heart of this re-visioned community of practice for both teachers and learners is Luke’s notion, drawing on Bourdieu, of intercultural capital: “that is the capacity to engage in acts of knowledge, power and exchange across time/space divides and social geographies, across diverse communities, populations and epistemic stances” (p. 1429). Pointing to Luke, I understand intercultural capital to be a form of cultural, social and symbolic capital (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991) gained through engaging in diverse communicative practices. Following Cummins (2009), I refer to these diverse communicative practices as transformative multiliteracies and the pedagogies that encourage their development as transformative multiliteracies pedagogies. See chapters 2 and 3 for a review of related pedagogical approaches and the way they are instantiated at the international youth leadership seminar.

Although schools are beginning to shift policy and pedagogy to embrace linguistic diversity (Blackledge & Creese, 2010; Garcia & Sylvan, 2011; New London Group, 2000), these examples remain pockets in places. In this context, my research investigates the meaning-making practices and identities of linguistically-diverse youth engaged in transformative multiliteracies pedagogy (Cummins, 2009) and practices at an international seminar on youth
leadership for social change. In an alternative international education setting, this study draws on the concept of super-diversity to explore what such diversity may look like in practice and stands as another example of what is possible in terms of pedagogy, practice, and policy when we move beyond the “ESL”/“Native English Speaker” divide to include the plurilingual and multimodal resources, identities and practices of all members of our communities.

1.3 The Study

1.3.1 Setting

Research at the Pearson Seminar on Youth Leadership offers an opportunity to examine what is possible in terms of identity positionings, empowerment, and multiliteracies practices beyond the institutional constraints of high school ESL programs bound by provincial curriculum, block rotation systems, and required evaluations. The program is held at Pearson College, part of the United World College movement, and shares the UWC mission of “making education a force to unite people, nations, and cultures for peace and a sustainable future” (“Our Story,” n.d.). The entire program spans five weeks: the first week for planning by the eight adult coordinators, the second week for the training of the twelve youth facilitators (17-18 years olds from other United World Colleges who volunteer to take on a facilitation role within the program), followed by the three-week core program for the program participants.

1.3.2 Participants

The three groups that make up the program community each year are the adult coordinators, the youth facilitators, and the program participants. In 2010, 4 of the 8 adult coordinators, 8 of the 15 youth facilitators, and 40 of the 80 program participants consented to
participate in the research project. In 2011, 4 of the 9 adult coordinators, all 13 youth facilitators, and 35 of the 75 program participants offered consent. Research participants will be introduced individually in the data analysis chapters (5-8). Broadly speaking, the majority of the participants (in the program as well as the research project) were English-dominant Canadians, predominantly from British Columbia. In both years, 5-6 Japanese-dominant participants from Japan made up the second largest linguistic group in the program as well as the study. These participants came to the youth program through their English as a Foreign Language (EFL) program in Tokyo, Japan and generally had a significantly lower level of English than other participants. There were also several participants from across Europe including Spain, France, and Germany with varying levels of English proficiency generally higher than the Japanese participants but lower than the Canadian majority participants. Following Sheridan, Street and Bloome (2000), the classroom instances and interview sections ultimately selected for analysis here are not to be understood as typical cases to be generalized everywhere, but as telling cases that are used to explore these situated practices from a particular theoretical stance. As further outlined in chapter 4, from the consent process, to the focal participants, to the interviews, to the analysis, to the final write-up there has been a process of increasing focus on certain narratives that I hope will illuminate particular aspects of the phenomena in question.

1.3.3 Research questions

This study is an ethnographically inspired investigation into the multiliteracies practices of youth in a pedagogical space designed to explicitly support communicative explorations beyond

4 The majority of the remaining program participants offered full assent, but were not included in the study as they did not bring a signed consent form- a challenge of researching at a camp-like setting.
the institutional borders of mainstream second language education. My research agenda, then, is driven by the following questions:

1. How can transformative multiliteracies pedagogies affect the meaning-making practices and identity positioning of linguistically diverse youth?

2. What multiliteracies practices and pedagogies can be creative of and created by a linguistically inclusive and critically multilingual community?

1.4 Background and Motivation

This dissertation, like perhaps all dissertations, is an identity text (Cummins & Early, 2011) in that into its production I have invested my identities as a researcher, educator, language learner, and citizen committed to social justice. Though Canada is a “multicultural” and “bilingual” nation (Fleming, 2007), my earliest memory of realizing that there were languages in the world other than English was at the age of twelve: a monolingual reality made possible because my family had generations ago lost any trace of heritage languages, my best friend hid the fact that her parents spoke Mandarin, and French was taught as though it were no different than math. My experiences learning French in Quebec during the 1996 referendum and learning Japanese while teaching English in Japan are part of my story of learning about my own linguistic limitations and privileges. Through my struggles to communicate, I learned empathy for those learning the dominant language. Through my Quebec exchange father’s words, “you learn French because you want to; we learn English because we have to,” I learned about power and language. When I taught at an international camp in Japan, I discovered that the North American youth were consistently the least prepared to communicate with empathy and clarity across languages and reflected that it seemed that Canada was failing at its mission to be tolerant
and multicultural. Onboard the Peace Boat, I was introduced to the idea of “Global English”: English as used for intercultural communication that did not necessarily favour the so-called “native” English speaker. When I began to teach “English as a Second Language” in Richmond, British Columbia, I felt the frustrations of my students struggling to be heard academically and socially. Searching for a local version of my overseas intercultural educational experiences, I found the Pearson Seminar on Youth Leadership and began working on site in the summers between my teaching years. It was here that I had the freedom, responsibility, and support to explore transformative alternatives for language education.

1.4.1 PSYL: An opportunity to redesign an alternative to ESL

When I first became interested in PSYL, I approached Ruth, the director, offering my skills as an intercultural communicator along with my experiences working on board the Peace Boat and a recent certificate in Peace Education from the United Nations Peace University in Costa Rica. What stood out for Ruth, however, was my Japanese language ability. She explained that they were facing challenges integrating a group of Japanese participants that came to the program every year from an EFL program in Japan. Ruth voiced particular concerns that the level of English for these participants was so low that not only did they not integrate socially, they also may not understand safety information. Over the years, Ruth and other adult coordinators had been working on various strategies for inclusion. They had consulted with the Japanese EFL program to encourage them to send outgoing participants with a higher level of English and a drive to be global leaders (rather than simply to improve their English skills). They had also created a “Japanese Show” at PSYL where the Japanese participants shared aspects of their culture and usually performed a song or dance they had prepared before arrival.
While recognizing the strangeness of having a show that singled out this one group of participants, Ruth saw this as being instrumental in beginning to break the wall between the Japanese participants and the rest of the community. A previous coordinator had also begun a Language Buddy program to pair each English language learner with a fluent English speaker to sit with during linguistically-challenging sessions. They were paired up at the beginning of the program, and a coordinator would check in with them from time to time to see if there were any major problems. However, despite these initiatives, Ruth was still finding that the Japanese participants especially, and all non-fluent English speakers generally, were somewhat isolated within the community. She asked if I would be willing to volunteer for the first week of the program to do some translation work and offer the Japanese participants some core language skills to help them integrate. I agreed, but also wondered what else I could do.

That year, I worked within the previous systems: I set up the Language Buddies, went over vocabulary for each session with the ELL participants, and helped the Japanese participants prepare for the “Japanese Show”. However, I also began to see that the Language Buddies could be more effective if they were offered intercultural communication skills, so I began to meet with them as a group. This group needed a “cool name” and became the “Communication Crew.” These meetings became forums for discussing communication problems that existed in the community, and we began to report back to the larger community about solutions we were deriving, such as hand signals for speakers to speak louder or slower and the idea of taking “Language Buddy breaks” to allow the Language Buddies a chance during sessions to review concepts together. Also in this group, the idea emerged to have a session in which only the languages of the language learners were spoken—turning the tables on the fluent English speakers. This was the first Multilingual Community Building, and post-session reflections
suggested that it was a rich learning experience for many of the English-dominant participants—a miniature version of my Quebec exchange experience. After a discussion amongst the coordinators about the implied essentialism of the well-intentioned “Japanese Show”, the show was expanded to invite all participants to “Show Us Where You’re From”—a widely interpretable title that I hoped would allow everyone to consider their own definition of place, home, and culture. After the first week, Ruth asked me to stay for the full program and I happily agreed, intrigued by this opportunity to play so freely with pedagogical ideas that were so difficult to implement in the mainstream school system. At Pearson, the “administration” (Ruth), fellow “teachers” (the other coordinators), and the “students” (the program participants) were already self-selected to be fully onboard with the curriculum of social justice and “doing things differently”. It was simply a matter of pointing out the connection between linguistic inclusion and the pre-existing social justice curriculum. In the following years, I continued to develop with the support of the community different ways to weave communication and multilingualism into the holistic experience of the program.

1.5 Potential Significance

In its design, this study seeks to align theory, methodology, and pedagogy with the concepts of multiliteracies in ways that may contribute to future research in the field. It extends the literature on identity and language learning to include the speakers of the dominant language in a learning community. This potentially has significant implications for how we approach the structuring of our language support systems and how we approach the teaching of our fluent speakers of the dominant language. Taking a communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) approach to both research and pedagogy in our increasingly diverse classrooms allows for a
revisioning of teaching and learning with transformative multiliteracies at its core. As teachers and leaders increase their capacity for multiliteracies, they may be better prepared to see the diversity of their classrooms and communities as powerful resources and may be more invested in designing pedagogy that builds the intercultural capital of all members in their learning communities. Empirical research on intercultural capital and identity re-negotiations in shifting communities of practices is challenging as such transformations are complex and may occur over lengthy periods of time. However, intercultural camps such as the Pearson Seminar on Youth Leadership that focus on intentional community building are designed with the intent to expedite the transformative process and reveal discursive practices and identity negotiations typical of a community of learning rich in intercultural capital. This study offers a unique opportunity to explore communicative competencies and identities among youth outside the institutional constraints of the mainstream schooling system: it allows a glimpse into a pedagogy that develops communicative competence beyond “ESL”—a term I use to gloss outdated identities and pedagogical practices that assimilate non-English speakers into an English-dominant community of practice. Many teachers are endeavoring to explore critical approaches to language teaching and learning that raise critical language awareness and promote the valuation of multilingual competence. This study attempts to record and analyze such an approach. It provides insight into the meaning-making, identity-constructing and community-building processes that open up in critically multilingual spaces. It is my hope that the pedagogy, methodology, and findings may thus inspire the creation of such communities in other pedagogical spaces. The practices documented here challenge theories that compartmentalize linguistic competencies and policies that separate language learners from target language speakers. In the words of Cummins and Early (2011) in their introduction to a collection of case
studies, “actuality implies possibility. If a particular intervention has happened, and if particular effects have been observed, then this intervention and its impact can happen” (p. 19). It is in this spirit of possibility that I offer this exploration of pedagogy, meaning making, and the new identities that open up in a diverse community beyond ESL.

1.6 Structure of the Thesis

In this chapter I have introduced the research problem, research site, and background and motivation that have led me to this particular research project. Eight chapters constitute the remainder of the thesis.

Chapter 2 outlines the theoretical framework for the study and reviews the associated literature including a social practice approach to language learning (Vygotsky, 1980; Bakhtin, 1986), a sociocultural approach to language (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991), language learning and identity (Norton, 2000; Norton & Toohey, 2011), and language learning and power (Freire & Macedo, 1987; Nealon, 2008). This chapter also links these foundational theories with current pedagogical debates and approaches, such as new conceptualizations of multilingualism (Blackledge & Creese, 2010; Canagarajah, 2013; Otsuji & Pennycook, 2010), including super-diversity (Blommaert & Rampton, 2011; Vertovec, 2007) and plurilingualism (Lin, 2013; ); and new conceptualizations of critical pedagogy (Freire & Macedo, 1987), including critical literacies (Janks, 2009; Morgan & Ramanathan, 2005), multiliteracies (New London Group, 2000), and transformative multiliteracies pedagogies (Cummins, 2009).

Chapter 3 is a relatively short chapter that situates the study by providing a description of the specific pedagogical activities at PSYL and connecting these activities to the theoretical approaches outlined in Chapter 2. In addition, the pedagogical activities are situated within
Janks’ (2009) interrelated model of critical literacy, connecting diversity, access, power, and design to critical pedagogy. These pedagogical activities are also referred to throughout the data analysis chapters.

Chapter 4 introduces the critical ethnographic methodological approach to the study of the culture of this community. It outlines the context of the study and my use of ethnographic observational and participatory fieldwork, audio and video recordings, and semi-structured and open research interviews in the data collection process. It also explains my process of data analysis, drawing on tools from a Bakhtinian discourse analysis (Bakhtin, 1981; 1986) and a small stories narrative approach (Georgakopoulou, 2007; Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008) in order to make sense of the social and cultural practices of the community. This is followed by a description of data collection activities, the interview process, and other discussion of the trustworthiness and ethicality of the approach taken.

Chapters 5-8 provide description of the social, cultural, and pedagogical practices in the community through data analysis and discussion of how transformative multiliteracies can transform discursive practices, identity investments, and communities of practice. These chapters are organized thematically around Janks’ (2009) four aspects of critical pedagogy: diversity (chapter 5), access (chapter 6), power (chapter 7), and design (chapter 8). They are also organized chronologically as the transformative multiliteracies pedagogy unfolded during the program: from setting the founding principles of the community (chapters 5), to working in linguistically-diverse pairs called “Language Buddies” (chapter 6), to discussing linguistic power and privilege (chapter 7), and finally to transforming the discursive practices of the community through a Multilingual Community Building session (chapter 8). Each chapter begins with a brief literature review in order to situate the analysis within the field. Most chapters then include
an analysis of classroom/community discourse followed by a section analyzing interview data pertaining to the classroom/community discourse. These chapters end with a discussion section linking the findings back to the research questions and core arguments of the thesis.

Finally, Chapter 9 provides an overall discussion and conclusion of the study, theoretical considerations, implications and future research and pedagogical directions. In particular, this chapter draws from across all four data analysis chapters to summarize the various identity positionings and multiliteracies practices that formed and were formed by this diverse community of learners. As an empirical study of how youth engaged in transformative multiliteracies (Cummins, 2009) make sense of communication and identities in a super-diverse (Blommaert & Rampton, 2011; Vertovec, 2007) environment, this study makes grounded contributions to theory, policy, and research, as well as to practice. This chapter further outlines how the findings of this study support current shifts towards further acceptance of first languages in the English learning classroom (for example, British Columbia’s ESL policy which states that “respect for and valuing an individual’s first language(s) and culture is important in order for English language learners to succeed” and “student learning is enhanced by having proficiency in more than one language” (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2011)) by providing an example of how this policy can be implemented for the benefit of all. For places where such policies are not in place, the findings here provide an example of how researchers and teachers can “read between and behind the lines (cf. Cooke, 2004) [of policy], to interpret the ambiguities and gaps in critical ways that open up moments and spaces for transformative pedagogical intervention” (Ramanathan & Morgan, 2007, p. 448). The chapter concludes with my hope for students, teachers, researchers and policy-makers to continue transformative work to support thriving multilingual communities of practice that embrace super-diversity beyond ESL.
Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

In order to understand the identity positionings and discursive practices of youth in a semiotically diverse community of practice, this study draws on various theoretical perspectives. Broadly speaking, the approach taken is a situated practice approach to language, language learning, power and identity. In this chapter, I briefly review the literature of poststructuralist theories of language, sociocultural theories of language learning, sociocultural theories of language and power, and poststructuralist theories of language and identity. The four interrelated components of Janks’ (2009) critical literacy framework—diversity, access, power, and design—are woven throughout the theoretical framework indicating the close connection between theory and pedagogical practice. Each section includes a sub-section that outlines critical pedagogical approaches that are informed by the theoretical constructs discussed and that subsequently inform the pedagogical approach taken at the site of study.

2.1 Diversity: Language and Multilingualism as a Social Practice

Because this study is interested in investigating communicative practices in the context of socially just and democratic pedagogies for social change, it builds on theories that acknowledge that the individual text or utterance is in a dialectic relationship with the culture, the context, and the language as a system. These are theories of language as a social practice and have their roots in poststructuralist notions of language. Poststructuralists such as Bakhtin (1981, 1986) shift the subject of language and literacy research away from the structuralists’ (Saussure, 1966) focus on language as an idealized underlying system (Saussure’s langue) and instead provide the arguments and analytic tools to study the situated utterances of speakers in interactive context.
Utterances shape and are shaped by their context (Bakhtin, 1981; Halliday & Webster, 2002). For Bakhtin (1981, 1986), the meaning of an utterance comes from its relation to other utterances in a chain of communication: each utterance links back to previous utterances through *intertextuality* as speakers struggle to create their own meaning from words used by others in the communicative sphere, and each links forward to future utterances through *addressivity* as speakers construct their meanings in such a way as to encourage desired responses.

Through post-structuralist theories such as intertextuality, the notion of “language” as a system is replaced by “language” as a set of available linguistic resources represented by the words of others in a given sphere of communication (Bakhtin, 1986). The New London Group (2000) calls these resources *available designs* that designers draw upon to create their own meaning in the situated practice of meaning making. Pennycook (2010a) emphasizes that “languages” and perceived boundaries that separate them are social constructs around all available linguistic resources and that speakers draw from as they construct their meanings and identities in local social practice. In this way, “identity, practices, and resources are inextricably linked and mutually constituted” (Norton & Toohey, 2011, p. 414). For Bakhtin, the ideological struggle of taking an Other’s words and making them one’s own is deeply consequential: “the ideological becoming of a human being… is the process of selectively assimilating the words of others” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 134). As is explored in later sections of this chapter, finding the voice of the self in the words of others is an act in which power, knowledge, and identity are implicated, negotiated, constructed, lost and gained.

Recent social practice research has turned its attention to multilingualism and multimodality, highlighting the diversity of the meaning making process. The reality and prevalence of multilingual and plurilingual (García & Sylvan, 2011) social practices including
code-switching (Wei, 2011; Kamwangamalu, 2010), code-crossing (Kamwangamalu, 2010), code-meshing (Canagarajah, 2011), and translanguaging (García & Sylvan, 2011; Pennycook, 2011; Canagarajah, 2011, 2013) observed in and out of classrooms have lead researchers to posit new monikers to describe what was previously known simply as “multilingualism.” These terms include super-diversity (Blommaert & Rampton, 2011; Vertovec, 2007) to describe the state of unprecedented and unpredictable cultural, social and linguistic diversity in our globalized world, heteroglossia (Bakhtin, 1981) to describe complex discourse with traces of the coexisting social, political and historical forces that have shaped it, metrolingualism (Otsuji & Pennycook, 2010) to describe the creativity and fluidity of language in flux across cultural, historical and political border, and the aforementioned plurilingualism (García & Sylvan, 2011; Taylor & Snoddon, 2013) to describe the normalization of translingual practices and multilingualism at the level of the individual. Other researchers, such as Blackledge and Creese (2010) have responded to these diverse situated practices by instead expanding and redefining multilingualism as “the appropriation and incorporation for meaning-making of any and all linguistic resources which come to hand” (p. 17). As Blommaert and Rampton (2011) note, “the local naming of these practices is itself often indeterminate and contested, both among users and analysts” (p. 7). Blackledge and Creese (2010) also acknowledge that while academics are coming to view linguistic resources as boundless entities, boundaries between languages still exist in terms of educational policy and in individual teacher and learners’ language ideologies with consequences for both pedagogical practice and learner identity. Further to this complexity, there is increasing recognition that the linguistic mode is only part of the meaning-making process (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001) and that all communication is multimodal (New London Group, 2000). As a result, mode-switching (Wei, 2011) and multimodal design practices (New London Group, 2000)
combining audio, spatial, gestural, visual, and linguistic modes of meaning have received increasing attention. For Janks (2009), this multimodal and multilingual *diversity* is a key component of critical literacy. Diversity provides design resources, produces contestation and change, and reflects and produces history, identity and value (Janks, 2009, p. 26). In a community of linguistically diverse learners, these theories are productive in approaching the ways in which participants construct meaning across perceived linguistic and cultural barriers.

### 2.1.1 Critical pedagogies based on diversity and multilingualism as a social practice

Theories that acknowledge the multilingual and multimodal nature of communication and meaning-making call for corresponding pedagogical practices and policies. Criticisms of the *monolingual bias* (Cenoz & Gorter, 2011) favouring the monolingual native speaker as the goal for language learning, the *two-solitudes* (Cummins, 2005) approach to keeping the two languages apart in bilingual education, and the *One Language Only* or *One Language at a Time* ideology (Wei, 2011) focus on the discord between multilinguals’ natural tendency to create meaning across languages and the schools’ policies to keep them separated (Blackledge & Creese, 2010). As mentioned in Chapter 1, Cummins et al. (2005) identify the “bizarre scenerio of schools transforming fluent speakers of foreign languages into monolingual English speakers, at the same time as they struggle, largely unsuccessfully, to transform English monolingual speakers into foreign language speakers” (p. 586). They call for an educational approach that actively promotes cross-lingual transfer and language awareness and that encourages students to view their multilingual talents as a valued component of their identities (Cummins et al., 2005). In Britain, Blackledge and Creese (2010) similarly found that the rich multilingual reality at the
micro-level of their ethnographic study was in stark contrast to the monolingualism reflected in the “mainstream” educational policies and consequently advocate for a “flexible bilingualism” that values the resourcefulness of multilingual students as they draw from multiple languages to negotiate their meanings and identities. Hélot (2012) questions the prevailing monolingual habitus of many educational systems and calls for the development of inclusive and tolerant multilingual policies. García and Flores (2012) describe dynamic plurilingual pedagogies that build on students’ “linguistic and cultural strengths” and develop students’ “multilingual awareness and tolerance” (p. 242). Gorter and Cortez (2011) call for a holistic multilingual approach to education that mirrors the multilingual practices of students with access to multiple sets of resources. Similarly, Kramsch (2010) describes the symbolic competence and power achieved through multilingualism: she emphasizes the double sensibility and dual perspective multilinguals gain as they not only subject themselves to the symbolic order of another language, but also retain an outsideness, embracing an entirely different symbolic realm and symbolic power than monolinguals. As educators and researchers in multilingual spaces, we must seek pedagogical and theoretical approaches that honour and grow these symbolic competencies in our students and participants.

In order to develop teaching practice from the strategies learners use themselves (Canagarajah, 2011), tap into the rich funds of knowledge that our diverse learners bring to the classroom (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005), expand identity options (Norton, 2000, 2013), and prepare our learners for success in a multilingual and multimodal world (New London Group, 2000), various bi/multi/plurilingual and bi/multi/plurliteracies pedagogical approaches have been developed (Cenoz & Gorter, 2011; Cummins, 2009; García & Flores, 2012; García & Sylvan, 2011; Hélot, 2012; Hornberger, 2010; Martin-Jones, Blackledge, & Creese, 2012; New
London Group, 2000). These include the *pluriliteracies* (García & Sylvan, 2011) approach adopted by the Common European Framework, which notes that the language learner does not “keep these languages and cultures in strictly separated mental compartments, but rather builds up a communicative competence to which all knowledge and experience of language contributes and in which languages interrelate and interact” (“The common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching, assessment,” n.d., p. 13). The goal of language education is no longer “mastery” of multiple languages, with the “ideal native speaker” as the ultimate model; instead, “the aim is to develop a linguistic repertory, in which all linguistic abilities have a place” (“The common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching, assessment,” n.d., p. 14). In the North American context, *multiliteracies* (New London Group, 2000) has been proposed as a framework with pedagogical practices that support multilingualism and multimodality. *Multiliteracies* pedagogy is grounded in providing students with *situated practice* and *overt instruction* in designing meaning multimodally and multilingually. Other elements of multiliteracies pedagogy as well as *transformative multiliteracies pedagogies* (Cummins, 2009) are explored in later sections.

2.2 Access: Language Learning as a Social Practice

In addition to theories that understand language as a social practice, this study draws on theories of education that understand *language learning* and *competency* as highly context-dependent situated practices. Sociocultural theories of language learning such as Vygotsky’s (1980) and Wertsch’s (1998) emphasize the social nature of learning as learners appropriate the cultural tools—including language—used by others and employ them for their own expressive means. By this view, learning is optimized when the learner is guided by an instructor or other
more expert community member through the *zone or proximal development* (Vygotsky, 1980) just beyond what he or she could achieve alone. Access to cultural tools is dependent on access to other community members skilled in the use of these tools.

These social theories of learning suggest the need for a community approach to linguistic development. According to Lave and Wenger’s (1991) *communities of practice* theory, learning involves a deepening process of participation in a community of practice wherein individuals enact their identities as members of a community through participation in the discursive practices that identify that community. Lave and Wenger describe newcomers’ participation as socially-situated and involving interacting with more experienced community members (“oldtimers”)—a process called *legitimate peripheral participation* (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Wenger clarifies that in order to gain access to this form of learning, participants must be “granted enough legitimacy to be treated as potential members” (1999, p. 101). From the community of practice perspective, *competence* is understood as “situated abilities”—abilities that are given value within a given community of practice (Wenger, 1999). This study explores what competencies gain value in a community of practice through transformative multiliteracies. This approach to learning is particularly appropriate for a community-centred study of communication because it emphasizes the role of not only the teacher, but all community members in the learning process. While communities of practice has been criticized for having too strong a focus on the community, seemingly relegating the learner to the role of being indoctrinated into the unchanging *regime of competency* of the community (McLellan, 1996), Wenger has responded by re-emphasizing the centrality of identity to the theory of learning as a highly contingent, ever-changing “social becoming” (Wenger, 2012, p. 3). In addition, Wenger has acknowledged that there is a constant negotiation between individual experience and a community’s regime of competency such that it
is possible for an individual’s experience to “pull a community’s regime of competency along” (Wenger, 2012, p. 2). This is an important concept when looking at the role and valuation of non-dominant language competencies in a super-diverse community of practice such as PSYL.

There is evidence that the discursive practices that support the legitimate peripheral participation of language learners in our communities have become increasingly recognized in national approaches to language assessment. The Canadian Language Benchmarks created a list of Can Do Statements that “describe what learners can do at benchmarks 1 to 12 in the Skills of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing” (“Can Do Statements,” 2013, p. 4). This list is relevant not only because the Canadian Language Benchmarks have become the main assessment tool for new immigrants to Canada- thus holding a lot of authoritative power to determine the future of thousands of English language learners- but also because it has couched within it a theory of learning as a social practice. Not only does it list “a general description of your ability” and “the kinds of things that people at your benchmark can usually do,” it also includes a descriptions of “when you are able to best show your ability” (“Can Do Statements,” 2013, p. 4). What is interesting about this last feature is that the description is focused on the other interlocutor in the communicative situation. For example, at Listening Level 1, the learner is able to “understand a few words and very simple phrases” and “understand common polite phrases” when the following conditions are met:

- I can see the person
- The person speaks slowly and helps me understand
- The person uses pictures or gestures
- The person speaks about things I know or need (“Can Do Statements,” 2013, p. 4)
The moderated level of speech, comprehension help, use of pictures or gestures, and necessity of a familiar topic are all features of levels 1-3. Other interlocutor-specific requirements, such as “the communication is face-to-face (one-on-one or in small groups)” and “the communication is moderate in length” continue through to level 8. This means that a language learner’s communicative success- and thus community inclusion- is dependent on interlocutor discursive choices for the critical lower two-thirds of the benchmark spectrum. Speaking is similar. In order for a level four speaker to best demonstrate their ability to “give simple information about common everyday activities, experiences, needs, and wants” (“Can Do Statements,” 2013, p. 27), the following interlocutor-dependent conditions are necessary:

- I can see the person or talk very briefly on the phone
- The person sometimes helps me
- I can sometimes use pictures and gestures (“Can Do Statements,” 2013, p. 27)

Who is this person who “helps” the learner? Who slows their speech, uses gestures, and keeps the topic familiar? If it is only the ESL instructor, the learner’s ability to express him or herself as well as his or her identity as an English speaker are limited to the classroom where all of the other interlocutors are also language learners. While this limited comprehensible input and language learning peer community is very important, it leaves the learner excluded from the so-called “mainstream” peer group community of practice.

While the other two measured Canadian Language Benchmarks skills, reading and writing, are beyond the scope of this thesis, it is interesting to note that just as speaking and listening success are interlocutor-dependent until level 8, reading and writing are text-dependent until level 8. The length, modality and access to a dictionary are all part of reading and writing success in levels 1-8. For example, level 1 reading requires “the topic is very familiar, there are many pictures, the words are very easy to read” and “I use a dictionary in my language: (“Can Do Statements,” 2013, p. 38). Writing is audience dependent, so level 1 writing requires “the topic is very familiar”, “someone helps me” and “I write for a familiar person” (“Can Do Statements,” 2013, p. 52)
2.2.1 Critical pedagogies based on access and language learning as a social practice

Sociocultural theories of language learning argue against policies that separate language learners from the target language community. Denying language learners access to target language speakers is denying language learners access to peripheral participation and language learning opportunities. Lave and Wenger allude to the “subtle and pervasive” ways that schools inadvertently sequester newcomers and prevent peripheral participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 104). According to Janks’s (2009) model of critical literacy, without access to dominant forms, language learners are ghettoized, remain on the margins, and remain subject to the exclusionary force of dominant discourses. The so-called “mainstreaming” of English language learners in English dominant classrooms has been the subject of much policy and academic debate (as noted in Leung, 2007). Morita (2004) and Cummins and Cameron (1994) argue effectively that the English language learner can no longer be viewed as a peripheral participant and in fact is the mainstream. Classrooms with linguistically diverse students are best understood, then, as multilingual communities of practice. However, researchers of classrooms in which English language learners are integrated with fluent English speakers have found that simply placing the learner in the same room as target language speakers does not constitute access to dominant linguistic forms. Iddings (2005), for example, found in her classroom observations that access to dominant forms and competencies remained limited as a parallel but separate community of practice emerged amongst English language learners. So long as legitimacy and participation in the community of practice continues to be dependent on English language fluency as defined by policy-makers, teachers, and—crucially—English-dominant
peers, the English language learner remains on the periphery. In order to move beyond this perspective, a theory and pedagogy of power and of transformation is needed.

2.3 Power: Sociocultural Theories of Language and Power

The social practices of language and language learning do not happen in a neutral environment: society’s power relations are implicated in every interaction. Foucault’s (1980; 1982) theory of power is useful here as it is also conceived of as a social practice, produced and reproduced in discourse and circulating in complex ways. Foucault’s contemporary Bourdieu (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991) envisions interactions occurring in a market or field in which participants are differentially positioned according to the unequal distribution of various interrelated types of resources or capital (p. 14-15). This capital is not only economic (material wealth), but is also cultural (knowledge, skills), symbolic (prestige or honour), linguistic (speaking the dominant language or accent), and social (networks and contacts). Bourdieu’s theories reveal how the dominance and legitimacy of a particular set of linguistic practices in our societies and classrooms over other possible languages or modes is in fact socio-culturally constructed and involves the misrecognition of the legitimacy of the dominant form by those with and without access alike. Not only linguistic forms, but speakers, too, can be deemed “legitimate” or “illegitimate” depending on the degree to which their habitus, or way of being, matches these dominant forms (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991). This misrecognition leads to symbolic violence of dominated forms and their speakers who struggle to find the “right to speak” and the “power to impose reception” (Bourdieu, 1977). This study builds on Bourdieu’s ideas to explore the possibility that the dominance of English in a multilingual world and the
dominance of the written word in our increasingly multimodal field of communication can be deconstructed and reconstructed in a ways that minimize symbolic violence.

The hegemony of English has been deconstructed by many scholars who have taken what Tsuda (2008) has called a Critical/Transformative position with regard to the global spread of English, perceiving English dominance as a serious problem causing injustices, inequalities and discriminations. These scholars include Phillipson (1992), whose concept of linguistic imperialism draws attention to the ideologies inherent in the spread of English; Pennycook (1994, 2007), who outlines the hegemonic and gatekeeping roles of the cultural politics of the global spread of English and calls for a disinvention of the myth of English as an international language; and Tsuda (2008), who connects English hegemony causally to the English Divide: the inequalities between the English-speaking people in the world and the non-English speaking people based on differential access to power and resources. A specific problem associated with the English Divide is linguicism: “ideologies and structures where language is the means for effecting or maintaining an unequal allocation of power and resources” (Phillipson, 1992, p. 55). This project takes up the Critical/Transformative position through transformative multiliteracies, described further in section 2.4.2.

2.3.1 Critical pedagogies based on sociocultural theories of language and power

Morgan and Ramanathan (2005) are among those who have noted the “critical turn” in language and literacy education based on sociocultural theories of language and power. Freire’s critical pedagogy (Freire & Macedo, 1987; Freire, 1974) was among the first to insist that teaching language and literacy was not simply teaching the skills of reading, writing, listening or speaking. From a Freirian perspective, learning to read the word involves learning to read the
world: understanding and critiquing the socially-constructed historical and political nature of power differentials between different semiotic forms (Freire & Macedo, 1987; Giroux, 2011). While it can be argued that all multilingual education is “critical” in that it embraces diversity and/or facilitates access to linguistic resources, Freire’s critical pedagogy and the other critical approaches discussed here move beyond Janks’ (2009) diversity and access to bring an explicit focus on power or domination in language education. Some form of explicit focus on the role of power in language and literacy education is included in the New London Group’s (2000) critical framing, Blackledge and Creese’s (2010) critical multilingualism, Janks’ (2009) critical literacy, and Fairclough’s (2001; Fairclough & Wodak, 2011) critical discourse analysis. The New London Group (2000), building on Freebody and Luke’s (1990) Four Resources Model that cited the ability to “critically analyze and transform texts” as one of four requirements for reading effectively, highlight critical pedagogy as a necessary part of multiliteracies pedagogy by including critical framing along with the situated practice and overt instruction mentioned in section 2.1. Critical framing interprets the social and cultural context in terms of relations of power (New London Group, 2000, p. 35). Blackledge and Creese’s (2010) critical multilingualism problematizes the privileging of English by drawing attention to how the hegemony of English is discursively constructed as well as to what linguistic resources are privileged, who has access to these resources, and who has the power to determine which resources are privileged. Similarly, Stein (2008) questions which modes are privileged in a given context and who has the power to determine which modes are permitted. This study can be understood as a grassroots example of such critical pedagogy in that it speaks back to and informs these theories and related educational policies.
The need for critical approaches to teaching English is demonstrated by studies such as Norton’s (2000) that examined the struggle of English language learners to find the *right to speak* and *power to impose reception* (Bourdieu & Johnson, 1993) in a community of practice that does not place high cultural capital on the “ESL” identity. Similarly, in his study of the cultural production of high school “ESL students,” Talmy (2005) found that the ESL category was culturally constructed to be low in prestige and that ESL students themselves contributed to the reproduction of this power differential by distinguishing themselves from an even lower prestige category, “Fresh of the Boat” (FOB). In her study of the discourse socialization of Japanese dominant speakers in an English-dominant university community of practice, Morita (2004) found that the non-fluent English speakers reported feeling marginalized and silenced as they experienced the “profound struggle to (re)construct their identities within the classroom” (p. 596). Morita suggests increased *transparency* (Lave & Wenger, 1991) on behalf of the teacher to explain cultural references and make discussions more accessible and increased intervention by the teacher to manage turn-taking in an egalitarian manner. However, Duff (2002) found that in spite of a well-meaning teacher’s attempt to deliberately allocate turns to certain students and include specific course content that would allow culturally diverse students to make cultural connections, “the students did not take up the identity positions attributed to them” and “instead, local students often seized the opportunities to talk” (p. 310). Thus it is Morita’s (2004) student-centred suggestion that is most avidly explored in the present study: “it may also be helpful to inform all members of the classroom community about participation issues and encourage them to achieve equity collaboratively” (p. 599). While this specific critical pedagogical strategy represents a gap in the literature, there have been many studies that have brought a critical pedagogical perspective to the study of English Language Learning.
Many researchers and practitioners have been inspired by Freire to bring a critical approach to the teaching of English. From a Freirian (1974) perspective, the raising of critical consciousness is the key to emancipatory education when teaching the “oppressed”: those most disserviced by the dominant distribution of resources and capital. Wallace (2003), for example, argued for the importance of critical literacy skills for language learners so that they can critique how they are being positioned by the dominant text. Furthermore, in a study closely related to the present study, Lau (2013) worked with an English Language teacher to develop an emergent critical literacy curriculum based on Cummins’ (2009) *Academic Expertise Framework* and Janks’ (2009) synthesis model of critical literacy in response to the ELL students’ concerns about language-based discrimination and bullying. In addition, critical language awareness (Pennycook & Alim, 2009) and critical dialect studies (Sterzuk, 2008) have been used as means to empower traditionally marginalized students by recognizing their speech practices in the academic sphere. For example, Alim (2010) has written much about the positive effect critical language awareness practices have on African American Ebonics speakers in the United States. By bringing the discourse of hip hop into the language classroom (Alim, Ibrahim, & Pennycook, 2008) and by having students take on the role of critical language ethnographers (Alim, 2010), speakers of a marginalized dialect come to simultaneously recognize both their extensive linguistic code-switching repertoires as well as recognizing the critical issues of how particular dialects are positioned by the dominant society. Similarly, Sterzuk (2008) advocates for dialect awareness studies for speakers of First Nations dialects of English. However, it is important to note that all members of heterogeneous communities need to be aware that they are “dialect speakers” and that some dialects and languages are positioned differently by different cultural and political forces: just as the Ebonics speakers realize the considerable code-switching
repertoire they have in their linguistic arsenal as they vary their speech with various interlocutors, the mono-lingual mainstream English speakers need to recognize that having their home dialect privileged in their peer and academic community gives them the advantage of legitimacy while also potentially a linguistic impoverishment as they may lack the impetus that other speakers feel to alter their speech for various interlocutors. Issues of accommodation and appropriation could be critically framed and mediated through such a pedagogical approach.

The fact that many of these researchers do not include linguistically privileged participants (fluent speakers of the dominant language of the particular context) is in part due to an educational system that in secondary school separates linguistically marginalized students from their linguistically privileged peers for the purpose of offering extra linguistic support (“English as a Second Language” class). In the teacher preparation literature, there are several examples of studies that look at methods of increasing the intercultural capital and multiliteracies practices of linguistically privileged teaching candidates in preparation for teaching linguistically and culturally diverse students (see for example Goldstein, 2007; Richards, 2006; Rogers et al., 2006; Seidl & Conley, 2009; Singh & Doherty, 2004; Tierney, 2006). However, nearly absent from the literature are accounts of research that investigate these same pedagogies working with both linguistically marginalized and linguistically privileged participants in a common community of practice. This is in contrast to common approaches to racism, sexism, and homophobia that routinely take a whole-community approach to critically framing privilege, naming oppression, and dialoging across difference to work for equitable solutions by shifting ideologies, identities, discourses, and practices. It is this gap in the theoretical and practical literature that this study seeks to address. Luke’s (2004a) definition of “critical” is especially useful in this respect:
To be critical is to call up for scrutiny, whether through embodied action or discourse practice, the rules of exchange within a social field. To do so requires an analytic move to self-position oneself as Other even in a market of field that might not necessarily construe or structurally position one as Other…. This doubling and positioning of the self from dominant text and discourse can be cognate, analytic, expository, and hypothetical, and it can, indeed, be already lived, narrated, embodied, and experienced. (p. 26).

The potential for critical pedagogy to enable this “doubling and positioning of the self” and the achievement of what Freire (1974) has called critical consciousness is explored in chapters 7 and 8.

The importance of including an overt theory of domination and power in the teaching of literacy is outlined in Janks’ (2009) synthesis model of critical literacy:

- Honouring diversity without teaching a theory of power “leads to a celebration of diversity without any recognition that difference is structured in dominance and that not all discourses/genres/languages/literacies are equally powerful” (p. 26)

- Teaching access to the dominant form without a theory of power “leads to a naturalization of powerful discourses without an understanding of how these powerful forms came to be powerful” (p. 26).

- Teaching design without a theory of power “runs the risk of an unconscious reproduction of [dominant discourses/practices]” (p. 26)

Janks (2009) argues that non-critical English as an Additional Language instruction simply reproduces the misrecognition (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991) of English as the legitimate dominant language, and that English teachers need to produce students who “understand why linguistic diversity is a resource for creativity and cognition, who value all the languages they
She argues that there are limitations to monolingualism and dangers to English domination: “we can help students to understand what English is and what it is not by making use of the wealth of linguistic resources that our multilingual students bring to our English classes. In this way, we might convince all our students that English is not intrinsically superior to other languages, while at the same time teaching them to value linguistic diversity and to respect people who have extensive multilingual repertoires” (p. 149). For Janks, learning another language is acquiring another habitus (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991) and an additional identity that allows us to denaturalize and disrupt our “taken-for-granted ways of being in the world” and “to imagine and own other possibilities” (p. 149).

Finally, when Bourdieu (1991) refers to “dominant” and “dominated” speakers, he evokes what Cummins has called “coercive power relations,” defined as “the exercise of power by a dominant individual, group, or country to the detriment of a subordinated individual, group or country” (p. 7). However, not all relations of power are coercive. Collaborative relations of power are also possible:

Collaborative relations of power, by contrast, reflect the sense of the term “power” that refers to “being enabled,” or “empowered” to achieve more. Within collaborative relations of power, “power” is not a fixed quantity but is generated through interaction with others. The more empowered one individual or group becomes, the more is generated for others to share. Within this context, empowerment can be defined as the collaborative creation of power. (Cummins, 2009, p. 7).

The possibility of collaborative power relations between speakers with diverse access to dominant linguistic forms is a primary motivation of this study.
2.4 **Design: Poststructuralist Theories of Language, Identity and Social Change**

The theory of transformation and social change outlined in this study is deeply rooted in poststructuralist theories of language and identity. Essentially, the pedagogical goal is the creation of new identity possibilities (Cummins & Early, 2011). These new identities are associated with transformed and transformative discursive practices (Gee & Green, 1998). These discursive practices are likewise both creative of and created by a transformed and transformative community of practice (Halliday & Webster, 2002) through the dialogism of utterance and context (Bakhtin, 1981). In this way, a shift in identity can indicate a shift in discursive practices, which in turn shifts the culture of a community of practice.

From a dialogic perspective, social change is inextricably linked to language change. Context shapes utterance and utterance shapes context; language shapes utterance as utterance shapes language; and language shapes culture as culture shapes language. Within these dialogic relations lies a model for social change. As Wallace (2003) notes, discourse potentially has transformative emancipatory power (p. 26). Changing the way we speak can change the world in which we live. I argue that power (Foucault, 1982), capital (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991) or agency (Wallace, 2003) (defined by Ahearn (2001, p. 113) as “the socioculturally mediated capacity to act”) are the determinates of which direction the shaping primarily occurs: if an agent is imbued with or is able to imbue him or herself with enough power, his or her utterances will shape the discourse, which will in turn shape both the situation and the language, which can in turn shape the culture. When an agent is not imbued with much capital in the field, it is more likely that the culture of the field will shape the situation which will in turn shape the discourse and potentially render the agent voiceless or strictly limit the utterances that will be accepted into
the discourse. This power, in turn, comes from an agent’s identity and positioning in the field.

Following the situated practice theoretical framework outlined above, the perspective of identity taken here is inspired by post-structural understandings of the subject and subjectivity (Foucault, 1980) as discursively constructed and context-dependent. Such poststructuralist theories of subjectivity are helpful in this study of transformative multiliteracies because, as Norton and Toohey have recently noted, “a conceptualization of subjectivity as multiple, non-unitary, and dynamic leaves room for the view that individuals need not be locked forever in particular positions,” and “thus, pedagogical practices have the potential to be transformative in offering language learners more powerful positions than those they may occupy either inside or outside the classroom” (Norton & Toohey, 2011, p. 417). Norton (2000, 2013) builds on Bourdieu’s conceptualization of symbolic power (1993) to show how language learners can use identity to shift power relations within a field or market and gain the right to speak and power to impose reception. Her constructs of investment and imagined identities/communities have been particularly productive in the field of identity and language learning. Norton found that learners invest in target language practices based on the belief that this investment will increase their symbolic, social, or cultural capital and grant them access to the imagined communities and identities of their imagined futures.

From a social practice perspective, speakers take up positions in social fields through discourse and in doing so are formed by the field (Bourdieu & Johnson, 1993; Hanks, 2005). It is in and through discourse that identities are performed, created, negotiated and transformed. This process does not occur in isolation: discursive positioning always occurs in interaction. Bakhtin’s (1981) notions of addressivity and intertextuality are useful here as they acknowledge that, even in monologue, one discursively positions oneself in relation to a real or imagined
addressee and draws on past utterance by others or the self to mark one’s position in the field. Small stories analysts (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008; Georgakopoulou, 2005, 2007; Watson, 2007) have demonstrated that much identity work is done in the narratives that occur in everyday talk. In contrast to typical definitions of narratives that imply a coherent story with a beginning, middle, and end, I follow these analysts to use the term “small stories” as “an umbrella term that captures a gamut of underrepresented narrative activities, such as telling of ongoing events, future or hypothetical events, and shared (known) events, but it also captures allusions to (previous) tellings, deferrals of tellings, and refusals to tell” (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008, p. 381). Through these tellings and non-tellings, participants engage in identity work, and “such continuous and repetitious engagements ultimately lead to habitus (plural) that become the source for a continuous sense of who we are—a sense of us as ‘same’ in spite of continuous change” (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008, p. 379). The small stories approach is a particularly rich approach to the study of identity because it allows for the analysis of identity work happening on at least two levels: first, at the level of the narrative, examining the self projected in the story-world; second, at the level of the narrating, examining the self constructed through the process of telling. In addition, Georgakopolou and Bamberg argue for a third level: that which connects the small story to the grand narratives of the context and culture.

Researchers into how social identity categories such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and age affect language learning draw on cultural theorists such as Hall and Cohen (1999) to view these categories not as fixed identities, but as dynamic processes that are constantly negotiated, made and remade in interaction. These social identity categories are also memberships into “imagined communities” (Norton, 2000, 2013) that may be marked by discursive practices and norms. Georgakopoulou (2007) argues that an examination of discourse
identities or story-telling roles through “a micro-analytic emphasis on the details and sequential management of talk” allows the analyst to trace the “extra-situational, portable identities” that the speakers bring into and negotiate through the discourse (p. 115). She echoes Goffman (1974) in warning that these relationships between discourse identities and social identities are “loose couplings” (p. 16) rather than deterministic pairings. These “loose couplings” need elucidation in order to further explicate how it is possible for the analyst to make connections between our discursive data and our participants’ or our own social identities. Bourdieu (1993) notes that the field offers various identity positions to various social agents. I understand Georgakopoulou’s (2007) “social identities” as being the identity positions offered to particular agents by participation in particular cultures or societies. These may be related to gender, race, class, sexual orientation, age, ability, education, or any of many other identity categories made relevant in a given field. These identities are diverse and power among them is never neutral. Similarly, I understand Georgakopoulou’s (2007) “discourse identities” as being the discursive positions offered to particular agents by particular discourses. For example, in a narrative discourse, storytelling roles such as author and animator are available to agents. The relationship between social identities and discourse identities is not direct or deterministic because the relationship between the culture and the discourse that make up the field that offers these identity positions is not direct or deterministic. They are mediated through language and situation.

According to De Fina and Georgakopoulou (2012), situational identities are “brought about by local telling roles and are connected with the topic at hand and the activity underway. In turn, situational identities link the local with the distal context of social activity… by invoking the participants’ differential types and degrees of knowledge and skills regarding the activity underway” (p. 90). In this study, reflexive awareness of situational identities such as researcher,
research participant, interviewer, interviewee, teacher, and student is key to understanding how discourse is shaped and how transportable social identities including age and race are brought into each interaction. In addition, this study explores situational identities specific to the site, such as program participant, program facilitator, program coordinator, and especially “Language Buddy,” a role new to all participants (see chapter 3).

In addition to discourse identities, social identities, and situational identities, this study is particularly interested in linguistic identities: identities associated directly with access to certain resources and engagement in certain linguistic practices. In communities of practice where English is constructed as the dominant language, much research has explored the binary of the socially-constructed identities “Native English Speaker” (NES) and “English as Second Language Speaker” (ESL). Rampton (1990) and Leung, Harris and Rampton (1997) have argued that what they called the “idealized native speaker” identity is inadequate in this era of global social change and needs to be displaced in favour of inquiries into the language expertise, language inheritance, and language affiliation of all learners, including ethnic majority learners who may not have expertise, inheritance, or affiliation with standard English practices (see section 2.1 for further literature in this area). Talmy (2010b) has investigated the production of ESL as a low-prestige, stigmatized identity category divergent from the “mainstream” norm produced through ESL policy, curriculum, pedagogical practices as well as the oppositional cultural production of local ESL students. “ESL” is a social designation in the education system that differentiates those whose linguistic resources match those for whom the “regular” classes were designed from those whose linguistic resources do not. In high schools, this becomes a matter of scheduling: in order to gain access to the linguistic resources they need to participate in “regular” classes, “ESL” students need classes devoted to the explicit teaching of these
resources. The designation is political and economic: the ministry provides funding to school districts based on the number of students deemed as needing extra linguistic support, so they need to be designated with the “ESL” label in order to be scheduled and funded properly. However, there are social consequences of this streaming, as Talmy’s research into the “Fresh off the Boat” discursive phenomenon demonstrates (see section 2.2 and Duff’s (2002) classroom ethnography of identity and language learning in contemporary high school). Oldtimer ESL students resent the “ESL” designation for its differentiation from the norm (Talmy, 2008) and, as Norton’s (2000) research shows, for separating them from the very speakers with whom they need access to in order to participate fully in the community of practice. At the seminar on youth leadership, young learners are able to meet each other outside the institutionalized “ESL” construct. An ethnographic approach to this community allows a rare opportunity to examine how linguistically diverse speakers are discursively positioned without the “ESL” label.

Following Cummins and Early (2011), these speakers are instead referred to here as culturally and linguistically diverse participants, English language learners, or simply as Japanese (or other language)-dominant speakers (see section 1.0.1 for more on terminology).

Also relevant to this study is research into identity and foreign language learning. The majority of the English language learners in this study come from contexts such as Japan where English is taught as a “foreign” language. Here the literature pertaining to world Englishes and identity is relevant. Kachru (1997) writes not only of multiple Englishes, but also of “multiple identities” of English. Just as Norton (2000; 2013) problematizes notions of the “good language learner” in an immigrant ESL context, Kramsch’s (2010) work questions the image of foreign language learners (in this case English-dominant speakers learning languages other than English in America) as monolingual, privileged, or secure in their identities and cultural capital. She also
works against the common assumption that foreign language learning has little effect on identity as it is taught in a decontextualized setting. Kramsch breaks new ground by explicitly associating affect, emotions, and identity to language learners’ experiences of symbolic form (p. 50). The development of these kinds of new linguistic identities that disrupt the NES-ESL binary is central to this thesis.

### 2.4.1 Pedagogical approaches to identity and design

Identity and design are intimately linked in critical pedagogy. Design is the pedagogical mechanism of transformation and social change. Design is also the final dimension of Janks’s (2009) critical literacy framework: critical literacy involves both “changing dominant discourses as well as changing which discourses are dominant” (Janks, 2009, p. 27). Janks defines design as “the ability to harness the multiplicity of semiotic systems across diverse cultural locations to challenge and change existing discourses” (p. 25):

- “Diversity provides the means, the ideas, the alternative perspectives for reconstruction and transformation. Without design, the potential that diversity offers is not realized” (p. 26)
- Access without design “maintains and reifies dominant forms without considering how they can be transformed” (p. 26)
- “The deconstruction of dominance, without reconstruction or design, removes human agency” (p. 26).

The New London Group (2000) emphasize that through the process of design, meaning-makers not only create new meaning, they also remake themselves. Identities are reconfigured and renegotiated through the creative process of redesigning. In addition, through the construct of
investment (Norton, 2000, 2013) designers invest their identities into the design process, thus making the identity ↔ design relationship a dialectic. These theoretical concepts find pedagogical practice in the pedagogical approaches that infuse this study.

**2.4.2 Multiliteracies and transformative multiliteracies.**

In addition to the concept of design, the New London Group’s (2000) multiliteracies pedagogy is built on four pedagogical components: Situated Practice, Overt Instruction, Critical Framing, and Transformative Practice. Like many pedagogical frameworks, multiliteracies includes Situated Practice—access to available Designs and immersion in the reading of multimodal texts and the embodying of identities of a discipline for real audiences and real purposes—and Overt Instruction—describing available Designs and Designing and knowing the vocabulary and “lingo” of a discipline. However, multiliteracies goes beyond the Situated Practice and Overt Instruction to include Critical Framing—understanding why the current texts are designed the way they are, why some practices have become the “norm” in the discipline, and who benefits from the current designs—and, most notably, Transformative Practice—creating new meaning through redesigning the norms of practice to match new contexts and creating new texts, new identities, and new experiences in the discipline. By focusing on critiquing power relations and transforming meaning making practices, multiliteracies becomes a social change pedagogy, as is reflected in the subtitle of the seminal text, “Multiliteracies: Literacy Learning and the Design of Social Futures” (my emphasis). “Designing social futures” entails more than decoding texts; it entails a deep understanding of social constructs and social transformation.

*Transformative multiliteracies pedagogy* (Cummins, 2009) expands on the multiliteracies
framework by bringing more focus to both power and identity. Cummins presents transmission, constructivist, and transformative pedagogies as being nested orientations. While transmission and constructivist orientations are based on Overt Instruction and Situated Practice, a transformative pedagogical orientation requires Critical Framing and Transformative Practice. In Cummins’ (2009) words, “transformative pedagogy enables students to scrutinize and actively challenge patterns of power relations in the broader society” (p. 6). The primary way that societal power relations are expressed in the classroom is through the negotiation of identities. In addition, identity investment is understood to be a “central component of learning” (p. 5) and the negotiation of identities is understood to be “a primary determinant of whether or not students will engage cognitively in the learning process” (p. 5). Transformative multiliteracies pedagogies enable students to “gain insight into how knowledge intersects with power… [and] to scrutinize and actively challenge patterns of power relations in the broader society” (p. 6). These pedagogies ultimately have great impact because “their focus on creating context of empowerment for CLD [Culturally and linguistically diverse] students directly challenges the operation of coercive relations of power in schools and society” (p. 6). This study shares this transformative approach to multiliteracies pedagogy.

Published studies of multiliteracies and transformative multiliteracies offer examples of how students are empowered when they are able to write in their dominant language or use their preferred modalities to express their identities (Cummins, 2009; Giampapa & Sandu, 2011). Studies also show how students gain access to new identities such as author (Giampapa & Sandu, 2011; Mirza, 2011; Prasad, 2011), journalist (Kendrick, Chemjor, & Early, 2012) or artist (Prasad & Dykstra, 2011; Early & Yeung, 2011) as they use technology to create “identity texts” (Cummins, 2006): the creative products of students’ maximum identity investment and cognitive
engagement. These products are held up as a “mirror” for students to see their identity projected, as well as a means through which students generally receive positive recognition and feedback from the learning community. Building on this idea, the production of identity texts can be understood as multiliteracy practices through which students transform the value of their identity within the field of the learning community. The concept of identity text is used throughout this study to understand the investment of identity into the multilingual utterances and multimodal products created by the diverse participants.

2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter I have outlined the key theoretical perspectives that situate this study as well as the pedagogical debates and approaches inspired by these theoretical perspectives. Foundational theories of language as a social practice were shown to be linked to contemporary ideas about multilingualism, multimodality, and diversity in education. Foundational theories of language learning as a social practice were shown to inform current debates over how to best provide language learners with access to target language communities. Sociocultural theories of language and power situate recent discussions of the nature of power as a coercive or collaborative force as well as an argument to include linguistically privileged speakers in this study of diverse linguistic identities. Finally, post-structuralist theories of language, identity and social change demonstrated the inter-connectedness of language, society, situations, discourse, and identities in transformative pedagogical approaches. Throughout the chapter, Janks’ (2009) critical literacy framework with its constructs diversity, access, power, and design connected theory to pedagogy and also served as a reminder that all of these theories are necessarily interrelated. The centrality of these concepts continues in the remaining chapters as diversity,
access, power, and design serve as organizing principles for the thesis in terms of pedagogy (chapter 3), methodology (chapter 4), analysis (chapter 5-8), and synthesis (chapter 9).
Chapter 3: Critical Pedagogy at PSYL

The previous chapter introduced some of the theoretical constructs and pedagogical debates that inform this study. This chapter further contextualizes the research through a description of the site and how the theories and pedagogical approaches of chapter 2 are actualized at PSYL. This gives some grounding for the methodology, analysis, and discussion to follow in the remaining chapters. This brief chapter first describes the site, then describes the activities of the program in relation to identities and Janks’ (2009) critical literacy elements: diversity, access, power, and design. Site-specific terms and the core pedagogical activities are introduced throughout.

3.1 Site Description

The Pearson Seminar on Youth Leadership (PSYL) has been selected as a site for discursive community of practice research for several reasons. First, it is a community rich in cultural and linguistic diversity. Although the majority of the eighty program participants (ages 14-18) are from North America, roughly one third are international. The majority of these are from Japan and Europe. In addition, the sixteen youth facilitators (ages 16-19) bring a truly global perspective: they are either past participants or students from the twelve United World Colleges (UWC) offering the two-year International Baccalaureate program around the world. The students at the United World Colleges are themselves recruited globally on a merit-based system, so the facilitators are a strong representation of global youth leadership. These facilitators come to PSYL between their first and second years in the UWC program, so they typically bring with them a variety of discursive competencies gained from experience within a highly multicultural, multilingual community of practice. At the same time, these UWC students
are often seeking new ways to increase the communicative practices and challenge the discursive norms of even these highly diverse learning communities. Finally, there is a team of eight adult coordinators who facilitate the programming with the intention to create transformative experiences for the participants and facilitators as potential future community and global leaders. The coordinators are “educators” in a broad sense, bringing with them diverse global experiences in educating for sustainability and social change.

In addition to this discursive diversity, PSYL was chosen as a site because of the central role that the development of discursive practices takes in the community, as can be seen through a brief analysis of the five program foundations (from www.psyl.ca). Beyond its central commitment to “equity, social justice, and critical thinking,” the program is stated to be built on a “belief in innovative notions of democracy,” which is demonstrated by the introduction of consensus-based decision-making early in the program. This innovation in the way decisions are made and communities are built means discursive norms are shifted rapidly, potentially expediting cultural change. PSYL describes itself as an “intentional community”: a community focused on building community. One hour every morning is devoted to “Community Building”: a whole-group meeting to use consensus-based decision making as conflicts arise. The program is further built on “ways of knowing and learning that incorporate conventional, traditional, and alternative processes” (www.psyl.ca). This is Discourse in the broad sense of word defined by Gee (2000): “a Discourse is composed of distinctive ways of ‘being and doing’ that allow people to enact and/or recognize a specific and distinctive socially situated identity’ (p. 2). By embracing multiple ways of knowing and learning, PSYL identifies itself as a multidiscursive environment for identity enactment and recognition. Finally, the program is committed to “exploring and developing creative aspects of ourselves” and “enjoying and savouring life,
playing and having fun.” These more traditional camp-like values encourage the development of multimodal discursive practices typical of a camp setting: dance, art, spoken word, song, play, and the multisensorial minutia of daily life are all legitimate resources for identity and community construction. Taken together, these foundations have the potential to make PSYL a discursively-rich experience in identity and community exploration and construction.

A further analysis of the official discourse of the community demonstrates that PSYL offers a linguistic landscape with the potential to either be an English-speaker-centred model or a more transformative multiliteracies-centred model. According to its website (www.psyl.ca), the program “provides a unique learning environment in which students from North America and from other nations around the world meet for a three-week seminar.” As a “seminar,” the program is created through active participation and shared meaning-making. The location of the camp on the west coast of Canada, the emphasis on the “students from North America” compared to the “othering” of the students from “other nations around the world,” and the fact that the website and most promotional material for the camp is in English indicate that, like most intercultural youth programs (see, for example, the Pacific Rim Intercultural Camp in Japan, and The Global Young Leaders Program in America, Europe, and China), the medium of communication will be English. In fact, my first position at the camp was to provide “ESL support” to help to integrate the “ESL participants” within the flow of the program (see section 1.3.1 for my history with the program).

In terms of linguistic identities (as described in section 2.4), because PSYL is situated in a country that is English-dominant and in a world that is increasingly English-as-a-Lingua-Franca dominant, the English language offers its speakers a great degree of symbolic power and cultural capital. All participants are expected to speak English well in order to participate. On
their website at the bottom of the registration form is the following statement: “participants must be fluent in English - capable of following and participating in advanced level discussions” (www.psyl.ca, accessed March, 2012). That being said, the reality is quite different. Every year there are participants who attend through English learning programs in Japan (8-12 participants) and Spain (1-3 participants) who are participating in the program partly because they would like to improve their English. There are also various other participants who come with diverse levels of English ability—many of whom do not self-identify as “fluent” in English. Finally, the facilitators have diverse multilingual resources. Coming from the United World Colleges worldwide, most have a relatively high level of English proficiency, but still many do not self-identify as “fluent.” Other ways in which English is constructed as the dominant language include English-only promotional materials (including posters, pamphlets, and the website), English as a common language amongst the coordinators (in 2010 and 2011 only one identified as having English as anything but a first language), and English being the language of instruction for the regular school-year program on the site (Pearson) and of the majority of the PSYL sessions. As a result, “Native/Fluent English speaker” (NES) and “English Language Learner (ELL)/English as a Second Language Speaker (ESL speaker)” potentially become critically significant social identities, with the former being the unmarked, assumed, mainstream “norm” imbued with high symbolic capital that allows its speakers the right to speak and the power to impose reception and the latter being the marked, peripheral variation that limits its speakers in terms of communicative rights and powers.

In tension with these aspects of situated discourse that suggested a native English-speaker-centric model of instruction, the promotional material for PSYL also suggests the potential for an alternative approach. The seminar is a “unique learning environment” where
“students are encouraged to broaden their perspectives on key world issues and are provided with the leadership skills they need to become leaders on themes of ecological sustainability, social justice and international understanding” (www.psyl.ca, accessed March, 2012, my italics). A learning environment that marginalizes its international participants cannot create leaders on the theme of international understanding; a learning environment that promotes linguistic privileging cannot create leaders on the theme of social justice; a learning environment that unquestioningly adopts Anglo-centric communicative practices cannot broaden perspectives on key world issues. Through its proclamation to be a “unique learning environment,” PSYL is a fertile ground for critical approaches to multilingualism. In Janks’ (2009) interdependence model, pulling aside the English language learners for extra linguistic support would provide access but without a theory of diversity, power, or design. Although providing these students with basic access to the dominant language and basic content of the seminar through vocabulary lists, simple translation, scribing and explanation is important, this approach “leads to the naturalisation of dominant discourses without an understanding of how these powerful forms came to be powerful”, “fails to recognize that difference fundamentally affects pathways to access and involves issues of history, identity and value”; and “maintains and reifies dominant forms without considering how they can be transformed” (Janks, 2009, p. 131). In response to this tension, in 2009 I shifted the focus of my role at the seminar from “ESL support” to the “promotion of intercultural capital.” Instead of simply pulling aside the English language learners for linguistic support, I offered to work with anyone interested in intercultural communication to create a pedagogical space focused on the exploration of language and culture. This allowed for an increased valuation of diversity and recognition that “different ways of reading and writing the world in a range of modalities [and languages] are a central resource for
changing consciousness” (Janks, p. 24). Finally, in 2010 and 2011 I began researching and recording while at the same time bringing an increased explicit awareness of power and design into my practice as an educator and as a researcher.

In order to see beyond the monolingual surface structure of the youth program, new perspectives on multilingualism and multimodality are needed, including Blackledge and Creese’s (2010) view of ‘multilingualism’ as “the appropriation and incorporation for meaning-making of any and all linguistic resources which come to hand” (p. 17). In a multicultural setting such as an international seminar on youth leadership, there are incredibly rich reserves of diverse linguistic resources available to be accessed by the participants for the purpose of community meaning-making. However, many of these resources are not utilized because there is such a strong privileging of English linguistic resources. Blackledge and Creese account for this phenomenon by taking a critical perspective on multilingualism. They ask such questions as “who has access to what linguistic resources?”; “What counts as valuable, legitimate linguistic resources?”; and “Who has the power to negotiate the value of linguistic resources?” Like in most international education programs, at PSYL the participants who have access to English linguistic resources, usually by virtue of birth in North America or by privileged education elsewhere, can potentially claim the power to speak with greater facility. Those who can claim the power to speak can also claim the power to negotiate the value of these resources. However, the present study aims to explore how transformative multiliteracies pedagogies can shift identities and challenge this distribution of power.
3.2 Diversity at PSYL

In this study, diversity and multilingualism as a social practice are especially relevant as participants introduce themselves through what I have called “linguaspheres”: each participant draws their perceived linguistic resources in concentric circles indicating the relative size of their pool of linguistic resources. They also share this with the community. With the whole group, they stood in a large circle and I called out each language indicated in at least one linguasphere diagram. Participants then ran in towards the centre of the circle to indicate their perceived fluency level (the centre of the circle representing complete fluency). They shouted a greeting in that language as they did so, and the community did their best to respond with the same greeting. On that day, I also asked for people who wanted to be “Language Buddies”—to receive and/or give linguistic support—to sign up for the “Communication Crew”. On the first day of the Communication Crew, the participants shared their linguistic resources again, this time using hand gestures to indicate the size of each of their language competencies. While these activities are not assumed to give any indication of anyone’s objective linguistic competencies, they are effective in highlighting the multilingual diversity of the community. From the first day, the multiple languages and multiple modes of communication were made explicit and significant as rich resources for the community. This in turn may have precipitated the use of these diverse resources in community tasks such as reaching a consensus on the five core values of their community. This is discussed in depth in chapter 5.

3.3 Access at PSYL

In this study, the activity that most directly reflects theories of access and language learning as a social practice is the Language Buddy system. Participants of the Communication
Crew are grouped into linguistically diverse pairs or small groups in which at least one member has indicated a desire for English support. These Language Buddies work together during linguistically challenging sessions, such as the Five Principles consensus building process on the second day of the program, and attend the Communication Crew meetings to participate in guided check-ins and gain inter-lingual communication skills. The roles, identities, and practices associated with gaining and providing linguistic access through the Language Buddy system are explored in chapter 6.

3.4 Power at PSYL

At the international youth seminar, various positions are institutionally imbued with authority. Even in its stated spiral model of leadership (whereby power is viewed in a non-hierarchical spiral with some agents closer to the centre but spiraling the rest of the community in with them), a high degree of authority is given to the adult director and coordinators who plan the majority of the sessions and overall program ahead of time and guide the facilitators and participants through these pre-determined experiences. These adults are imbued with the authority to begin and end each session, to gain the participants’ attention, and to guide both the topic and the turn-taking flow of large group discussions. Often the coordinator will also have the “final word” in a session, drawing together the ideas presented in a way that signposts the direction of the overall community.

However, while the rank of the adults in the community is acknowledged, there are also specific ways that the coordinators and director at PSYL adopt a more spiral-based model of leadership, especially when compared to traditional schooling. First, the educators at PSYL are
not given institutional authority to grade or evaluate the participants in any formal way. Second, there is an openness towards explicit discussion of rank. In the Power and Privilege session, the statement “unacknowledged rank breeds anger” was introduced, and this was discussed in relation to the rank of the adults in the community. The educators explicitly acknowledge the rank they have as adults playing a particular role in the community. In addition, the program’s institutionalized commitment to experiential education opens more space for participant empowerment and voice. While a session may be guided by a coordinator, they are often designed to facilitate the voices of the participants. For example, in the six-hour Five Principles consensus process, the coordinator offers the steps to work towards consensus, but the discussion and choice of principles is in the hands of the participants themselves. Similarly, in Circles, the coordinator creates the space for the participants to speak freely and openly about their experiences and feelings without interruption or time constraint. Finally, the overall plan of the program is to empower each participant to see him or herself as a “leader”. As such, the purpose is to help all participants to find the authority within themselves to speak and be heard both within the community and upon their return to their home communities.

While power is implicated in all pedagogical practices, at PSYL power becomes the explicit pedagogical focus in a day devoted to power and privilege about half-way through the program. On this day, participants participate in a simulation of global privilege and inequality. They are randomly assigned groups that are “countries” represented by areas marked by tape around the tennis court. They are told they must create the best possible country, bringing their ideas to a central figure (played by a program facilitator) for approval. They also are subjected

6 With the notable exception of the “Credit Crew” (about a dozen participants receiving credit for participation in the program in exchange for the completion of a few additional tasks)
to natural disasters that may destroy what they have built or shrink their play area. They may be “arrested” and brought to a jail far from their country. What participants don’t realize is that they are not being treated equally. Certain countries have been pre-determined to have less resources, more natural disasters, less approval, and more jailings. The emotional process of realizing that the game play is not fair often leads to a revolution. When the game ends, a long debrief process occurs that makes connections to global inequality as well as personal privilege including race, gender, class, sexuality, and language. Within this discussion, Peggy McIntosh’s (1990) list of white privileges and Earlham College’s (n.d.) list of straight privileges is introduced. In the Communication Crew, linguistic privilege is explored more deeply and a list of English privileges is created by the participants. This process is explored in depth in chapter 7.

3.5 Design and Identity at PSYL

The kind of empowerment promoted at PSYL through such discourse as “be the change you wish to see in the world” (a quote often attributed to Gandhi and prevalent in the promotional literature of the program), “we speak the language of changemakers” (an utterance developed in the discourse of PSYL 2011 that was selected by the community as their T-shirt slogan), and “we are one of the stories changing the world” (an utterance developed in the discourse of PSYL 2010 that was selected by the community as their T-shirt slogan) suggests that agents are able to change the culture(s) around him or her by changing their personal actions. “We speak the language of changemakers” in particular seems to highlight the discursive nature of this process of social change.
The Communication Crew is the site of most linguistic design activities at the seminar. This group is entrusted with the task of improving communication in the program, and during every session suggestions for making communication more equitable are brought forth. A typical session would begin with a check-in in Language Buddy pairs/groups to find out how each member, but especially the non-English dominant members, are faring. Communication challenges are identified and shared with the whole group. This leads to brainstorming possible solutions, strategies, innovations, or interventions either to be applied within the Language Buddy groups (such as deciding to do a language exchange at lunch every day or a volunteer to post a running list of English slang expressions to post in the cafeteria) or brought to the larger community. An example of a larger community intervention was the idea to shift linguistic resources for a community building session. After a discussion of linguistic privilege, the suggestion was made by a participant to have one community building where no English was spoken. In 2010, the idea was to simply eliminate English. In 2011, the idea was to limit community building to the dominant languages of the English-learning participants of the Communication Crew (Japanese, German, and Spanish). A description and analysis of this intervention is in chapter 8.

According to Hanks, Bourdieu’s field is “a configuration of social roles, agent positions, and the structures they fit into and the historical process in which those positions are actually taken up, occupied by actors (individual or collective)” (Bourdieu & Johnson, 1993; paraphrased in Hanks, 2005, p. 70). At an international youth leadership seminar, official social roles and agent positions include “program participant”, “program facilitator”, “program coordinator” and “program director.” However, other social roles are made relevant through the curriculum, such as gender-related identities such as “male,” or “female” (including “transgendered”) on Gender
Day; place-based identities such as “Japanese” or “Torontonian” at the Show Us Where You’re From variety show; performance-related identities such as “singer”, “musician”, “poet”, “actor” or “dancer” at other shows; class, race, and sexual-orientation–related identities such as “upper class”, “middle class”, “lower class”, “First World”, “developing world”, “black”, “white”, “Asian”, “First Nations”, “gay”, “straight”, and “bisexual” on Power and Privilege Day; and “social activist”, “change-maker”, “student”, “teacher” and “leader” throughout the program. As a result of this study, “research participant”, “researcher”, “interviewee” and “interviewer” also became relevant categories. Community members variously take up these positions throughout the program in ways that are more or less familiar to them.

While all of these identity positions (and many others) are relevant in the program, this study is particularly interested in examining linguistic identities. In the field of the Communication Crew and its related activities, the relevance of language-based identities becomes explicit. As in most international/intercultural learning settings where English is the de facto lingua franca, “Native English Speaker” and “English Language Learner” have immediate social significance from Day One. The purpose of the Communication Crew is to recognize a more diverse range of communication-based identities and to enhance communicative practices in the community. Throughout the program, identities including “Japanese speaker,” “French speaker,” “German speaker,” “communicator beyond words,” “multilingual,” “monolingual,” and “interculturally competent communicator” proved to be socially significant. As linguistically diverse participants are paired up to support each other throughout the program, many of these identities are explored under the larger identity category of “Language Buddy.” The analysis of relevant identities is woven throughout the thesis with a special focus on the Language Buddy identity in chapter 6.
3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has offered a brief description of some of the core activities and philosophies of the PSYL program and the Communication Crew within the seminar in an attempt to make an unfamiliar setting familiar to the reader prior to a description of the methodology (chapter 4) and analysis (chapters 5-8). Specifically, the site’s self-proclaimed focus on community-building was linked to theories of discourse; the tension between the program’s philosophy of embracing diversity and promoting social justice and its predominantly monolingual program delivery was presented as an opportunity to explore alternate transformative pedagogical models; and the sharing of linguistic resources, the Language Buddy system, the questioning of linguistic privilege, and the Multilingual Community Building intervention were presented as examples of diversity, access, power, and design respectively. Finally, some of the identity positions available in the field were explored, with emphasis on a few unique to the site: program participant, program facilitator, program coordinator, and Language Buddy. In the remaining chapters, the methodology (chapter 4), analysis (chapters 5-8), and concluding discussion (chapter 9) bring an ethnographic eye to this site of potential transformation.
Chapter 4: Methodology

Investigating the multiliteracies practices and identity positionings of youth participants in an intensive linguistically diverse community of practice demands particular approaches to the kinds of data needed, how these data are collected, and how it is analyzed. In recognition of the socially constructed nature of the concepts under investigation, this study uses ethnographic methods of data collection and discursive approaches to data analysis. In order to capture the ways that transformative multiliteracies pedagogies affect the ways that meaning, power and identity are negotiated in discourse, this study uses a critical, multilingual and multimodal approach to ethnography. Following Whitaker’s (1996) suggestion that ethnography be viewed as “a form of publically displayed learning” (p. 8) whose findings and representations are “pedagogical experiments” (p. 8), I approach the study of this diverse community of practice both as a learner of the program and research participants’ lived experience and as a teacher sharing these learnings with others in the research and pedagogical communities. If ethnographic research is to be understood as a form of learning and teaching, and if I am to argue for the affordances of the transformative multiliteracies approach to learning and teaching, it stands to reason that the methodological approach should align with the transformative multiliteracies pedagogical approach. My approach as a researcher-learner in the community strives for situated practice by understanding participant observation and research interviews as situated practices; overt instruction through the systematic analysis of this situated practice and the overt ethnographic approach; critical framing through critical ethnographic and critical discourse analytic approaches; and transformative practice through my intention to make active change in the community researched as well as the research community. These themes are
highlighted throughout the following discussion of the methodological approach taken in this study. This chapter outlines the ethnographic methodology and methods for data collection and analysis. The focus of this chapter is on how these approaches relate to each other, relate to the theoretical framework outlined in chapter 2, relate to the data collected, and relate to the exploration of these research questions:

1. How can transformative multiliteracies pedagogies affect the meaning-making practices and identity positioning of linguistically diverse youth?

2. What multiliteracies practices and pedagogies can be creative of and created by a linguistically inclusive and critically multilingual community?

4.1 Ethnography

In his recent description of super-diversity, Blommaert (2014) notes that “the uncertainty compels us towards an ethnographic stance, in which we go out to find out how sociolinguistic systems operate rather than to project a priori characteristics onto them” (p. 3). Ethnography has its roots in anthropology where it originally signified the “up-close, intensive, long-term, holistic study of small-scale, non-Western societies” (Atkinson, Okada, & Talmy, 2012). Its techniques—including participant observation, surveys, artifact collection, and the ethnographic interview—were developed in order to understand the society emically from the participants’ own perspective. Data collected through these techniques are triangulated—or juxtaposed and integrated—to strengthen the validity of the analysis (Atkinson et al., 2012, p. 86). It is ethnography’s “regard for local rationalities” and method of “tapping into ecologies of meaning-making and the participants’ own sense-making” (Georgakopoulou, 2007, p. 20) that make it a suitable approach for studies of discourse, narrative, and identity—including this study of the
meaning-making and identity negotiation processes of linguistically diverse youth. The ethnographic approach taken here is particularly inspired by the approach taken by small stories analysts (Georgakopoulou, 2007), ethnography of communication researchers (Hymes, 1980), linguistic/multilingual ethnographers (Blackledge & Creese, 2010), and critical ethnographers (Anderson, 1989; Carspecken, 2001; Talmy, 2010a).

In recognition of the highly contextualized nature of the central concepts of this study, a lived ethnography is appropriate as the situated practice of “being there” (Geertz, 1988) allows for some contextualized sense to be made of the participants’ actions and utterances. As noted by Stein (2008), “ethnographic data adds important ethical and interpretive dimensions to the micro-analysis of students’ multimodal texts, enabling the researcher to situate the communicative practice within larger frames of meaning which make sense to the participants themselves and throw different perspectives on the notion of the sign-makers ‘interests’ in the moment of interaction” (p. 11). In order to understand the meaning of any given utterance, artifact, or interview exchange, it is important to have immersed oneself in the community of practice that contextualizes that utterance to the extent that such an immersion is possible. There is much debate about minimal times spent in the field to be considered an “ethnography” (see, for example Walker, 1980 and Jeffrey & Troman, 2004). Working within the time constraints of the program itself, this is as close to an ethnography as possible and is defined by Jeffrey & Troman (2004) as a compressed time mode: “a short period of intense ethnographic research in which researchers inhabit a research site almost permanently for anything from a few days to a month” (Jeffrey & Troman, 2004, p. 538). In this case, the compressed time mode of the research covers the entire duration of the community in two instantiations separated by a calendar year. Rather than being “an ethnography” in the purist sense, this study uses the “ethnographic perspective”
(Green & Bloom, 1997): a focused approach to studying particular aspects of everyday life and cultural practices of a social group. Similarly, it draws on Geertz’s (1988) definition of ethnography as a viewpoint rather than a series of methods. Atkins et al. (2012) have summarized Geertz’s ethnographic viewpoint, or thick description (Geertz, 1988), succinctly as a viewpoint that emphasizes “(1) the complexity and particularity of the social scene studied, (2) understanding that scene from an emic, or insider’s, perspective, and (3) the researcher's awareness that s/he is a constitutive part of the scene” (Atkinson et al., 2012, p. 86).

Ethnographers strive to be reflective in representing and interpreting the social context of their research participants as they engage in social action alongside those they are researching. As an active educator in the community, it is of especial importance that I make deliberate attempts to acknowledge my own positioning and performance throughout my time in the field at the seminar. My own language choices, subject positioning, identities, power and privilege thus need to be accounted for and analyzed throughout the data analysis process.

In addition to the situated practice of “being there” (Geertz, 1988), I seek overt instruction in the meaning-making processes of the community. In order to achieve this, I draw on what has been called “overt ethnography” (Strangleman & Warren, 2008, p. 53) in which the participants are fully aware of my role as a researcher and the topic and purpose of the research. All participants (and their parents) are aware that my intention is “to explore linguistic power and privilege in a multilingual educational setting” and to invite participants to “discuss what power and privilege look like in linguistically diverse communities” and “actively create community strategies to support linguistic inclusion of second language users in the community” (letter to program participants and parents). Being overt about my intentions and aims as an educator and researcher was important to me both ethically and pedagogically. Ethically, it
allowed the research participants and their parents to give more informed assent/consent. Pedagogically, it allowed me to engage with the research participants in overt discussions of power, privilege, and multilingual inclusion. This overt approach arguably created a context for the rich and remarkably self-aware narratives of participants such as Owen (section 8.4) and Andrew (section 7.4) to develop. It also supported the critical and transformative aims of the study as outlined below.

4.1.1 Critical ethnography

Approaching this study as a transformative multiliteracies learner, I draw on critical ethnography to critically frame the situated practices of the community. My approach is “critical” in that it addresses the ways in which social differences within a community are connected to social inequality (Carspecken, 2001). This allows a focus on the ways in which language practices are socially and politically situated in a given community. In particular, this study strives to achieve Talmy’s (2010a) description of a “critically-located ethnographic methodology”:

A critically-located ethnographic methodology highlights the interplay between social structure, material relations, and agency; addresses the ways that social structure is (or is not) instantiated, accommodated, resisted, and/or transformed in the micropolitics of everyday life; contends with issues of ideology, hegemony, and culture; critically addresses its own historically-, materially-, and culturally-specific interpretations; works toward change; and does so with the collaboration of research participants. (Talmy, 2010a, p. 130)

In this case, the social structure I am particularly focused on is linguistic privilege—examining
the instantiation, accommodation, resistance and transformation of situated, discursive, linguistic and cultural identities in the micropolitics of everyday interaction. This study contends with issues of linguistic ideology, linguistic hegemony, and culture in the pedagogical approach, research design and analysis; and critically addresses my own historically-, materially- and culturally-specific interpretations through reflexivity (see below). Finally, this methodology works toward change both at the micro- and macro- level. As Anderson (1989) points out, “a persistent criticism of educational critical theory is its tendency toward social critique without developing a theory of action that educational practitioners can draw upon to develop a "counter-hegemonic" practice in which dominant structures of classroom and organizational meaning are challenged” (p. 257). Critical ethnographies that describe and critique unjust social realities and hegemonic educational practices are necessary in order to elucidate what needs to be changed; this study, however, aims to counter the criticism of lacking a theory of action by working toward change through taking transformative multiliteracies as the object of analysis. In doing so, it builds off of the work of extensive critical ethnographies conducted by Talmy (2008), Blackledge and Creese (2010) and others who have already well-documented the hegemonic practices of uncritical TESL pedagogy. At the micro-level, this project works toward change by making transformative pedagogies the core of the research process: this study does not aim to passively observe a community with pervasive inequality between speakers of dominant and non-dominant languages; rather, this study actively engages in transformative pedagogy with community members to address this inequality that has been well-documented elsewhere (see, for example Talmy, 2008). At the macro-level, this project works toward broader social change by making the pedagogy used in this community overt and reproducible (see chapter 3 as well as chapters 5-8) and making recommendations for future research and pedagogical applications.
This emancipatory work is done with research participants, many of whom chose to use their real names in recognition of their contribution to the transformation of the norms of linguistic privilege. I view the participants as being involved in a collaborative process over the course of the project designing actions to solve the problem of linguistic exclusion in a multilingual but English-dominant community. This focus on transformation may call for a distinction between critical ethnography, which highlights hegemonic practices with the view to future transformation, and transformative ethnography (Juris & Khasnabish, 2013), which works with research participants to transform these hegemonic practices. Both are necessary components of research-based social change. (This distinction draws upon the multiliteracies distinction between critical framing and transformative practice, both necessary components of pedagogy-based social change.)

The study is also “critical” in that it is approached with an intentional awareness of researcher-researched dynamics. My identities as researcher, educator, “native English speaker,” white, formally-educated, and adult all may be generally afforded with high cultural capital in the context of the research site. This status needs to be accounted for throughout the data collection and analysis process. In addition, a critical ethnographic view uses an awareness of these power relations to mitigate the tendency of researchers to overuse their privileged access to subjective claims about what subjects felt, experienced, or intended (Silverman, 2010). For this reason, a discourse analytic approach that transparently outlines the process of analysis and incorporates member-checking is taken to the analysis of the data (see below).
4.1.2 Multilingual, multimodal ethnography

This study is a form of linguistic ethnography, drawing on linguistic-based discourse analysis to ground the analytic claims. Linguistic ethnography is founded in two key tenets:

- that the contexts for communication should be investigated rather than assumed. Meaning takes shape within specific social relations, interactional histories and institutional regimes, produced and construed by agents with expectations and repertoires that have to be grasped ethnographically; and

- that analysis of the internal organization of verbal (and other kinds of semiotic) data is essential to understanding its significance and position in the world. Meaning is far more than just the ‘expression of ideas’, and biography, identifications, stance and nuance are extensively signalled in the linguistic and textual fine-grain. (Rampton, 2007, p. 585)

This linguistic ethnographic approach builds off of ideas from Goffman (1959), Hymes (1980), and Rampton (2007) who argue that a close observational analysis of situated interaction demonstrates aspects of identity, community, and competency that are produced, revealed, and negotiated through language.

Following Blackledge and Creese (2010), Rampton (1997), Blommaert, Collins, and Slembrouk (2005), Tusting and Maybin (2007), and Heller (2007), I expand on this linguistic ethnography to pay attention to multiple languages, and following Stein (2008), where possible I pay attention to other modalities of communication. The very use of a particular language or semiotic mode can index a subject position (Blackledge & Creese, 2010), construct meaning, indicate a particular addressee, and shape the utterance through specific affordances (Stein, 2009), limitations and communicative norms. For this reason, attention is paid in the data collection to note when a shift is made between languages or modalities, even if only for a single
I draw on Bakhtin’s (1986) term heteroglossia to refer to the way that different signs are combined as a resource in the act of meaning making. In addition, in the words of Blackledge and Creese, multilingualism itself is “a social construct and always about power, distribution of linguistic resources and construction of boundaries” that are “reproduced, contested, challenged, fought over, altered and at times demolished in negotiations which become visible in the fine-grained detail of language interactions” (2010, p. 58). While the majority of the data is spoken English discourse (for example, the interviews were predominantly English), this study pays attention to the choice of language and modality in interaction as a means of understanding identity and power.

In terms of multimodality, Dicks et. al (2011) note that “although a number of scholarly traditions have concerned themselves with the study of non-verbal and material forms of sensory data, it is only over the last ten years or so that multimodality has become an established way of examining and analysing communication and interaction in contemporary everyday life” (Dicks, Flewitt, Lancaster, & Pahl, 2011, p. 234). While one could argue that all ethnography is necessarily multimodal in the multi-sensorial sense of “being there” (Geertz, 1988), what makes this new wave of multimodal ethnographies unique is the focus on the centrality of multimodality to the situated meaning-making process. Kress (2011) argues that “ensembles of theories and methods [such as ethnography and multimodality] are contingent on and assembled for specific research tasks, and their contentious union may be fleeting or offer the potential to be more enduring” (as summarized by Dicks et al., 2011, p. 231). The particular marriage between ethnography and multimodality here is a natural union born from the goal to explore the meaning-making processes of diverse youth in a transformative multiliteracies community of practice. Because multiliteracies is at the pedagogical core of this meaning-making community,
it follows that a multimodal ethnographic approach to the observation and analysis of the constitutive meaning-making practices. While the linguistic still dominates the discourse and analysis, the gestural and (to a lesser degree) the visual were presented pedagogically as an interlingual communicative strategy; as a result, the observation and analysis pays attention to these modes through the use of video as described below.

4.1.3 Video in ethnography

The use of video allows the researcher to analyze the multimodal meaning-making practices of the participants as they draw on every semiotic resource that comes to hand. As noted by Stein (2008), the use of video data is the “most efficient and effective means of capturing the different semiotic layers (full body movement, action, gesture, body position, talk, silence, interactions, use of space) in a communication event” (p. 16). This study draws on video ethnographic techniques that have been developed through my research on the meaning-making practices of youth dancers (Meredith, 2011). By using video, the importance of gesture as a central meaning-making mode is recognized and promoted. At the same time, the presence of a camera has ethical, theoretical, practical, and methodological implications that need to be considered. Ethically, the use of video adds a layer of vulnerability and non-anonymity to the data collection process. For this reason, video was not used continuously throughout the program, and its use was always noted. Special care was taken to frame shots in such a way that participants who did not consent to the use of their image were not in shots that would later be used for research and its dissemination. In addition, because there is a tendency as Behar (2003) notes for researchers to “reveal little or nothing of ourselves; we make others vulnerable but we ourselves remain invulnerable” (p. 273), where applicable I have turned the camera on myself and included my self and my own interactions in the video image (at times with a tripod mounted
camera, at times with a volunteer holding the camera). This allows me the opportunity to analyze my own interactions in addition to the interaction of the other participants.

There has been much written by Speer and Hutchby (2003) and others on the influence of video on research data as the presence of a camera can affect the conduct of the participants. However, taking a social constructionist approach allows the researcher to frame this influence as part of the social-constructedness of the interview talk-in-practice rather than simply as a source of bias or invalidation of the “naturalness” of the data collected (Heath, Hindmarsh & Lush, 2010). In this study, the role of the camera is understood to be fluid and to be part of the meaning-making process. Following Heath, Hindmarsh & Lush (2010), “rather than assuming an a priori, all-pervasive influence of the recording process on the participants” I find utility in “addressing the problem empirically,” making note of the participants’ orientations towards the camera and considering how they arise and why (p. 48).

There were many times that audio-only recording were used. This was sometimes by participant request (some research participants asked their image to not be used, and in some cases that meant they were nervous about having their image recorded), sometimes by my choice to be less intrusive (especially in 2010 when my concerns over the influence of the presence of the camera out-weighted my desire to capture everything on video; through the analysis of the 2010 data, however, it became apparent that video held an irreplaceable value and that the presence of the camera could be addressed empirically as described above), and sometimes by the limitations of technology (full memory cards and dying batteries were a recurrent theme, especially in this fast-paced, intensive outdoor program). In these cases, field notes noting gesture and the collection of visual artifacts were used to capture crude but useful shadows of the fleeting gestural and visual meaning-making practices.
4.2 Data Collection

After obtaining consent and assent, data collection incorporated three primary methods: ethnographic observational and participatory field work, audio and video recordings, and semi-structured and open research interviews.

4.2.1 Consent

Working with linguistically diverse youth poses logistical and ethical challenges that may dissuade researchers from focusing on populations that most need to be heard. In my case, I was fortunate that my previous connection with the program meant that negotiating access was relatively simple: although the initial expectation was that my graduate studies would mean that I could no longer be a part of the PSYL organization, I offered to continue my work supporting the communication needs of the community in exchange for institutional consent to research this contribution. I negotiated the terms of access with the supportive director of the program. Because many of the participants travel alone to the program, in order to gain required parental consent, I sent a letter introducing myself and the research via email in the weeks leading up to the program. In order to help the participants understand what I was researching, I provided a session in which I highlighted the unique linguistic diversity of the community and introduced the basic ideas I had about multilingual communication. We read through the assent together, and I emphasized that not participating in this research in no way would limit their experience of the program. I used gestures, diagrams, and multilingual explanations where possible throughout to ensure understanding. Further, I later followed-up with all of the participants who had signed for whom English was not a first language. I recognize part of the identity of this community is
that they are highly invested in academic and global identities: perhaps it is thus not surprising that the majority of the community enthusiastically offered their full assent and consent (including use of their true names) to this chance to participate in the academic world and have their identities as intercultural communicators acknowledged. An ongoing process has been the ongoing check for assent. Many continue to be interested in the themes addressed, and I have been in contact frequently as a method of member-checking as well as simply checking-in.

4.2.2 Ethnographic observational and participatory field work

My field work involved two five-week intensive participatory immersions in an educator role at the youth seminar for the entire duration of the four-week program and one-week planning session of the summers of 2010 and 2011 with member-checking and follow-up online and in the month long-summer session in 2012. Observations in particular included morning Community Building sessions, the interaction of “Language Buddies” during language intensive sessions such as consensus building, Communication Crew sessions focused on strengthening communication within the community, facilitator meetings, coordinator meetings, and general community life. Observation produced 10 sets of field notes (limited due to the intensity of the program) supplemented by extensive audio and video recordings as below. In addition, documents were collected including participants’ own visual images of their perceived linguistic competencies, and short questionnaires on communication, participation, and subjective experiences of various sessions. Finally, documents pertaining to descriptions of the program were collected on site and online.
4.2.3 Audio and video recordings

Where possible, audio and video recordings were made of key community moments. In 2010, video recording was limited to the Multilingual Community Building, the presentation of the Five Principles, a gesture-based communication session, and onstage performances. Audio recordings were made for Communication Crew meetings, Language Buddy interaction in sessions, and final interviews. However, upon reviewing the data in the fall of 2010, it was clear that the video data provided multimodal richness that was lost in the audio recordings. As a result, Communication Crew meetings, Language Buddy interactions in sessions, and final interviews were video recorded in 2011.

4.2.4 Semi-structured and open research interviews

Focal participants were interviewed at the end of the program. Although these interviews occur at the end of the program, they are not conceptualized as being reports of the experience of the program; rather, they are an integral part of the program. In 2010, all interviews were done in Language Buddy pairs, allowing for an analysis of partner interaction. In 2011, language “teams” were used rather than language “buddies.” Team interaction was recorded during several Communication Crew settings, so final interviews were done individually as a matter of scheduling limitation and facility.

4.3 Data Analysis

In line with the critical ethnographic approach of this study, I take a critical perspective on discourse and use an array of resources for undertaking its analysis. Because this study takes a social practice approach, it uses discourse analysis techniques in its examination of the culture
of the community. Atkinson, Okada and Talmy (2012) have argued for the compatibility of ethnographic and discourse analytic approaches to data collection and analysis, specifically that “close description of the moment-by-moment constitution of social life in talk-in-interaction can both fundamentally enrich and be fundamentally enriched by broad descriptions of social behaviours, norms and values” (Atkinson et al., 2012, p. 89). In her overview of discourse analysis in educational research, Warriner (2008) similarly argues for “the value of combining ethnographic methods data collection (e.g. long-term participant observation, document collection, and individual interviews) with a close analysis of discourse in order to provide a grounded and nuanced account of the specific, local, and complicated ways that institutional social processes (bureaucratic, social, economic and political) are related to individual identity construction or performance” (Warriner, 2008, p. 208). In the case of this study, the compatibility of the two approaches has further theoretical motivation. As outlined in section 2.4, this study is particularly interested in how meaning-making and identity positioning in discourse can potentially shift communicative norms and negotiations of power in a given community’s culture. Because of this fundamental perspective on the connection between culture and discourse, the use of discourse analytic methods to ground ethnographic claims is not only justifiable, but is arguably essential.

As for the compatibility of critical ethnography and discourse analysis, Talmy has argued elsewhere that approaches such as conversation analysis can “powerfully substantiate and elaborate a critical analysis of discourse” as it works to “ground and expand claims that are made in a critical analysis of discourse, thereby addressing criticisms about analytic accountability and warrantability of assertions in critically-situated empirical research” (Talmy, 2009, p. 206). In addition, discourse analytic approaches allow the critical analyst to examine “how power is
interactionally achieved rather than an *a priori* given or foregone conclusion” (Talmy, 2009, p. 206). I expand on this to argue that such an examination of how power is “interactionally achieved” also allows the researcher to point to potential for altering unfair imbalances of power through transformed interactions. Methods are drawn from Bakhtin (1981) for explicating the *dialogic* nature of all discursive data, Georgakopoulou and Bamberg (2008) (who themselves draw on tools from narrative analysis and conversation analysis) for a dialogic approach to narrative, and discourse analysts such as Gee (2011), Fairclough (2001), and Van Dijk (2001) for their attention to power in discourse.

4.3.1 Bakhtin and discourse analysis

As noted by Blackledge and Creese (2010, p. 125), Bakhtin’s framework is often used by social practice theorists as it connects the voices of social actors to their wider socio-political and historical context. Following Bakhtin (1981), discourse is understood to be *dialogic* and each utterance is understood primarily as a link in the chain of communication. Each utterance links back to previous utterances through *intertextuality* and forward to proceeding utterances through *addressivity* (Bakhtin, 1986). *Intertextuality* is the process through which speakers construct their utterances in relation to the words of other speakers, while *addressivity* is the process through which speakers construct their utterances in order to achieve favourable responses and deter unfavourable responses from a particular audience. In addition, the Bakhtinian approach adopted here allows for a focus on *heteroglossia* (Bakhtin, 1986), the simultaneous use of different forms or signs in the multilingual, multimodal environment.
4.3.2 Narrative and discourse analysis

Narratives are of particular interest to identity researchers as they offer the speaker additional tools for identity negotiation, performance, and construction. In my analysis, I pay particular attention to the stories that are co-constructed by participants. Following Georgakopoulou, Bamberg and De Fina (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008; De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012; Georgakopoulou, 2005, 2007), I make use of an approach to narrative that is in line with Bakhtin’s dialogism: these narratives need not be grand life stories produced monologically; rather, they are small stories (Georgakopoulou, 2007) produced dialogically, some only a single sentence long (see, for example Yusuke’s small story in chapter 6). Because this study is particularly interested in identity investment, construction, and negotiation, it draws especially on the elements of narrative analysis that allow for an examination of identity positions. The analysis is organized around Bamberg and Georgakopolou’s (2008, p. 385) three levels of positioning:

(i) how characters are positioned within the story (the narrated self)
(ii) how the speaker/narrator positions himself (and is positioned) within the interactive situation (the narrating self)
(iii) how the speaker/narrator positions a sense of self/identity with regard to dominant discourses or master narratives (the grand narrative self)

Level one analyzes the story itself, drawing on narrative analysis techniques (including Labov and Waletzky’s (1967, 1997) story elements and Goffman’s (1959, 1974) story-telling roles) to explore who the characters are and how they are positioned in the story told. Level two analyzes the story-telling interactions, drawing on conversation analysis techniques such as turn-taking
and self-repairs to explore how the teller is positioned in the telling. Level three analyzes the grand narratives implicated in the telling, drawing on critical discourse anlaysis and Bakhtinian analysis techniques to explore how the identity of the teller is positioned in relation to the larger cultural context. Georgakopoulou (2007) argues that an examination of story-telling roles though “a micro-analytic emphasis on the details and sequential management of talk” allows the analyst to trace the “extra-situational, portable identities” that the speakers bring into and negotiate through the discourse (p. 115). This narrative analytic approach has been adopted in order to analyze the identity work being done in and through the narratives that are co-constructed by participants throughout the program. Following Georgakopoulou (2007), the “micro-analytic emphasis on the details and sequential management of talk” is accomplished by drawing on tools honed in the field of Conversation Analysis (Wooffitt, 2005) such as turn taking, subject positioning, false starts, repairs, and stake inoculations—rhetorical devices constructed to prevent the undermining of one’s utterances. These features of talk in action are understood to be integral to the meaning-making and identity positioning processes. For further theoretical considerations of the small stories approach, see section 2.4.

Because this study explores transformative multiliteracies pedagogies (Cummins 2009), it is particularly interested in transformative acts of narration. As Wortham (2000) summarizes, “many have proposed that autobiographical stories do more than describe a pre-existing self. Sometimes narrators can change who they are, in part, by telling stories about themselves” (p. 158). Wortham explains what I argue is a transformational process of narration: “while telling their stories autobiographical narrators often enact a characteristic type of self, and through such performances they may in part become that type of self” (p. 158). Wortham describes how “the self represented in an autobiographical narrative and the self enacted in the same narrative can
interrelate so as partly to construct the self” (p. 158). Story-tellers can “act out” the transformation that they describe in their life stories. This is especially relevant to the longer stories told by Andrew and Owen in chapter 7 and 8 respectively. Though these stories are longer in length and broader in focus than other narratives analyzed here, they are still analyzed as “small stories” as they are produced in interaction and fit the small stories definition above. Following the small stories tradition (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008; De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012; Georgakopoulou, 2005, 2007), I draw on tools from other narrative analytic approaches (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012; Goffman, 1959; Labov & Waletzky, 1997) where warranted by the data.

4.3.3 Power and discourse analysis

In line with the critical theoretical framework and methodology, this study makes use of critical approaches to discourse analysis. Following Van Dijk, I take critical discourse analysis to be not so much a different approach or specialization distinct from a narrative analysis or other approach, but rather a “‘mode’ or “perspective” of theorizing, analysis, and application throughout the whole field” (Van Dijk, 2001, p. 352). For van Dijk, this perspective is one that “studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context” (Van Dijk, 2001, p. 352). I would add to this list “transformed”: this study takes a more optimistic pedagogical, theoretical and analytic approach, studying not only the ways that the effects of inequality may be resisted, but also actively transformed by text and talk in the social and political context. Thus while Van Dijk’s (2001) critical discourse analysis is framed as “dissident research” in which analysts “take explicit position, and thus want to understand, expose, and ultimately resist social inequality”, the analysis taken here takes up where such dissident research left off, moving to transform
social inequality and to understand, expose, and ultimately sustain social transformation. Such a transformative approach to critical discourse analysis is not always warranted, but is appropriate for this study of transformative multiliteracies.

While the focus on social transformation rather than social critique may be different, the analysis taken here follows the eight tenets of critical discourse analysis as outlined by Fairclough and Wodak (2011):

1. CDA addresses social problems
2. Power relations are discursive
3. Discourse constitutes society and culture
4. Discourse does ideological work
5. Discourse is historical
6. The link between text and society is mediated
7. Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory
8. Discourse is a form of social action

The critical discourse analysis taken here addresses the social problem of linguistic inequality and exclusion (1); however, it also addresses social solutions to this problem. It understands that power relations are discursive (2), but especially seeks to understand and expose ways that empowerment relations—co-constructed rather than coercive power relations (Cummins, 2009)—are discursive. It understands that discourse constitutes society and culture (3) and thus further understands that shifts in discourse can constitute shifts in society and culture. It understands that discourse does ideological work (4) and thus examines how transformative discourse can accomplish transformative ideological work. It understands that discourse is historical (5) and thus examines the intertextual connections of the participants’ discursive work.
back to previous texts and forwards to imagined future transformations. It understands that the link between text and society is mediated (6) and thus examines the situations that mediate that link and either promote or hinder a transformed text from transforming society. It understands that discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory (7) and thus moves beyond description of the participants’ discourse to examine how this discourse is relevant at a societal level. And finally, this study understands that discourse is a form of social action (8) and thus examines the participants’ transformative discourse as being forms of transformative social action.

Furthermore, though the focus on transformation may differ from the majority of work using critical discourse analysis, the techniques honed through social critique are drawn upon here for the study of social transformation. For example, following Critical Discourse analysts such as Gee (2011), the analysis pays close attention to the use of pronouns and *I-statements* as discursive moves linked to both identity and power, the use of pronouns and processes is analyzed for power relations, and the frequency and duration of utterances is analyzed as an indicator of an interlocutor’s discursive power, as is the ability to control the topic of talk. Drawing on Fairclough (2001), the experiential (of knowledge/beliefs), relational (of social relations) and expressive (of social identities) values of words and grammatical features are described, interpreted and explained where relevant. However, while these techniques are drawn upon throughout the analysis, they do not constitute the analysis. Rather than organizing the analysis around values of words or grammatical features, the analysis is organized around the natural flow of the participants’ interactions and narratives. This serves to highlight the narrative and interactive elements of the discourse. Thus, power is analyzed interactively, examining who speaks under what conditions, and narratively, examining who is the author, animator, figure, and principal (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008; De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012; Goffman,
1974) of the narratives that are told. This allows for a closer examination of where the agentive power lies in the story-telling and in the stories told.

4.3.4 Transcription

As Bucholtz (2000) notes, transcription is never an objective, neutral process and instead involves both “interpretive decisions (What is transcribed?) and representational decisions (How is it transcribed?)” (Bucholtz, 2000, p. 1439). Interpretive decisions over what is transcribed recognize that transcription is “not a straightforward task” (Bucholtz, 2000, p. 1441): low quality recording, quiet or quick speech, loud noises or interruptions in the setting may hinder the transcribers’ interpretation of what was and was not said. All of these challenges were faced in this study. While the interview data were recorded in a more controlled setting in a small closed room chosen for its audio quality, the classroom discourse and other discussions took place in large rooms with 40-80 people in the room (such as the Five Principles consensus process in chapter 5 and the linguistic privilege discussion in chapter 7) or occurred outdoors (the Multilingual Community Building in chapter 8 is a notable example). Efforts were made to include as much comprehensible detail as possible. Where words were unintelligible, efforts were made to contact participants in the member-checking process and ask for clarifications. In some cases, the speaker was immediately able to decipher their own words. In most cases, however, where it was indecipherable to the analyst, it was equally indecipherable to the original speaker, so the words were left missing. Where an educated guess has been made, the words are placed in (parenthesis) to mark the reflexive awareness of this uncertainty. Where even a guess cannot be made, the words are omitted and these absences are noted with “(inaudible).” Beyond environmental and technical challenges to the quality of recording, the linguistic diversity of the
participants in this study provides additional interpretive problems. I understand these challenges to be limitations of my own receptive linguistic skills rather than limitations of the speakers’ productive communication. For example, I am less familiar with a Ugandan English accent than I am with a Canadian English accent or a Japanese English accent and thus had to pay especial interpretive attention to the discourse of Andrew from Uganda. Fortunately, through spending three weeks in communicative content with all of the participants, I benefitted from having my own receptive linguistic repertoire expanded to include the variety of accents represented here. Where I was uncertain, I first made every attempt to become more familiar with the accent in question, researching its various inflections and cross-referencing with other sections of speech by the same participant. I then asked for a second opinion from other listeners before finally resorting to member-checking with the individual participant. Member-checking due to my own linguistic limitations was approached with especial sensitivity in this case because the emotional effect of being misunderstood was explicitly part of the narrative of one of the participants and was likely implicitly part of the lived experience of many.

Representational choices are also made: “embedded within the details of transcription are indications of purpose, audience, and the position of the transcriber towards the text” (Bucholtz, 2000, p. 1440). For example, phonetic detail may preserve linguistic diversity but may also obscure a text to make it inaccessible to its intended readers. My intention is to preserve linguistic diversity while also making transcripts intelligible to a wide research and educational community as well as to the speakers themselves. Linguistic diversity is preserved at a morphemic level, retaining the heteroglossia of contractions, ellipses, and diverse colloquialisms. Where other languages are used, transcription is done to match the conventions of that language. In the case of Japanese, I take advantage of the use of Romaji—the Japanese convention of
spelling Japanese words using the Roman alphabet—in order to make these transcripts accessible to both a Japanese and English-speaking audience. The case of the Japanese word 勇気 in chapter 5 is indicative of how representational choices have been made reflexively to reflect the level of analysis. The kanji characters are used when the word is first introduced because the discussion around the word includes the meaning of the individual kanji characters and the fact that it has a visual form is multimodally significant as the community rallies around this “exotic” feature of the word. The Romaji transcription of the word “yuuki” is used when the word is uttered in discourse by a Japanese speaker or other speaker who recognizes the long “u” sound. This phonological level is necessary as it indexes phonological familiarity with the word. However, when a non-Japanese speaker utters the word without the long “u,” this non-standard pronunciation is indicated as “yuki.” Again, this is done only because this lack of familiarity with the language of the word’s origin in analytically relevant. In addition, oral forms are necessary for the level of analysis used, so discourse markers, repetitions, laughter and repairs are included in the transcription. Care was taken to include this level of transcription for all speakers—native English speakers and English language learners; Canadian English speakers and Ugandan English speakers; research participants and researcher. Analysis occurred at the level of the utterance, so the change in speaking subjects (rather than breath groups of other units) was used as the unit for line changes. These decisions were conscious decisions to reflect the level of analysis as well as the breadth of audience.

4.4 Data Collection Activities

Throughout the program, various transformative multiliteracies pedagogical practices were developed to invite the participants to transform their discursive practices, invest their
expanding identities, and create a communicatively inclusive community of practice. Using Janks’ (2009) interdependence model of critical literacy, we can see that the overall curriculum strives to honour multilingual and multimodal diversity, provide access to meaningful utterances, critically frame communicative privilege in a theory of power, and offer opportunities for re-designing and transforming communicative norms. While each pedagogical practice necessarily touches on multiple aspects of the interdependence model, linguaspheres and Communication Crew introductions highlight diversity, Language Buddies and Five Principles shift to access, linguistic privilege and Communication Crew feature power, and Muglish and Multilingual Community Building focus on design.

4.4.1 Diversity: Linguaspheres, Communication Crew introductions, and “yuuki”

On the first day of the program, participants were invited to draw their perceived linguistic competencies in the form of a diagram I call a “linguasphere”: concentric circles where the largest circle represents their most “fluent” or “confident” language and the relationally smaller circles representing any other linguistic resources they felt they had. The linguaspheres were collected as visual artefacts representing perceived linguistic competencies.

![Linguasphere examples](image)

**Figure 4.1 Lingasphere examples**
These competencies were then presented to the group through an embodiment activity: with the entire community standing in a circle, I read out each language that was written on the card. Those who felt they had some linguistic resources in that language were invited to run into the circle: to the centre if they felt they were “fluent”, just a few steps if they only knew a few words, or anywhere in between. As they did so, they yelled “hello!” in the language. This process was framed as a way to showcase the diversity of linguistic resources in the community as well as to highlight the fact that while English is the most shared common language, not everyone has equal access to its resources. I asked for general strategies for working in a multilingual environment and received the following responses:

- “Be patient”
- “Use hand gestures”
- “Use other languages. Even if you only speak a little Spanish, use it.”
- “Try your best”

I then offered an additional strategy: pair up diverse speakers into “Language Buddy” pairs and form a Communication Crew to help make communication at PSYL better for everyone. I asked that anyone interested in joining this “Communication Crew”—including anyone who wanted to improve their English—to draw a star on their linguasphere image.

In both 2010 and 2011, approximately two-thirds of the community volunteered. The next day, the Communication Crew met for the first time. They introduced themselves saying their name, the meaning of their name (in 2010 only), their languages (offering a gesture for each to show how “large” or “small” each language was “in their heads”), and answering the question “why do you want to be a part of the Communication Crew?”. These introductions (as well as the initial session in which the idea of the crew was announced) were video-recorded as
multimodal identity texts investing their linguistic identities in their statements of self. A critical
multimodal analysis of these identity texts is offered in chapter five.

However, “diversity” is only really diversity if it is represented in the practices of a
community. The sprinkling of multilingual practices, especially the use of the Japanese word
“yuuki” in 2010, are also analyzed in chapter 5.

4.4.2 Access: Language Buddies and Five Principles

According to Janks (2009), “diversity without access to powerful forms of language
ghettoizes students” (p. 26). Celebrating the linguistic diversity in the community is not enough.
Those students who do not feel that they have access to the dominant language and modality of
the program—spoken English—need to be provided with access to these dominant forms. In this
study, access is provided through the Language Buddy system. These pairs were asked to work
together during linguistically challenging sessions. Audio, video, and/or observational data were
collected during these sessions, such as the consensus-building process on day two in which the
entire community is asked to engage in a lengthy process to determine the Five Principles that
underlie the culture of their community. This process often takes six hours or more of engaged
dialogue, including highly detailed discussions on the distinctions between “respect” and
“compassion” or the connotation of “pizzazz”. In other words, it is a highly linguistically-
demanding activity that can potentially be alienating for participants not fluent (or not perceived
to be fluent) in the dominant mode of communication. The Language Buddies then meet
together with me for an hour every second day as a larger group—the Communication Crew.
Here they are invited to share and reflect on their communication-related challenges, successes,
and inspirations. Most Communication Crew sessions begin with a Pair-Share style activity
where Language Buddies check in with each other, asking questions like “What goals do you have for communicating at PSYL?”, “what challenges are you having?”, “What can we do to improve communication at PSYL?”. Their answers are then shared with the group. These sessions and other interactions between Language Buddies during linguistically challenging sessions and exit interviews were video-recorded and analyzed in chapter six.

4.4.3 Power: Linguistic privilege and Communication Crew

While the Language Buddy system provides space for diversity and access, according to Janks, diversity to access without a theory of power “leads to the celebration of diversity without any recognition that difference is structured in dominance and that not all discourses/genres/languages/literacies are equally powerful” and “a naturalization of powerful discourses without an understanding of how these powerful forms came to be powerful” (2009, p. 26). In order to provide a theory of dominance, one of the topics I highlight in the Communication Crew sessions is linguistic privilege. At PSYL, the topic of Power and Privilege is woven throughout the program. In particular, it is introduced through a simulation called the Earth Game wherein participants are separated into five groups separated physically around a field in taped-off areas that represent the boundaries of their countries. They are told to create a constitution and plan for their new countries and bring these to the International Office for approval. During the course of the simulation, plans are either approved or disapproved, national disasters befall some nations, new rules are created, participants are removed from their countries and taken to “jail” if rules are disobeyed, and the “media” give reports on what is going on. What is not known to the participants is that some countries are favoured while others are condemned from the start: the sizes of the countries are not equal; the resources available for
building are not equal; the rules are not applied equally; and while one country has all their plans approved, another will receive only a “no” with no explanation. When the simulation ends, they tour the different countries. Countries that did well proudly display their roads and schools while countries that did not fare well complain bitterly of the never-ending landslides and disapproved plans. Finally it is revealed that the set-up was unequal, and a reflection process of global power and privilege begins. This discourse is then shifted to personal power and privilege through the introduction of “The Invisible Knapsack of White Privilege”, a list of white privileges compiled and published by Peggy McIntosh in 1988 (reprinted 1990). These invisible privileges include the following:

- 7. When I am told about our national heritage or about "civilization," I am shown that people of my color made it what it is.
- 9. If I want to, I can be pretty sure of finding a publisher for this piece on white privilege.
- 21. I am never asked to speak for all the people of my racial group.
- 46. I can chose blemish covers or bandages in "flesh" color and have them more or less match my skin. (McIntosh, 1990)

Then a list of straight privileges, compiled by students at Earlham College (“Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack II,” n.d.) is shared, including the following:

- I can be pretty sure that my roommate, hallmates and classmates will be comfortable with my sexual orientation.
- When I talk about my heterosexuality (such as in a joke or talking about my relationships), I will not be accused of pushing my sexual orientation onto others.
- People don't ask why I made my choice of sexual orientation.
• I do not have to fear revealing my sexual orientation to friends or family. It's assumed.

Finally, participants reflect on their own personal privileges.

In 2010, “ally-building” was introduced as a way to acknowledge one’s own privilege and use it for positive social change. In 2011, the focus was on “rank theory”, acknowledging one’s rank and again using that acknowledgement to work for positive social change. The Communication Crew discussion of Linguistic Privilege is embedded within this overall discussion of power and privilege. In the session, participants discuss their responses to the questions “why are we speaking English at PSYL?”, “Who does this privilege?”, “What is good and what is bad about having English as an International Language?” and finally “What is in the Invisible Knapsack of English Privilege?”. The discourse analysis of this video-recorded session, the list of linguistic privileges, and interview excerpts discussing linguistic privilege make up chapter seven.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic(s)</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Cameras</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
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<td>audio</td>
<td>7, 8</td>
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<td>Difficult sessions</td>
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<td>audio</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>8/06/2010</td>
<td>Strategies Reflection</td>
<td>42:03</td>
<td>audio</td>
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<td>7/29/2011</td>
<td>What was difficult? How can we help?</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
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<td>8</td>
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Table 4.1 Communication Crew audio-video recordings
4.4.4 Design: Muglish and Multilingual Community Building

Design is the final piece of the critical literacy puzzle. According to Janks (2009, p. 26), diversity, access, and power without an opportunity for design and transformative practice has various consequences:

- “Diversity provides the means, the ideas, the alternative perspectives for reconstruction and transformation. Without design, the potential that diversity offers is not realized.”
- “[Access without design] maintains and reifies dominant forms without considering how they can be transformed.”
- “The deconstruction of dominance, without reconstruction or design, removes human agency.”

In order to transform communicative norms, the Communication Crew brainstorms communication-based interventions for the entire community. For example, when a Language Buddy pair was finding it difficult to facilitate communication of announcements because the announcers often speak too fast, the Communication Crew came up with a gesture to remind speakers to slow down. One of the Crew members then made an announcement at the next community meeting to demonstrate the gesture and explain how it would improve overall communication in the community. Similarly, a request was made by a Japanese-dominant participant for more gestures to be used during communication. From this suggestion, I worked with a few participants to introduce a gesture-based activity called “Muglish”—similar to charades but including the vocalization of the single word “mu” to draw on intonation and other paralinguistic techniques for communication. Finally, after a discussion of linguistic power and privilege, a suggestion was made to have a non-English community building session so that the English speakers could experience a sense of non-dominance. This event was organized by the
Crew and brought to the community. Audio, visual and/or observational data were collected during all planning sessions and during all linguistic interventions, such as the Multilingual Community Building. These recordings as well as excerpts from interviews discussing these interventions are analyzed in chapter 8.

### 4.4.5 Interviews

The final data collection activity was the exit interviews on the final two days of the program. As mentioned above, in 2010 these interviews were audio-recorded and done in Language Buddy pairs while in 2011 these interviews were video-recorded and done individually due to scheduling constraints. In line with the study’s overall theoretical framework, I adopt an interview as situated practice perspective (Talmy, 2010c). These interviews are understood to be sites of ongoing identity negotiations wherein the participants do not report on past experiences and inner-held thoughts and feelings, but rather offer constructed accounts of these experiences, thoughts and feelings. These interviews are theorized as processes through which participants perform, de-, re- and co-construct their “Language Buddy” identities. In addition to allowing space for participants to give accounts of their Language Buddy experience, these interactions are also integral parts of the Language Buddy experience. As a result, they can be analyzed using conversation analysis and narrative analysis to examine how they construct and express their “Language Buddy” identities as translingually competent individuals or otherwise. Because I take an interview as social practice approach to these interviews in the sense that meaning is understood to be co-constructed with both the interviewer and interviewee taking an active role in its construction (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995; Talmy, 2010), it is important to acknowledge my own positioning and identity. Interviewees construct their utterances for a particular interlocutor,
generally the interviewer. Not only am I performing the identities of “researcher” and “interviewee”, I am also the leader of the intercultural communication program (or the “Language Buddy” program) at the seminar so often play the role of “linguistic expert” or “intercultural communication expert” as well as “teacher” and “language support worker.” In addition, I am a “native-English speaker” who also speaks some Japanese, French and Spanish so on rare occasions play the role of “translator.”

In line with the critical and transformative methodological approach of this study, the interviews are theorized as spaces for the research and program participants to make sense of their own experiences. Narrative space is created in the interviews to allow participants to offer their accounts of observed phenomena. In addition, the interview protocol includes questions about the future in order to allow participants to consider future transformative practices. Further, examining the flow of power is also of especial interest in native- non-native speaker relationships, so a critical discourse analytic approach has been adopted to examine the role of power in these conversations. These constructed accounts are narratives of identity negotiations, positionings, and performances. In addition, these interviews are understood to be multimodal meaning-making practices in which gestures and other modalities in addition to words are drawn on to make meaning. Where possible, video was used and/or observational notes were made on physical positioning, gestures, and images produced in the course of the interview. After an initial thematic analysis seeking moments when identity becomes variously relevant, a discourse analytic approach is taken to the analysis of the data. This discourse analytic approach is also taken to the rest of the data and is outlined below. Where space allows, discursive data are presented here in excerpts long enough to allow for an examination of how the utterances are co-constructed. This is especially true in the many cases where an analysis of this co-construction
provides insight into the concept being discussed. However, in some instances additional shorter theme-based excerpts are included when the discussion is focused on drawing similarities across multiple cases. Their decontextualized presentation, however, should not be misunderstood as a decontextualized analysis.

<table>
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<th>Name</th>
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Table 4.2 Language Buddy interviews 2010
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<td>Japanese-English</td>
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<td>Laura</td>
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<td>16</td>
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<td>Fred</td>
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<td>(5, 7.3)</td>
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<td>10:23</td>
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<td>Sven</td>
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<td>English-(French)-(Ukrainian)-(Italian)-(Morse)-(Asui)</td>
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<td>Panni</td>
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<td>Sukhothai, Thailand</td>
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<td>20:38</td>
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<td>CC facilitator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annabelle “Jessica”</td>
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<td>Canada</td>
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Table 4.3 Communication Crew interviews 2011
### 4.4.6 Summary of data collection activities

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<tr>
<th>Data Collection Activity</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>Critical Literacy Focus</th>
<th>Chapter References</th>
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<td>Linguaspheres (Drawings)</td>
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<td>64 artifacts</td>
<td>Diversity</td>
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<td>Communication Crew</td>
<td>3 sessions</td>
<td>7 sessions</td>
<td>Access</td>
<td>(5-7)</td>
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<td>Sessions</td>
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<td>Linguistic Privilege</td>
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<td>25 statements</td>
<td>Power</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>Statements</td>
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<td>from 20 participants</td>
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<td>Facilitators intro-</td>
<td>Design</td>
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<td>(MLCB)</td>
<td>Muglish- 14:25</td>
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<td>MLCB- 46:10</td>
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<td>Other Community</td>
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<td>Performances</td>
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<td>Paired Language</td>
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<td>5, 6 (and all)</td>
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<td>Individual Language</td>
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<td>20 audio-video</td>
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<td>7, 8 (and all)</td>
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Table 4.4 Summary of data collection activities

### 4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the critical, open, multimodal and multilingual approaches to ethnography and the critical, Bakhtinian, narrative approaches to discourse analysis utilized in this study. Their coherence with each other and with the goals of the research study as well as theoretical and ethical concerns have been discussed. These transformative multiliteracies inspired methodologies and analytic methods are explored in more detail through their use in the next four data analysis chapters as they are used to examine the identities, power relations, and narrative discourse of linguistically diverse youth engaging in situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing, and transformative practice of communicative norms.
Chapter 5: Diversity

5.1 Drawing on Diverse Multiliteracies and Performing “Cosmopolitan Cool”

The culture of a community is its discursive norms. These norms continually shape and are shaped by the ongoing discourse of the community as its members interact in social situations. A study of a short-term, intensive educational community like PSYL allows the opportunity to gather information about how the norms of a community are negotiated in and through discourse. An analysis of this discourse can shed light onto how diversity, identity, and power play into the cultural negotiation process. Differences in ways of reading and writing the world provide productive resources for changing consciousness (Janks, 2009), adopting new social identities (Gee, 1990), and finding innovative solutions (Kress, 1995). However, because differences in a community are organized in hierarchies based among other attributes on relations of power (Janks, 2009), often it may be the speakers of the dominant language in the dominant modality who have their voices heard and shape the discursive norms. Diversity can be silenced as the strongest and loudest have their say. This chapter examines the possibilities for identities and practices in discourse in the context of transformative multiliteracies pedagogy that seeks to honour diversity. Using Bakhtinian (1981, 1986) concepts of intertextuality, heteroglossia, and authoritative utterances as well as tools drawn from a small stories approach to narrative (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008; Georgakopoulou, 2005, 2007), this chapter seeks to understand how diverse utterances can be valued highly in symbolic capital (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991) and how through identity investment (Norton, 2000, 2013) speakers co-create and transfer this symbolic capital to their speaking selves. In doing so, we can see how in a context of super-diversity (Blommaert & Rampton, 2011; Vertovec, 2007), multilingualism—
“the appropriation and incorporation for meaning-making of any and all linguistic resources which come to hand” (Blackledge & Creese, 2010, p. 17)—becomes *metrolingualism*—the creativity and fluidity of language in flux across cultural, historical, and political borders (Otsuji & Pennycook, 2010) and potentially *plurilingualism*—the normalization of translingual practices (Lin, 2013; Taylor & Snoddon, 2013). In order to draw on their multilingual resources, community members need to view their multilingual talents as a valued component of their identities (Cummins et al., 2005), regardless of first language. In doing so, the youth perform what could be called a “cosmopolitan cool” identity. This chapter focuses on an analysis of the discourse around the Five Principles consensus process as the community constructs and narrates their communal story and group identity.

### 5.2 Five Principles Consensus Building Process

Within the first few days of the program, the participants actively construct the story and the discourse of the community as they participate in a consensus-building process to identify the five core values of their community. Typically these may include such ideals as “respect,” “communication,” “change,” “inspiration,” or “spirit.” The principles chosen are imbued with high symbolic capital and become what Bakhtin (1986) calls “authoritative utterances” within the field: those “to which one refers, which are cited, imitated, and followed” (p. 88). The participants and facilitators refer to these core principles frequently to solve conflicts, build rapport, and perform group identity. The process of consensus-building is a new discursive practice for many, and is also one of the most linguistically demanding discursive events in the program. As Fairclough (1989; 2001) notes, discourse is central to the process of consensus. Achieving consensus on values is an act of power. For Bourdieu (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991),
it is an act of coercive power through which one group dominates another by imposing their values. This, however, does not match the definition of “consensus” that seeks to have every voice heard. Through collaborative relations of power (Cummins, 2009), achieving a consensus on core values is a discursive practice of empowerment. The Five Principles consensus-building process is done three times as different groups join the community: first with the adult coordinators during planning week, then with facilitators during facilitator training, and finally with the participants during the main program. The analysis here focuses on the latter two. Each facilitator or participant is asked to come up with a list of Five Principles they hope their community will live by. They then pair up to share their ideas with a partner and reach a consensus on Five Principles between the two. For the small group of facilitators (approximately 16 facilitators), each pair then shares these with the larger group and the larger group uses consensus to finalize five. For the larger group of program participants (up to 90 participants), once this two-person consensus is achieved, the pair joins another pair and again enters discussions to reach a consensus on Five Principles between the four discussants. This process continues in increasingly large groups until the groups reach sixteen people or the two-hour time slot is over. At this point, the principles are shared with the entire group and each group of sixteen chooses a representative to enter a “Spokes Council” to continue the process. Typically, discussion takes six to eight hours and involves lengthy meta-linguistic discussions on the precise definitions of various words, debating what distinguishes “respect” from “care” or “integrity” from “honesty.” As a result, it can appear to be one of the most alienating, tiring and frustrating sessions for non-native speakers of English. Ethnographic participant observation was used to observe this discursive community-building event and record the focal participants’ involvement as they invest in a new practice and position themselves and their diverse linguistic
resources in the discursive construction of the values of the community. In the case of the program participants, one of the questions in the interviews was “how was the Five Principles process for you?” An analysis of the presentation of the program facilitators’ Five Principles and the program participants’ interviews describing their Five Principles is used to analyze how diversity, identity, and power are used in this process of cultural negotiation. Data in this chapter are from 2010.

5.3 Pura Vida, Agape, Fluss, Kai (开) and Real: Program Facilitator Five Principles

The program facilitators—past program participants or students at United World Colleges around the world—are a group high in symbolic, cultural and in some cases economic capital (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991). Most have multiple linguistic resources, usually including a “home” language, the language of the country in which they are studying, an additional language they are learning at school, and English as the language of the International Baccalaureate (IB) program. While this does not mean that they all consider themselves to be multilingually competent or fluent in English, they do have access to a diversity of linguistic resources and have had experience living and learning in a linguistically diverse environment. Because linguistic and cultural capital intersect with economic capital in various ways, it is worth noting that this group is also complex in terms of economic capital: many attend UWC schools on full-scholarships (for example, at Pearson 100% of the students were on full-scholarship at the time of the research) and some were deliberately selected for their lack of economic capital. That being said, being a facilitator is a volunteer position, so arguably only those with sufficient means to not have to work during their summer holiday would be able to take the privileged position.
With the intention to encourage the program facilitators to draw on their full repertoire of multimodal and multilingual repertoire, they were asked to use images and gestures as much as possible to accompany the principles they suggested throughout the consensus process. Interestingly, the resulting Five Principles came from five different languages. The first principle chosen was “pura vida”, a word first suggested by Joni, who lists his preferred languages as German (he grew up in Germany), English (he studies at an English-medium IB school), and Spanish (he is now studying at the “bilingual” Spanish-English UWC in Costa Rica). Other suggested words that became associated with “pura vida” throughout the consensus process were energy, sparkle and passion. Also in the first session, Hilary, an English-speaking student originally from America but studying at a UWC in Bosnia, suggested an ancient Greek word she had learned in classical studies of the IB program: “agape,” which she defined as “brotherly love.” Hilary offered this term as an authoritative utterance from the academic field. Field notes recorded what seemed to be the “immediate buzz of excitement” from her peers when she suggested this word, tempered only when another facilitator used Wikipedia to discover that there is a slight religious connotation to the word in relation to Jesus’ brotherly love for his disciples (field notes, July 17, 2010). However, in the end the word was selected as Alex said, “it doesn’t matter what the dictionary definition is as long as we all agree on the meaning. It’s our principle” (field notes, July 17, 2010). Later in the afternoon, the word “flow” was suggested as a principle to capture the idea of inclusiveness, nurturing, togetherness and unity. Another facilitator suggested “river” instead. There was some debate over the two words, and Joni, a German-speaking facilitator studying in Costa Rica expressed his confusion saying “I think there’s only one word for that in German.” Alex, an English-German speaker from New Zealand agreed and said “oh yes, fluss!” Other facilitators expressed excitement at having found
a non-English word that combined their ideas. There was some debate over how to pronounce it and whether they actually liked the sound of it, but in the end it was chosen. At this point, someone mentioned it would be funny if none of the principles were in English. Alex expressed that she thought at least one should be in English and suggested “real” which was chosen. Then the conversation turned to the remaining words, which included open-mindedness and respect. Alex suggested “kia kaha”, a New Zealand term. There was excitement about the term, but not about the meaning, which didn’t seem to capture the essence of the remaining words. In a moment of silence, Hilary asked if anyone knew a word in another language. Juan from China responded, “actually, there is a word in Chinese. Kai.” After explaining the Buddhist conception of “kai,” there was much excitement, which only increased when Juan drew the Chinese character for the word, 开.

Figure 5.1 Facilitator Five Principles 2010
Throughout this discussion, an extremely high level of symbolic and multilingual competence is demonstrated as this unusually cosmopolitan group of youth encouraged each other to value and draw upon all linguistic and semiotic resources at hand in order to solve a common problem of discovering five core principles. There was a lot of energy around the idea of using multilingual words as they seemed to have high symbolic capital and displayed the cosmopolitan cultural capital of the group. By drawing on multilingual resources, all members of the community are participating in *metrolinguism* (Otsuji & Pennycook, 2010) or *plurilingualism* (Lin, 2013; Taylor & Snoddon, 2013) and developing a *metrolingual identity* both as a group and as individuals. Because this metrolinguism is limited to a few set words and phrases and is thus marked more by the depth of significance of the multilingualism than by the breadth of multilingualism, perhaps a better description of this identity is *cosmopolitan cool*. Luke, Luke and Graham (2007) offer a definition of *cosmopolitan* that aligns well with the concept of *super-diversity*:

Cosmopolitanism is often used to describe global civil society, a global citizenry and community, the social subject of globalization with multiple ethnonationalist affiliations, mobile on the flows of global labor opportunities, “outward” looking, and at ease in a lifeworld of difference—multilingual, multiethnic, multiracial, multiclassed, multicultural (Calhoun, 2003). The combined concept of *kosmos* (world/known universe) and *polis* (city/community) is an historical ideal much like democracy—both are ideal aspirations of individuals living as “citizens” or members of both “local” community (village, town, city, canton, nation, state, federation of states, etc.) and the larger world consisting of multiple and different locales and locals (Archibughi, 2003). (p. 6)
In contrast to Luke, Luke and Graham’s depiction of cosmopolitanism as an ideal, Kubota (in press) warns against adopting an elitist cosmopolitanism that reflects neo-liberal notions of multiculturalism. I use the word “cosmopolitan” bearing both the ideal and the potentially elitist references in mind. Questions about power and elitism are further explored in chapters 7 and 8. For now, I simply note that whereas the English language learners could often be side-lined in linguistically complex discussions, in this case they were foregrounded and respected for the diverse cosmopolitan perspective they were able to offer to the group. This was especially possible in this group because they had the English linguistic resources to fully participate in the English-based discussion.

In the presentation of the Five Principles, power and identity inflect the semiotic positioning of these multilingual resources. The facilitators worked in pairs or groups of three to present the principles to the adult coordinators. Drums would beat, then roll, then hit and a blanket would fall revealing the next pair of facilitators who in many cases would use their bodies to express the word as they said it. Then they stepped forward and one would begin to speak. In most cases, it seems that the speakers had not prepared in advance who would speak first, and the speakers silently or otherwise negotiate this role before they begin. An analysis allows us to examine how these speaker roles are negotiated, shaping discourse, power and identity. In general, there seems to be a strong deference to the strongest speaker of the language from which the word was taken as we see with the following opening exchanges:

Excerpt 5.1: “Um ‘kai’ um is a Chinese word”


2  Juan:  [Arms open. “Kai.”]

3  Anne:  [Arms open. Holding sticky note with “kai” written on it. Um- º Gestures to Juan.º]
Juan:  *Gestures back to Anne.*

Anne: Um “kai” um is a Chinese word and we chose it because we think it is very important that we be open-minded. And that we’re um open to everything that we’re open to embrace everything um in terms of trust and in terms of um- empathy and in terms of a lot- of a lot of different ways but we didn’t- we were unable to find a word in English to describe this but then Juan came up with the word “kai”.

Juan:  *Takes paper from Anne.* And apart from open-mindedness, it actually represents a broad level of mind of the Buddha to be open to be in the world to be receiving everything to be knowing everything and it’s really high state.

Kim:  Mm. Cool.

Applause.

In the presentation of the principle “kai”, Anne seems to remain silent as long as possible (l. 2-4), uttering only “um” and perhaps attempting through gesture to pass her turn to Juan until her partner insists through a stronger gesture that she speak first. Her speech is then uncharacteristically scattered with more “ums” as she seems to search for the words to explain a word that is not yet fully in her linguistic grasp. Juan, on the other hand, speaks confidently and frames the word with deep cultural references to Buddha. His confidence in building the narrative of the facilitator community by communicating the meaning of this word from his linguistic repertoire is not hampered by subtle variations in his English speech (such as not using an article in “it’s really high state” (l. 11)): here his *plurilingual* identity is relevant as he speaks not only as an English-speaker presenting in English, but also as a Chinese-speaker presenting a Chinese word. This moment also reflects back to the moment he first suggested the term and the
enthusiastic response he received as he drew the Chinese character. He is able to draw on his multilingual identity in order to shape his situated discursive identity as a speaker: acting as a bridge to bring a Chinese word into what would otherwise potentially be an English-monolingual community allows Juan to perform the *cosmopolitan cool* identity. This in turn shapes the discourse of the community as “kai” becomes an *authoritative utterance* (Bakhtin, 1981), raising the *cosmopolitan cool* quotient of the whole community and used occasionally throughout the program.

**Excerpt 5.2: “You explain”**


2. Hormuz: Pura vida.
5. Hormuz: (1.0)
6. Joni: Um- (2.)
7. Hormuz: You explain
9. Joni: “Pura vida” is the Costa Rican culture life mentality. Uh it’s what you hear everywhere. You ask people how they are they say “pura vida” no matter how bad they feel. And it’s just like this positive attitude which kind of reconnects to the first word which is “fluss”. Um it’s like this- like the flow of the thing, the positive attitude, the just like love to the life. I think Ticos- Costa Ricans- are the happiest people on the planet. Of all nations. And this “pura vida” is just like
10. *expansive hand gesture* just like you see it everywhere- even in the kitchen
actually (points to the kitchen) there’s a “pura vida” café from Costa Rica. So it’s like this really really positive attitude to life.

Kim: Mm-hm. A:we:so::me!

Others: *Applause.*

Joni: To add just one thing. We were talking about- lots about the adventure and that we wanted to include the fun and it’s all just like- included in this “pura vida”-pure life.

For “pura vida”, we can see Hormuz’s pause (l. 19) and direct request “you explain” (l. 21) as deference made to the speaker with the most situated cultural and linguistic knowledge. If competence were measured by “standard” English fluency alone, Hormuz would have the higher competency and capital of this speaking pair; however, Joni gains the right to speak, perhaps at least in part through his acknowledged competency and familiarity with Costa Rican culture and the Spanish language. He builds the situated symbolic capital of the word as an authoritative utterance (Bakthin, 1986) by indicating its prevalence in Costa Rica and even in the site’s kitchen (l. 23). By creating capital for the word, he also creates capital for himself as speaker of the word and for the entire community as users of the word. He invests his multilingual/plurilingual/meterolingual identity into the word on behalf of the community: Joni is able to display his full plurilingual competency in this utterance as he weaves linguistic resources from English, Spanish (“pura vida”, “Ticos”), and his native German (“fluss”) nearly seamlessly. This is an example of what Bakhtin (1986) calls heteroglossia, the multiplicity of coexisting but socially differentiated forms of language. The social differentiation means that there is social significance when speakers produce dialectally or generically heterogeneous
utterances. The use of Spanish and German here has social significance as it demonstrates the cosmopolitan capital of the speaker on behalf of the group. My uptake response, “Mm-hm. A:weso::me!” (l. 31) and the adult audience’s enthusiastic applause not only reflect our authority (the power of our roles as coordinators to approve of their utterances) and convention (applause following a speech event), but also further co-construct the capital around this utterance. Like an identity text reception, this applause reflects the speakers’ multilingual creative identities—their cosmopolitan coolness—back in a positive light, further empowering the members of the community of practice. Indeed, pura vida was the most often used principle in daily discourse of the facilitator community with its status as an authoritative utterance reinforced through each intertextual reference (Bakhtin, 1986), and is still used four years later as they remain globally connected on a Facebook group.

Through the process of the selection and presentation of the five multilingual principles, diversity is celebrated as a resource to help solve the community problem of reaching a consensus on concepts to found the story of their community. Instead of limiting their options to the English language, this group was able to pool suggestions from six languages and multiple modalities (note the images, diagrams, and Chinese script all featured in Figure 4.1). It is noted that the discussion remained largely in English and the three most fluent English speakers spoke slightly more than their less-English-fluent speaking partners, reaffirming that issues of power and access are always interconnected with diversity and design. However, despite the conversation being in English, dominant speakers of other languages were able to find their voice in the conversation by suggesting principles from their non-English linguistic resources. The positive evaluation of these diverse resources in their usefulness and prestige earned their speakers the right to speak and the power to impose reception. In addition, due to the high level
of English proficiency among the group, the use of images and gestures seemed to provide
enough access for all of the facilitators to draw on their semiotic resources and contribute to the
discussion.

5.4 Diversity Narratives: 勇気(Yuuki): Program Participant Multilingual Principle

When the program participants arrived the following week, issues of access and power
were far more prevalent as there was a greater discrepancy of English proficiency levels, less
multilingual and intercultural capital in terms of international education experience, and far more
North American native English speakers. Some indication of the economic diversity of the
community can be understood in that one quarter of the program participants in 2010 were
attending on a needs-based full-scholarship while the remaining three-quarters paid a substantial
fee to attend. As explained in section 4.4.2, after a session on communicating across difference,
the “Communication Crew” was formed of participants who were interested in taking on the task
of ensuring inclusive communication in the program. All participants drew their perceived
language competencies as concentric circles: the largest outer circle represents their “strongest
language.” These languages I report below as “fluent” or “dominant.” In 2010 the
Communication Crew included twelve non-fluent English speakers and twenty fluent English
speakers. Non-fluent English speakers or English language learners were paired with fluent
English speakers as “Language Buddies” for the program. Participants were paired up based on
availability and according to whether they had consent and assent to participate in the study
(participants with consent were paired together and participants without consent were paired
together). At the end of the program, program/research participants were interviewed in
Language Buddy pairs (or teams, as one was a group of three). These pairs of participants were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Country of residence</th>
<th>Languages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Julie</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Versailles, France</td>
<td>French-English-(Spanish)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucy</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Montreal, Canada</td>
<td>English-French-(Swahili)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miei</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Tokyo, Japan</td>
<td>Japanese-(English)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaylee</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Vancouver, Canada</td>
<td>English-(French)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natsumi</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Tokyo, Japan</td>
<td>Japanese-(English)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracy</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Toronto, Canada</td>
<td>English-(French)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yusuke</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Tokyo, Japan</td>
<td>Japanese-(English)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louis</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Vancouver, Canada</td>
<td>English-French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mika</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Tokyo, Japan</td>
<td>Japanese-(English)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brandy</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Revelstoke, Canada</td>
<td>English-(French)-(Spanish)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomo</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Tokyo, Japan</td>
<td>Japanese-(English)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graham</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Powell River, Canada</td>
<td>English-French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miki</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Tokyo, Japan</td>
<td>Japanese-(English)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arielle</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Vancouver, Canada</td>
<td>English-French-Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justine</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Montreal, Canada</td>
<td>French-English-Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julia</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>German-English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brian</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Boston, Canada</td>
<td>English-French-(Spanish)-(German)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.1 Language Buddies 2010

The first time they worked together was as partners for the consensus process of the participant Five Principles. Graham, a fluent English speaker and French and Spanish language learner from Powell River, was paired with Tomo, a fluent Japanese speaker and English language learner from Japan. Kaylee, a fluent English speaker and French language learner from Vancouver was paired with Miei, a fluent Japanese speaker and English language learner from Japan who drew tear drops beside the small circle representing her English ability. These pairs took significantly longer than other pairs to achieve partner consensus: the rest of the participants had moved on to groups of four and many to groups of eight while these pairs continued at their own pace. They then joined together and remained a group of four while others made groups of sixteen and even thirty-two. At the end of the two-hour session, the group presented their Five
Principles. They included the Japanese word 勇気 -“yuuki,” which can be translated as “courage.” The pronunciation of this word was generally anglicized to “yuki.” Graham presented this principle to the community with much fanfare, saving it for last and saying, “and finally, one very special principle: yuki.” It received the most positive response in terms of a wide round of applause from the community. Graham suggested that Tomo and Miei be on the council that made the final decision: they did so and were mostly quiet throughout the process that was dominated by English-fluent speakers, including Lucy, another member of the Communication Crew. However, the Japanese word was eventually chosen as one of the Five Principles of the participant community. The narrative accounts of how “yuuki” came to be one of the community’s founding principles demonstrates issues of access, power, and identity in the discursive construction of a community. In order to balance a breadth of accounts with a depth of analysis, each section contains a broad sampling of shorter excerpts from various voices analyzed briefly as well as one or two longer interview excerpts analyzed more in depth using Bamberg and Georgakopolou’s (2008) three levels of positioning.

5.4.1 Consensus-building in diversity

An analysis of the narrative discourse around “yuuki” in the interviews provides insight into how diverse members of the community orient themselves towards this particular linguistic resource and its place in the semiotic landscape of the community. Although this chapter ultimately highlights the valuation of linguistic diversity in the group identity of the community of young leaders, it is important to note that diversity is not without issues of access, power, and design and this story is not without linguistic struggle, miscomprehensions, divergent tellings,
and imbalances of power. Linguistic diversity is the cause of both struggle outlined here and in section 5.4.2 and triumph outlined in section 5.4.3.

As expected, the Five Principles session was described by many of the ELL Language Buddies as being one of the most difficult sessions, partly because it was so early in the program, and partly because the challenge of discussing principles or values in any language can be daunting:

Excerpt 5.5.3 “Difficult but it was very good”

Miei (Japanese-English)

1 Kim: Five Principles. How was that for you? How was the Five Principles experience?
2 Miei: Mm very difficult.
3 Kim: Yes.
4 Miei: If I discuss the topic in Japan,
5 Kim: Yes.
6 Miei: I can’t speak. Eh?! In Canada?! In English?!
7 Kim: Right- even worse.
8 Miei: Yes.

Julia (German-English)

10 Julia: It was one of the difficult session.
11 Kim: Yep.
12 Julia: Jet lag, tired, new and then this big difficult session.
13 Kim: Yeah.
14 Julia: At first I was sitting there and saying “what they want from me?”
Kim: Yeah.
Julia: I didn’t understand nothing but when Brian sit next to me he- he see that and he talk more and I hear more and um I say something to him and then he say it to the others.
Kim: Mm hm.
Julia: So: um I was a little bit shy but he- when I said something to him he said it to the others.
Kim: Okay.

Mika (Japanese-English)
Mika: This class is very different from Japan.
Kim: Nice.
Mika: So at first I can’t understand what everyone doing.
Kim: Yes.
Mika: But she wrote a note and teach me. So- But I can’t join discussion.
Kim: Right.
Mika: But I can understand.

Tomo (Japanese-English)
Tomo: A:h. The five principle ah (inaudible).
Graham: You were with um- Kaylee.
Tomo: Yeah, I remember. It was very difficult. A:h then I couldn’t- I couldn’t understand what Graham and Kaylee said.
In each of these excerpts, “difficult” or “very different” was used as a descriptor for the Five Principles session. Miei states that even if she discussed Five Principles “in Japan” (l. 4)- and by implication in Japanese- she “can’t speak” (l. 6), identifying not only the language but also the situated practice of choosing core values as a challenge. She uses highly expressive language that belies the need for complex traditional grammar to express the challenge she faced: “Eh?! In Canada?! In English?!” (l. 6). Julia from Germany elaborates on her description of the session as “one of the difficult sessions” (l. 9) through the listing of various factors: “Jet lag, tired, new and then this big difficult session” (l. 11). However, she prefaxes her emphatic account that she understood “nothing” (l. 15) with the qualifier “at first” (l. 13). Here she rhetorically shifts her
description into a narrative—a small story—about the relationship between her and her Language Buddy and fellow interviewee, Brian: “But when Brian sit next to me he- he see that and he talk more and I hear more and um I say something to him and then he say it to the others” (ll. 15-16). The other two language learners who described the session as “difficult” also made similar rhetorical shifts marked by “but.” Like Julia, Mika also prefaces her description with “at first” (l. 22) and flips her description multiple times with multiple “but” (l. 24, l. 26): “at first I couldn’t understand what everyone doing… but she wrote a note and teach me. So- But I couldn’t join discussion… but I could understand” (ll. 22-26). Tomo uses a similar narrative pattern to flip “difficult” (l. 29, l. 34) to “good” (l. 34, l. 37): “Uh so mm I couldn’t understand enough to answer so: it was very difficult but it was very good experience…Because I and Miei can- I and Miei could answer “yuuki” … and uh mm I can feel Graham and Kaylee’s kindness” (ll. 34-40).

At the narrative level (positioning level 1), Miei, Julia, Mika, and Tomo construct their narrated selves as silenced outsiders facing the challenges of jet lag, a difficult task, and linguistic exclusion. The other characters in their narratives are their Language Buddies whose words, notes, teachings, and kindness shift the narrative to a positive conclusion of relative comprehension, success, and inclusion. These language learners carefully construct their narratives to counter-balance their accounts of a difficult experience with accounts of the helpfulness of their Language Buddies. At the narrating level (positioning level 2), these accounts are co-constructed. Even though my contributions are minimal and their English-fluent Language Buddies’ verbal contributions are nearly completely absent, our mere presence and role as addressee is of significance. Graham corroborates his role as a successful and helpful communicator by offering a piece of contextual information when Tomo pauses (l. 32), a helpful
technique to bridge comprehension. During their English language learning partners’ narratives, Kaylee and Graham’s silence and attentive body language can be understood as creating narrative space and encouraging their partner’s “right to speak” (Bourdieu, 1977). In the presence of both their Language Buddies and the researcher, these narrators construct themselves as grateful to their Language Buddies and as helpful research participants as they both highlight their Language Buddies’ helpful actions and share with me the details of their linguistic struggle. They build situated capital for themselves as being capable and thoughtful research participants in an English research interview, offering complex accounts indexed through the multiple uses of the conjunctions “and” and “but” (extending what could have been a simple answer and offering multiple complicating factors) and indexing deep consideration through the use of pauses and echoing the researcher’s words (l. 37). Beyond the narrative and narrating situations (positioning level 3), Miei, Julia, Mika, and Tomo build social and linguistic identities and capital as successful English speakers and engaged citizens willing and able to help in the construction of institutional knowledge as participants in educational research. At the same time, they build social and linguistic capital for their Language Buddies as they construct Graham, Kaylee, Brian, and Brandy as effective and compassionate cross-linguistic communicators, an identity that has relevance and capital at all positioning levels. In Tomo’s case, he constructs his account to be such an expression of gratitude that his Language Buddy responds with “thank you” (l. 43).

The majority of the English-fluent Language Buddy “helpers,” on the other hand, claimed that not only was working with their Language Buddy not a burden, it was in fact a mutually beneficial process as they explored the meanings of the words in the consensus process. Tracy—an English-fluent program participant from Toronto—for example says, “This helps me out, people were saying words that they thought. When you get the real definition, it makes it easier
for you to understand and for you to- like when I was explaining it felt easier for me” (interview). Similarly, Lucy from Montreal says, “I kind of found it actually a bit of fun to find different ways to explain things” (interview). Part of Kramsch’s (2010) *symbolic competence* of multilingual speakers is the ability to step outside the limitations of one’s own language and so to not have your thoughts or expression limited by the limits of your language. For many fluent English speakers, the process of having to deeply explain words they had taken for granted seemed to help them to expand this symbolic competence for their entire group. An expanded analysis of this co-construction of identity and power between Language Buddies can be found in chapter six. I was often surprised to hear that English language learners also stated that they enjoyed the process and saw the mutual benefit of slowing down to explain, such as in this excerpt with German-fluent Julia and her Language Buddy, Lucy who had previously stated that she liked being a Language Buddy because “I kind of found it actually a bit of fun to try to find different ways to explain things”:

**Excerpt 5.4: “Even the English language person don’t feel the same”**

1 Kim: Alright so how about um doing the Five Principles when we were choosing the Five
2 Principles many people noticed that was a very difficult time. So how did it feel- what
3 was it like for you.
4 Julia: Yeah I really liked the Five Principles because it was u:h- because each word like she
5 said that we- when she had to explain uh me uh what it mean, she had to- to say uh with
6 other words. And even if we were all speaking the same language we had to define
7 because even the English language person don’t feel the same. So in the group we- we-
8 we were all when we were explaining it, it helped us to know what we are talking about.
9 When we are saying “cooperation” if it’s because we are meaning the same thing as the
people or if- and everyone in the group has different (inaudible). I really like this. Five
Principles. To talk about it.

Kim: So you felt that you two were helping everybody. Not just each other?

Julia: Yes. Heh heh.

Kim: Yeah.

Lucy: Yes because we went from a group of two-

Kim: Yeah.

Lucy: -to a group of four and then eight.

Julia: And it was good.

Anticipating a discussion on the frustration of the language-centred experience, I introduce the
topic of the Five Principles as something that “many people noticed was a difficult time” (ll. 1-
2). Julia, however, immediately counters this supposition with “yeah I really liked the Five
Principles” (l. 3). In her small story, she elaborates that the very thing that I thought might make
it “difficult”—the English speakers having to stop to explain the meanings of difficult words and
the lengthy word-centric discussions—was in fact the very reason she enjoyed the experience:
“because each word like she said that we- when she had to explain uh me uh what it mean, she
had to- to say uh with other words” (ll. 3-4). The phenomenon of forcing a fluent English
speaker to rephrase the meaning of the topic of discussion is described in positive terms. She
confidently states that, “even if we were speaking the same language we had to define because
even the English language person don’t feel the same. So in the group we- we- we were all when
we were explaining it, it helped us to know what we are talking about” (ll. 5-7). In their
responses in lines 11 and 13, Both Julia and Lucy agree with my summation that, “you felt that
you two were helping everyone, not just each other” (l. 10). At the narrated level (positioning level 1), Julia and Laura co-construct an account of a successful and enjoyable communicative event in which their roles as Language Buddies delving into the denotative meaning of words was valuable to their entire group. At the narrating level (positioning level 2), this universal value is emphasized through Julia’s use of several collective words in lines 6-7 including “group”, “we” emphasized with “all,” and a collective “us” that includes not only her and Lucy, but also their entire consensus-building team. Lucy co-constructs this account by emphasizing the widespread influence as they went from a pair all the way to a group of eight. Again, these collaborative communications at both the narrated and narrating level build valuable situated, linguistic and social capital transportable to their social and linguistic identities as helpful citizens and capable translingual communicators beyond the present situation (positioning level 3).

Communicating across diversity can also be a source of solutions for community problems. Graham and Tomo’s narrative explains how the challenge of working with speakers with diverse access to linguistic resources lead to the introduction of the word “yuuki” into the community discourse:

Excerpt 5.5 "We don't have a word for 'yuki'"

1 Kim: Okay. So how about for you Graham, how was the experience?
2 Graham: Um I actually really enjoyed that experience because it was the first time we got to do that.
3 Kim: Yeah.
4 Graham: And so me and Kaylee were both really really excited to have that opportunity.
5 Kim: Yeah.
Graham: And then we got the chance to like sit down and just talk about it for like an hour and a bit. [A coordinator] was like “hurry up you guys. Hurry up hurry up.” We’re just “no, no we’re talking.” Heh.

Kim: Yeah.

Graham: Um but it was really really cool because it was the first time I’d run up against the deficiencies of the English language- we don’t have a word for “yuki.”

Kim: Mm.

Graham: So getting the translation exactly right on “yuki” was so interesting. I really enjoyed that part.

Kim: Cool. Do you remember how “yuki” came about? What’s your memory of-

Graham: I have the notes somewhere.

Kim: Oh really?

Graham: Yeah. Somewhere. (Looking through notebook)

Kim: I might need a photocopy of it. Heh heh heh heh.

Graham: Heh heh. Um I think we were going with like- yeah here we go. (Turns notebook to face interviewer)

Kim: Yeah.

Graham: We had- it was like a combination of um courage and um I think communication as well

Kim: Okay, yeah.

Graham: And like consensus even.

Kim: Oh wow okay.
Graham: We were trying to like conglomerate- because we wanted to put in communication really really a lot and they wanted to put in courage a lot.

Kim: Right.

Graham: And so we were trying to like- (force) it “well communication is so important” and they were like “well courage is so important” and then Miei is like “yuki.”

Kim: A::h.

Tomo: Yeah heh heh.

Graham: Because um we wanted to get something that was the courage to communicate-

Kim: Nice.

Graham: -your own feelings.

Kim: And then who wrote this. Is that Tomo or is that Miei?

Tomo: Ah yeah.

Kim: What does it say?

Tomo: Uh it’s mean when we have meeting.

Kim: Yeah.

Tomo: Uh it’s when we have a meeting.

Kim: Yeah.

Tomo: It’s a meeting of gathering everyone’s opinion.

Kim: Kay.

Tomo: And- okay and make- make new things.

Kim: Yes.

Tomo: Make new things.

Kim: Yes. I remember.
In this co-constructed narrative, Graham, Tomo and I build the story of how “yuuki” came to be proposed as a possible principle for the community. In this relatively long small story, Labov’s narrative elements are helpful to organize the analysis. Graham opens his narrative (positioning level 2) with a statement that functions as a Labovian abstract (Labov & Waletzky, 1967), or short summary of what his narrative is about: “Um I actually really enjoyed that experience because it was the first time we got to do that” (l. 2). His characterization of the experience as enjoyable because of its novelty continues in what functions as a Labovian orientation, orienting the listener to the narrative’s situation (Labov & Waletzky, 1967): “And so me and Kaylee were both really really excited to have that opportunity” (l. 4). Here Kaylee, the other English-dominant Language Buddy in the group, is introduced as a character sharing in his collective excitement over this “opportunity” (l. 4) that they “got to do” (l. 2) for the first time. The complicating action, or what happens in the narrative, is both simple and profound: “And then we got the chance to like sit down and just talk about it for like an hour and a bit. [A coordinator] was like “hurry up you guys. Hurry up hurry up.” We’re just “no, no we’re talking.” Heh.” (ll. 6-8). The complicating action of Graham’s narrative is simply sitting and talking for over an hour. The value of this talk, however, is emphasized as being described as a “chance” that they “got” that is defended even when a coordinator enters the narrative. The act of “talking” is offered as a legitimate justification for disobeying the coordinator’s request to “hurry up.” Talking is a valuable activity in this narrative and leads to a resolution and evaluation of the narrative, showing its result and significance (Labov & Waletzky, 1967): “Um but it was really really cool because it was the first time I’d run up against that- the deficiencies of the English language- we don’t have a word for “yuki”… So getting the translation exactly right on “yuki”
was so interesting. I really enjoyed that part” (ll. 10-14). Graham constructs the significance of
his narrative by emphasizing how cool, interesting, and enjoyable it was to discover for “the first
time” the deficiencies and limitations of his dominant language. “Yuki” is brought into the
narrative for the first time, identified as a word “we don’t have” (l. 13). The “we” here is
presumably English speakers (by the present tense, perhaps specifically Graham and myself).
This functions as an effective evaluation for the narrative because in the narrating situation (an
interview about communication in linguistic diversity), a narrative about the deficiencies of the
English language has particularly high value. Graham effectively weaves capital for himself at
the narrative level (positioning level 1) as an enthusiastic Language Buddy devoted to the novel
experience of engaging in discourse with partners with diverse linguistic resources and highly
evaluating those diverse linguistic resources, focused on “getting the translation exactly right” (l. 14). Simultaneously, Graham creates capital at the narrating level and beyond (positioning
levels 2 and 3) as the provider of a valuable narrative in a research situation about linguistic
diversity and linguistic privilege—value I confirm as I ask further questions about “yuki” and
indicate I would value a photocopy of his notes (ll. 15-19).

In lines 20-49, the narrative shifts to the specifics of how “yuki” entered the discourse.
Using the notes that they wrote during the process as reference, Graham lists the English words
they were trying to combine or “conglomerate”: courage, communication, and consensus.
Graham sets up the orientation of this narrative as a conflict between two groups (Graham and
Tomo vs. Kaylee and Miei) and two ideas (communication vs. courage, respectively): “We were
trying to like conglomerate- because we wanted to put in communication really really a lot and
they wanted to put in courage a lot” (ll. 26-27). The drama of the conflict is emphasized through
words like “really” and “a lot”: both sides are characterized as being deeply invested in the
values they want to “put in” to the final five. The complicating action and conflict continue to escalate until a resolution is reached: “And so we were trying to like- (force) it “well communication is so important” and they were like “well courage is so important” and then Miei is like “yuki!”” (ll. 29-30). Here Graham skillfully constructs the narrative as a heated and equal debate between a “we” and a “they” who both believe their respective value is “so important.” Into this debate, Miei’s voice is characterized as saying simply “yuki” (l. 30), the simplicity of which interrupts the debate and is offered as a perfect solution. At this point of resolution, Tomo enters the narrative for the first time, offering “yeah” and a laugh, as though approving Graham’s telling of the shared event. Graham then continues to offer evaluation of the significance of the narrative and of “yuki” as a perfect solution by explaining “because um we wanted to get something that was the courage to communicate… your own feelings” (ll. 33-35). While it is debatable whether this complexity is actually inherent in the denotative meaning of “yuuki” in Japanese (while it is translated in Graham’s notebook below by Tomo as “strong mind,” Yusuke, another Japanese-fluent participant, later states that “yuuki” simply means “courage”), in the context of this discourse, this is the complex connotation it comes to hold.

Tomo then translates the other Japanese words that were also being included in the conversation, including one that means “a meeting to gather everyone’s opinion… and make new things” (ll. 45-49), a word that likely entered the discourse as they debated the multilingual meaning and value of “consensus” itself. Tomo and Miei’s narrated offering of Japanese words throughout the consensus-building process as they learn English is an example of what Blackledge and Creese (2010) call a flexible bilingualism that values the resourcefulness of multilingual students as they draw from multiple languages to negotiate their meanings and identities. The multiple Japanese and English words in the notebook (see Fig. 5.1 below) and the
narrative are indicative of this group’s recognition that all linguistic resources were valuable in this task and that English had “deficiencies” for which Japanese could compensate. Working to negotiate meaning across linguistic diversity in the roles of “Language Buddies” has lead to a narrative that seems to feature the kind of students that Janks (2009) hopes critical literacy will produce: students who “understand why linguistic diversity is a resource for creativity and cognition, who value all the languages they speak, and who recognize the paucity of English only” (p. 12). As Miei and Tomo propose values in Japanese, they perform identities that value the languages they speak; as Graham identifies the “deficiencies” of the English language, he performs an identity that recognizes the paucity of English only; and as all four invest these identities into enthusiastically exploring the options available to them in both English and Japanese to break the deadlock between “courage” and “communication,” they seem to understand why linguistic diversity is a resource for creativity and cognition. Diversity provides the design resources with which these cosmopolitan citizens can build identities and value for themselves and their community.

In these accounts of the consensus-building process in general, the struggle to communicate across linguistic diversity is acknowledged. The struggle to collaborate across language barriers takes more time, limits participation, and makes the task difficult. However, this struggle is also characterized as a positive aspect of identity and social practice. The participants’ willingness to engage in the struggle may index a kind of translingual compassion and ultimately communicative success. For some, this engagement is also characterized as being helpful to the larger community as it builds clearer and deeper meaning for all. Ultimately, the skills and characteristics the Language Buddies are building through sustained engagement with
the struggle of diverse communication may be transported to affect their ongoing identities beyond the communicative situation into their role in society at large.

5.4.2 Spokes Council: Diversity and domination

The struggle to honour diversity continues in the diverse and divergent accounts of how the Spokes Council that ultimately selected “yuuki” as a principle came to be. Drawing on common consensus-building practices, once the groups reached the limit of manageability (16 people) and each group had presented the principles they had agreed upon, two members of each 16 person group were chosen to make a “Spokes Council”. Of the 92 person community, 14 were chosen from their discussion groups to form this Spokes Council and continue the process to reach a final consensus on the Five Principles that would symbolically guide the whole community. Three Language Buddies were part of the Spokes Council: English-fluent Lucy and Japanese-fluent Miei and Tomo. Miei and Tomo were silent for most of the Spokes Council
consensus process, except for the discussions around the proposed value “yuuki.” They worked together to write the Japanese characters on the board and explain the meaning of each character alone and the meaning of the characters combined. Their symbolic capital as Japanese speakers was demonstrated in this part of the discussion; however, it did not necessarily transfer into the rest of the discussion. A discourse analysis of the diverging accounts of how it came to be that after the two-hour highly language-intensive session, two of the Japanese participants “volunteered” to be on the Spokes Council to continue the discussion for several more hours reveals nuances of power relations that were reflected in the Spokes Council discourse as well.

Excerpt 5.6 “Let’s go!” So go.”

1 Kaylee: And so it was just myself, Miei, Graham and Tomo. And we used up the whole time like that. And then Miei and Tomo went together as Language Buddies to each other to do the um- they represent- were the spokes persons- people for our group because you really wanted to do that so- heh heh.

2 Kim: Yeah. Did you want to be on the Spokes Council?

3 Miei: Mm? Shifts in seat.

4 Kim: So then you went to the smaller group later:-

5 Miei: Yeah.

6 Kim: Did you want to do that?

7 Miei: Heh [heh heh

8 Kim: [Heh heh heh

9 Kaylee: [Heh heh.

10 Kim: Why did you do it? Heh heh.

11 Miei: Eh? Mm. (3.0). Why?
Kim: Yeah.
Miei: Uh- the day is very fast. N?
Kim: Yeah.
Miei: First week-
Kim: Yes.
Miei: -so I didn't know what happened.
Kim: Ah.
Kaylee: Heh heh.
Kim: I understand. So accidentally “oh here I am”. Ah I see. Well I was very glad that you were there- I was very happy that you were there.
Miei: Thank you.

In Kaylee’s account (positioning level 1), Miei and Tomo were “Language Buddies to each other” (l. 3) who shared agency and went to the Spokes Council willingly. Whereas just previously Kaylee had referred to her co-interviewee in the third-person (“it was just myself, Miei…” l. 2), when she explains how Miei ended up on the Spokes Council, Kaylee refers to Miei directly in the second-person: “you really wanted to do that” (l. 3) (positioning level 2). Here Kaylee speaks for Miei, reporting her desires, but also speaks to Miei in a way that creates discursive space for Miei’s own account. This raises issues of power through questions of truth and tellership rights. Typically, the one who “owns” the experience “owns” the narrative and the right to tell it (Sacks, 1970/2010). While the narrative analysis here does not seek narratives as descriptions of objective truth, “truth” in the form of credibility is important as narrators gain power through credibility, or “the possibility for a story or a narrator to be accepted as truthful”
De Fina and Georgakopoulou (2012) note that credibility “is often based on the primacy of personal experience over other forms of experience and knowledge, hence the widely held view of narrative as a privileged genre for communicating personal experience” (138). They further note the danger of narrating someone else’s experience: “speaking on behalf of another… raises issues of entitlement (i.e. who has the right to tell whose story?) and can be contested on the grounds of lack of ownership” (2012, pp. 146–147). It may be that as Kaylee begins to talk about Miei’s participation and desire for participation in the Spokes Council, Kaylee recognizes that she lacks the ownership of this part of the story and thus addresses Miei so that she can tell her story. At this point, I read Miei’s hesitation (both verbal and gestural) as a possible sign of a disagreement and ask, “did you want to be on the Spokes Council?” (l. 4), explicitly opening space in the discourse for a divergent account. Miei hesitates to offer one, first seeming to not understand or avoiding the directness of the question with a raised intonation, “Mm?” (l. 5). As I begin to re-phrase, she interrupts “yeah,” indicating that comprehension is not the problem in this moment. In response to my repeated and re-emphasized question in line 8, Miei laughs and we all join her in recognition that her laughter indicates the probable answer “no.” I then pursue a follow-up question: “Why did you do it?” (l. 12). Miei uses her turn to repeat, stall, and pause. Finally, in lines 15-21 Miei offers her contrasting account with frequent positive interviewer feedback: “the day is very fast… the first week… I didn’t know what happened… ‘Let’s go!’ So go.” Rather than volunteering because she really wanted to participate, Miei frames the account at the narrated level as a case of miscomprehension- someone (her Language Buddy? The other Japanese participant?) told her to go, so she went. Kaylee and I join her again in shared laughter at the narrating level to indicate that this is a perfectly acceptable account and I offer that I was glad
she was there (rephrased as “happy” to ensure comprehension) so that both Kaylee and Miei could feel comfortable that, whatever the story of how it came to be, it resulted in something positive.

The account of Tomo, the other Japanese-dominant member of the Spokes Council, shows remarkable parallels:

**Excerpt 5.7 “To tell the truth… I couldn’t understand”**

1 Graham: And then later on for the council-
2 Kim: Yes.
3 Graham: Tomo and Miei got to go and I understand you didn’t really- weren’t able to catch up with the conversation very much.
4 Kim: Mm hm.
5 Graham: But you got to talk about “yuki” as well. Which is “which is really cool”.
6 Kim: Mm hm. Yeah and was that something you discussed like “hey maybe you should go to the council?”
7 Graham: Yeah well it was um Kaylee and I decided that it was a lot better because I mean most of our words weren’t that important but “yuki” is kind of special.
8 Kim: Important so you sent the “yuki” representatives. How was the Spokes Council for you?
9 Tomo: Spokes Council?
10 Kim: yeah that smaller group it was you, Miei, [Lucy].
11 Tomo: [Lucy]?

*(Turns 16-25 of naming people omitted)*

26 Graham: And other people as well. Remember after we did the five principle- after we talked about them you and Miei and um Kaylee and me
Tomo: Uh.

Graham: We decided that you and Miei would go and re-talk about them some more.

Tomo: A:h! I remember!

Kim: How was that?

Tomo: Uh okay um it- to tell the truth,

Kim: Yeah.

Tomo: I couldn’t understand.

Kim: I know. Heh heh heh heh.

Tomo: Heh heh.

Graham: Heh heh.

Kim: I couldn’t understand. Honestly.

Graham: I can imagine.

Tomo: Yeah. And because everyone’s discussion is too speedy.

Kim: Yeah.

Tomo: And use the word which I know- I don’t know.

Kim: Me neither.

Tomo: And sometimes I can understand.

Kim: Yeah.

Tomo: But u::m but some- a little sometimes.

Kim: Yes.

Tomo: Sometimes I – I can understand but I can’t- I can’t understand.

Kim: Yeah.

Tomo: I couldn’t understand.
Kim: Ah I see.
Tomo: So I can’t answer- I can’t express my mind.
Kim: Yeah.
Tomo: I couldn’t, I couldn’t- couldn’t.

Like Kaylee, Graham describes the Japanese participants’ participation in the Spokes Council (positioning level 1) in positive terms as a way of honouring and recognizing these multilingual voices and resources: they “got to go” (l. 3) and “you got to talk about ‘yuki’ which was really cool” (l. 6). Here the shift from the third person to the second person is reminiscent of Kaylee’s shift above—as the narrative shifts into an experience “owned” by Tomo, Graham also shifts the addressee, perhaps to bring Tomo into the conversation. At the same time as highlighting the privilege of having the opportunity to attend the Spokes Council and the “coolness” of getting to talk about “yuki,” Graham’s narrative acknowledges other perspectives on this “volunteering,” including that it was a difficult communication situation for Tomo to enter and that the decision to attend was not Tomo’s own: “well it was um Kaylee and I decided that it was a lot better because I mean most of our words weren’t that important but “yuki” is kind of special” (ll. 8-9). Graham seems to perhaps show hesitation to construct a narrative in which it was the English-fluent members who had the agency to decide that Miei and Tomo should go to the Spokes Council and immediately reframes it as decision that was made to honour the value of the “important” and “kind of special” value, “yuki” (l. 10). Here Tomo’s linguistic identity as a Japanese speaker (positioning level 3) links him to the linguistic resource, “yuki,” which is imbued with high cultural capital through its description as being “important” and “kind of special.” Through his hesitation and re-framing, Graham works discursively at the narrating
level to maintain his overall positioning as a multilingually aware community member and leader constructing capital for his Japanese-fluent Language Buddy, an identity also mirrored at the narrating level as he engages in the practice of bringing Tomo into the conversation.

It takes several turns (from line 13-26) for the three of us to negotiate and clarify for Tomo which session we are talking about. However, after this lengthy clarification, Tomo very succinctly answers the question of how the experience was for him through a small story: “to tell the truth… I didn’t understand” (ll. 34-36). He then elaborates that he couldn’t understand because “everyone’s discussion is too speedy” (l. 42) and “use the word which I do not know” (l. 44). In Tomo’s narrative (positioning level 1), the other members of the Spokes Council are described as an “everyone” whose speed and choice of words leave Tomo linguistically excluded from the conversation, unable to understand or express. This is in tension with Tomo’s own previous statement that the overall Five Principles experience was “good… because I and Miei… could answer ‘yuuki’… and I can feel Graham and Kaylee’s kindness” (excerpt 5.3, ll. 37-40). Here the tension is between being honoured for their diverse linguistic resources, but lacking access to dominant linguistic resources that are key to participating in dominant discourse about honouring diverse linguistic resources. This is an example of what Janks (2009) refers to as the “access paradox” and is further explored in chapter 6.

Lucy, an English-dominant Language Buddy who was also on the council offers an account to explain the linguistic challenge they faced:
“But the great thing was the transformation”

Lucy: Oh Spokes Council. Um and the first time ‘cause there were two of the Japanese um and also I think but I believe almost everyone else in our group was first language English speakers.

Kim: Right.

Lucy: So our first round it was like this ongoing debate. Nah nah nah. And we all couldn’t like you know- We were all trying to push our point and not really actually- Okay we were trying not to make it a debate, but that’s sort of how it has a tendency to go because when two people have opposite ideas then it’s a clash. Um and it was going really really fast in terms of conversation and you could barely get a word in edgewise, much less if it was your second language- you would just be overwhelmed. But then the great thing was the transformation the second time we met because um we were all kind of really tired and we were exhausted and everyone was just like “Let’s- let’s either get it done now or we do this later or we don’t really want to- and we let go of some of what was- and I guess we had some time to sit on it and reflect and now we were just a little more willing to compromise I guess.

Kim: Right.

Lucy: Not compromise just- not stuck in a rut.

Kim: Mm-hm.

Lucy: I guess. Um- And that second time around we got it done so quickly and everyone spoke. And that made it so much better for us because we took it a little slower, we were all a little tired.
In the first half of Lucy’s narrative (ll. 5-10), she makes linguistic identity relevant as an explanation for how the discourse was shaped: other than the two Japanese participants, “everyone else in our group was first language English speakers” (ll. 2-3). She links this lack of overall linguistic diversity causally with the conjunction “so” followed by an account of how the task led them to fall into “debate” mode and speak much faster than usual: “Okay we were trying not to make it a debate, but that’s sort of how it has a tendency to go because when two people have opposite ideas then it’s a clash” (ll. 6-7). She describes the resultant communicative environment as “going really really fast in terms of conversation and you could barely get a word in edgewise, much less if it was your second language- you would just be overwhelmed” (ll. 8-10). At the level of the narrative (positioning level 1), Lucy constructs herself as part of a larger group of English-dominant speakers caught up in a fast-paced ongoing debate characterized through the meaningless syllables “nah nah nah” (l. 5). This may be a difficult account for Lucy to give as she, herself, is a Language Buddy so may feel a sense of responsibility for having created a non-inclusive communication environment. However, at the level of the narrating (positioning level 2), Lucy partially absolves herself of neglecting her Language Buddy duties by clarifying that she and the other English speakers were “not trying to make it a debate,” but that such fast-paced oppositional discourse is simply a natural “tendency,” implying she should not be held accountable. While at the narrative level she was participating in patterns of communication that excluded the non-English-dominant members, at the narrating level she makes the effort to justify this behavior and thus protect her Language Buddy identity. She then demonstrates her Language Buddy status by noting the difficulty in the environment. This is the climax of her narrative. She makes it a positive narrative by then framing the second meeting of the Spokes Council as a “transformation” (l. 10) where the participants were “a little more
willing to compromise” (ll. 14-15) so they “got it done so quickly and everyone spoke” (ll. 19-20) and it was “much better for us because we took it a little slower” (l. 20). Although she credits this transformation primarily to their being “exhausted” (l. 12) and “tired” (l. 21), the result is described as a positive, inclusive environment. In Lucy’s narrative (at both positioning levels 1 and 2), the kind of fast-paced debating that left the less English-fluent members lost is evaluated negatively (or neutrally as a “tendency”) while slower discussion that would be more inclusive for all members is evaluated more positively. The transformation she narrates between the linguistically unaware self caught up in meaningless debate in the first session and a more subdued yet discursively aware self participating in a meaningful (if tired) discussion in which everyone is included is also mirrored in the transformation between the narrated self first making this transition and the narrating self who works to be consistently viewed as discursively inclusive and aware.

The diverse narratives around the Spokes Council selection and consensus processes highlight the access paradox (Janks, 2009) as the participants struggle to have linguistically-diverse voices heard in the community. Honouring diversity also requires a means of providing access to the dominant discourse, be that through language education or adjusting the discursive norms. A second paradox is also shown here through Blackledge and Creese’s definition of multilingualism: “the appropriation and incorporation for meaning-making of any and all linguistic resources which come to hand” (Blackledge & Creese, 2010, p. 17). The word “appropriation” has a negative connotation when it is a “dominant” group “appropriating” cultural artifacts from a “dominated” group. At the same time, in this case the multilingual terms are being “appropriated” by a diverse group, including speakers of the language from which they are appropriated. The struggle to have “yuuki” included in the final Five Principles can be
understood simultaneously as appropriation, honouring diversity, and expressing a diverse identity for the community.

5.4.3 Yuuki: Diversity and symbolic capital

So far this chapter has examined some of the complexity of the contrast between a community that identifies as valuing diversity while struggling with the situated practice of engaging with that diversity. Ultimately, the choice of the Japanese word, “yuuki” as one of the five core principles of the group was framed as a symbolic-capital building experience. As interviewees described the Five Principles, “yuuki” held a marked discursive position. As mentioned previously, Graham referred to “yuuki” as being “kind of special,” in contrast to their other four values which were “not really that important.” This marked position of “yuuki” is highlighted as Graham and I co-construct a narrative about the first moment the whole community heard the word “yuuki” (after the small group consensus and just before the Spokes Council was chosen):

Excerpt 5.9 "I was like super stoked for the word because I knew it was cool"

1  Kim: Now I remember you, Graham, announcing-
2  Graham: Heh heh heh heh heh.
3  Kim: -your group’s Five Principles to the group.
4  Graham: They loved it!
5  Kim: Yeah! Were you- what were you thinking at the time. Because I know you
6    purposefully? maybe? saved “yuki” for last?
7  Graham: Y(h)eah. Well-
8  Kim: What was-
Graham: Um I was like super stoked for the word because I knew it was cool.

Kim: Yeah.

Graham: And so I wanted to make it little bit dramatic obviously.

Kim: Yeah.

Graham: But then when they—people were clapping and giving it shooting stars

Kim: Yeah.

Graham: I was like “whoa” they really like this one so I was—actually was surprised and delighted that they were so stoked about it.

I begin the *shared story* (Georgakopoulou, 2007) of a shared or known event with, “Now I remember you, Graham, announcing… your group’s Five Principles to the group” (ll. 1-3). Graham responds to this shared story with laughter, which Georgakopolou (2007) has argued indexes recognition and connection of the laughter to the teller and the teller’s story. Graham’s evaluation of the event, which comes to serve as the abstract of his story, is “they loved it!” (l. 4). Because we had earlier been talking about “yuki,” my assumption is that he is referring to his announcement of “yuki” specifically: “I know you purposefully? Maybe? Saved yuki for last” (ll. 5-6). In my narration of the event, I suggest that Graham built capital for “yuki” by saving its announcement for last, reminiscent of the saying “save the best for last.” After first responding with more laughter (l. 7), Graham takes up the narrative, offering an orientation: “Um I was like super stoked for the word because I knew it was cool… And so I wanted to make it little bit dramatic obviously” (ll. 9-11). At the narrative level (positioning level 1), Graham as a character uses his agency to (in my words) “purposefully” shape the discursive situation in a way that both recognizes and constructs the capital of the word “yuki”: because the word was “cool” (l. 9), he
was “super stoked” for it (l. 9) and it was “obviously” worthy of a “dramatic” (l. 11) announcement to the community. The complicating action of the narrative is the community’s response to “yuki” and his announcement of “yuki”: “But then when they- people were clapping and giving it shooting stars… I was like “whoa” they really like this one” (ll. 13-15). In Graham’s narrative, the community (“they” or “people”) participates in the recognition and construction of the capital of “yuki” by “clapping” and “giving it shooting starts” (l. 13). “Shooting stars” is a gestured sign of gratitude introduced on the first day and used frequently in the community. Finally, Graham offers his resolution and evaluation of the “yuki” narrative: “so I was- I actually was surprised and delighted that they were so stoked about it” (l. 15). Just as he had been “super stoked for the word” (l. 9) at the beginning of the narrative, the entire community is “so stoked about it” (l. 15) at the end. Graham has successfully communicated to the community the power of the word built up through discourse within his group of four participants. He indexes being both “surprised and delighted” (l. 15) at this reception. Like the reception of an identity text (Cummins, 2009, 2011), the community’s response reflects the speaker’s identity and his group’s identity back to him/them in a positive light.

The extent to which “yuki” has become an identity text for both Tomo and Graham is shown in the following excerpt as they discuss how “yuki” was ultimately chosen by the Spokes Council as one of the final Five Principles of the community:

Excerpt 5.10 "I was happy"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Kim:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yeah. And how did you feel when “yuuki” was chosen?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ah yuuki choose a::h. (3.0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>How did you feel to see “oh a Japanese word was chosen”?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>U:h. I’m v- was very happy because I- I can feel they- I can feel we- Japanese was</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>allowed by everyone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Kim: Mm.

Tomo: -so °I was happy°.

Kim: Nice. How did you feel when the council came back and announced and “yuuki” was still there?

Graham: I was so happy.

Kim: Heh heh heh.

Tomo: Heh heh heh.

Graham: I don’t know, it was just really really appropriate for me because of the Japanese influence in the camp.

Kim: Nice.

Graham: That that happened and also just because like the four of us included that really strong effort.

Kim: Yeah.

Graham: And then it being rewarded in that awesome way I was just really really pleased by that.

Kim: Cool.

Here Tomo, Graham, and I co-construct the value of “yuuki” as a heteroglossic authoritative utterance (Bakhtin, 1986). When Tomo doesn’t offer an immediate verbal answer to how he felt when “yuuki” was chosen (l. 2), I paraphrase my question, this time replacing “yuuki” with “a Japanese word”: “How did you feel to see ‘oh, Japanese word has been chosen?’” (l. 3). This makes the word’s Japanese origin a relevant category for discussion and comment. Tomo’s response takes the form of a short narrative: “U:h. I’m v- was very happy because I- I can feel
they- I can feel we- Japanese was allowed by everyone… -so °I was happy°” (ll. 4-6). In Tomo’s narrative (positioning level 1), Tomo as a character was happy when a Japanese word was chosen as a founding principle because it made him feel that his language, Japanese, was “allowed by everyone” (l. 6). By entering the official authoritative discourse of the community, Japanese linguistic resources are demonstrated to be allowed, accepted, and valued by the community. Tomo draws on his linguistic identity as a Japanese speaker (positioning level 3): when Japanese resources are recognized as legitimate (Bourdieu, 1991) resources, this can transfer into Japanese speakers being recognized as legitimate members of the community of practice. At the narrating level (positioning level 2), perhaps an echo of the connection between allowable resources and allowable speakers is the false start in which Tomo changes “I can feel we-” to “I can feel… Japanese was allowed by everyone” (l. 6).

One Japanese participant, Yusuke, questioned the choice of a token Japanese word: “If everyone knows that- what that word means. Maybe no problem. But, it is ‘courage,’ so we can write ‘courage.’ Why only ‘yuuki’?” (Yusuke, interview). With characteristic humour, he questions the arbitrary symbolic valuing of this particular linguistic resource and the tokenism of having a word in Japanese for the sake of having a word in Japanese (Yusuke’s narrative on the Five Principles is further explored in chapter 6). For most of the Japanese-fluent participants, however, the group’s decision to have a Japanese word as a principle was represented in interviews as a source of happiness and pride as it indexed a positive valuing of their symbolic capital with Miei and Natsumi joining Tomo in using the word “happy” (excerpt 5.10, line 4) to describe their feelings towards its inclusion (italics are my emphasis):

Miei: I want everyone to know Japanese words, … so I was pleased by one Japanese word. Very happy.
Natsumi: Mm. I was so happy to- mm- to chose- choose Japanese word and I- I have to do yuuki it’s easy to speak in Japanese because I can speak Japanese.

Miei in particular narrates a desire for the community to know Japanese words. Translingual practices are especially common in communities that share common multilingual resources (Canagarajah, 2013), so having these resources known on a community scale is important to their value as usable community resources.

Graham also uses the word “happy” in his narrative about hearing the news “yuuki” was chosen as a one of the final Five Principles (excerpt 5.10, l. 10). He offers two explanations for this happiness: first that the choice of a Japanese word was “just really really appropriate for me because of the Japanese influence in the camp” (ll. 13-14); and second “just because like the four of us included that really strong effort. … And then it being rewarded in that awesome way I was just really really pleased by that” (ll. 16-19). The first reason ties his pleasure with the choice of the word to the way in which the word reflects the diversity of the community: the heteroglossic (Bakhtin, 1981) word gains value through its symbolic capital linked to the diversity of the community. His investment (Norton, 2000, 2013) into diverse linguistic practices is linked to entry into a community marked by diversity. The second reason ties the word’s capital to the effort invested in its creation by “the four of us”: again, a significant identity investment (Norton, 2000, 2013) as the two English-dominant speakers and the two Japanese-dominant speakers who made a “really strong effort” to construct meaning across diversity. That effort is “rewarded” when the word is chosen, so the word’s symbolic capital is transferred to the group of four who worked tirelessly to bring it into the community’s discourse. “Yuuki” has capital both for the Japanese speakers from whose language it comes and for the non-Japanese speakers into whose discourse it enters.
Lucy constructs her narrative of what “yuki” meant for the Spokes Council:

Excerpt 5.11: “I think it’s one of our coolest principles”

1 Lucy: For the Spokes Council we liked more of what was represented in that word-
2 Kim: Mm hm.
3 Lucy: -than so much of its- I-I don’t know how to explain this. We were trying to show that we
4 want to draw in from other cultures and be diverse and we liked the idea of it being two
5 different characters but having a third meaning.
6 Kim: Right.
7 Lucy: And- but the funniest thing is of the Five Principles I think it’s the one I like the most. It’s
8 the one I consciously think of. I’ll be like “okay let me have the yuki and be first person
9 to raise my hand.” That- I- I- do that while for a lot of the other ones- I don’t know- It
10 just doesn’t so much occur to me I guess.
11 Kim: Mm hm.
12 Lucy: So maybe it’s- I don’t know, I think it’s one of our coolest principles if that’s possible to
13 have.
14 Kim: And Julia you’re nodding. Is it the same for you?
15 Julie: Yeah I like this because uh we don’t know the- we- We just know the image of what it
16 represent- we never- when I ask what it means everybody says I don’t know we must
17 create it.
18 Kim: So it works better than the words.
19 Julie: Yes.
20 Kim: Interesting.
21 Julie: Because we have an image.
For Lucy, there is indexed significance in the choice of a non-English linguistic resource: beyond the denotation of the word itself, Lucy marks it as symbolic of the community’s desire to “draw on other cultures and be diverse” (l. 4). This takes advantage of what Kramsch (2010) calls the “symbolic [2]” aspect of language whereby there are subjective meanings of signs beyond the denotive (p. 7). Different modalities and semiotic systems offer different subject positions to their speakers, and these identities are highly situated and context-dependent. At the time, it seems that Lucy was not particularly drawn to the (denotative) meaning of the word, but was drawn to the symbolic capital of the group it represented. As Julie comments, it is precisely the lack of denotative meaning that allowed the symbolic capital of “yuuki” to grow: “Yeah I like this because uh we don’t know the- we- We just know the image of what it represent- we never-when I ask what it means everybody says I don’t know we must create it” (ll. 15-17). The false start shifts the focus from what they “don’t know” to what they do “know”: “we just know the image of what it represent” and “we must create [the meaning]- although the community is not clear on the denotive meaning of the principle, they are clear on their co-constructed image of what the word represents. Furthermore, Lucy’s comment that “yuuki” is “the one [she] like[s] the most,” (l. 7) “the one [she] consciously think[s] of” (ll. 7-8) and “the coolest principle” (l. 12) is echoed in the data as it is the most frequently cited principle by Japanese and non-Japanese participants alike, such as when Natsumi says “I speak my opinion and have yuki” or when Tomo says his greatest challenge was “at first, having “yuki”” or when English-dominant Arielle says she joined Language Buddies to “help out with the yuki they need to come here with all these English speakers” or comments that Miki has “such amazing opinions and so much yuki” (all quotes from exit interviews). The word “yuuki”/“yuki” fits very comfortably into the
heteroglossic discourse of the program through its recognition as one of the community’s Five Principles. It was the first of several Japanese words to enter into the daily discourse of PSYL: イケメン (“ikemen” or ‘hot guy’) and a Japanese gesture to indicate the object of one’s affection were also frequently heard and seen around the seminar by the end of week one.

Especially for the non-Japanese speakers, the “coolness” of the principle was is over-riding characteristic (italics are my emphasis):

Tracy: I thought it was cool, I liked it. …Yeah I’ve said it to people! You’ve heard me, I say it! I’ve started using Japanese expressions!

Louis: There’s no word in English. So it was nice to have that word in it’s original meaning. It was really cool to like agree on Five Principles across language barriers

Graham: It was really really cool because it was the first time I’d run up against that the deficiencies of the English language- we don’t have a word for “yuki”… Um I was like super stoked for the word because I thought it was cool.

I was super stoked for the word because I knew it was cool.

Lucy: So maybe it’s- I don’t know, I think it’s one of our coolest principles if that’s possible to have.

Among adolescents, things that are high in cultural capital are “cool,” so for a word to be described as “cool” indicates that it is associated with high cultural capital. Overall, the value of “yuuki” as a linguistic resource for the community was originally constructed through the lengthy discursive process of consensus-building and then continued to be compounded by its
frequent *intertextual* use and authoritatively “cool” evaluation by English-fluent speakers. Here, English-fluent speakers seem to still hold the power and privilege in the valuation of linguistic resources by deciding what is “cool” and making the final decision on which words are included in the Five Principles. However, what marks this discursive community is that these same English-fluent speakers who hold the power also seem to hold an awareness of this power as they carefully construct narratives to explicitly bring value to their non-English-fluent partners and community members. While in the end this is still an English-dominant community, it is also a multilingual symbolic-capital-dominant community that values and creates space for plurilingual practices.

### 5.5 Discussion and Conclusions

This chapter focused on diversity as an essential strand of critical pedagogy and transformative multiliteracies. Drawing on diverse linguistic resources and performing a cosmopolitan cool identity became part of the discursive practices of the community. The findings here support pedagogical theories that argue for the inclusion of students’ first languages in the classroom (Cenoz & Gorter, 2011; Cummins, 2009; García & Flores, 2012; García & Sylvan, 2011; Hélot, 2012; Hornberger, 2010; Martin-Jones, Blackledge, & Creese, 2012; New London Group, 2000). By drawing on their diverse linguistic resources, English language learners were able to contribute value to participate in community discourse and contribute value to the community. Their *plurilingual* (Lin, 2013; Taylor & Snoddon, 2013) identities as not only English language learners, but also Spanish, Mandarin, or Japanese speakers became highly-valued social identities as their resources helped the community overcome a difficult challenge. However, the findings here contribute two further perspectives
to the literature on diversity. First, it is not only the identities of the speakers of languages other than English that are invested in the use of multiple languages: the speakers of the “dominant” language are also invested in multilingual discourse. Their identities as cosmopolitan citizens (Luke, 2004b) are invested into the diversification of discourse. Nurturing these identities is key to the inclusion of diverse voices in our communities. To the extent that speakers of the dominant language identify with a global, cosmopolitan, inclusive identity, they will accept, encourage, appreciate, and strive for more diversity in the community’s discourse. Relatedly, the second key finding is the role of power and access in any discussion about diversity. The struggle to have diverse voices heard is real, even in a community that repeatedly prides itself on being linguistically diverse. The social practice of inclusion lags behind the identity of inclusion and requires pedagogical support and intervention as is further described in chapter 6.

Because discursive norms of a community are in a dialogic relationship with actual utterances in the community, there is always space for diverse voices to shape the culture. However, it is unequal power relations that affect which utterances have the cultural and symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1991) to be heard and to shift the norms. In this international education community of practice, multilingual competence is imbued with enough cultural capital and “cool” to shape the founding principles of the group. The group identity is marked by linguistic inclusion and cosmopolitan cool. Even while the situated practice may fall short of this imagined group identity as language learners continue to struggle to understand and be understood, the official discourse—the authoritative utterances—of the community are marked by linguistic diversity. In addition, pura vida and yuuki transcended the idealized abstraction of a list of principles to become frequently used words in utterances throughout the community, shaping the discourse at both the authoritative level of the system and the situated level of the
instantiation. Each continued use intertextually strengthened the authority of the utterance and marked its speaker with the symbolic capital of being a cosmopolitan leader.

Differences within a community provide it with a rich diversity of design resources that can be used to solve community problems (Janks, 2009), shape community identity (Norton, 2000; 2004), and shift the discourse in productive ways. In order to tap into this plethora of potentially available designs, pedagogical design needs to create the discursive space for diverse identities to be invested (Norton, 2000, 2013) and reflected back in a positive light (Cummins & Early, 2011). When the community identity of inclusion and cosmopolitanism is activated in discourse, diverse voices and diverse designs are more likely to be welcomed into the field. The explicit instructions to do things differently and value every voice helps to shape the discursive practices that in turn shape the discursive norms. Ultimately, these participants are cosmopolitan and cool because they use “yuuki” and “pura vida,” and they use “yuuki” and “pura vida” because they are cosmopolitan and cool. Practice, identity, and resources are mutually constitutive and dialogic (Norton & Toohey, 2011). In turn, these terms are used because they are authoritative, and they are authoritative because they are used.

“Yuuki,” “kai,” and “pura vida” function as identity texts (Cummins & Early, 2011). It can be argued that the Japanese, Mandarin, and Spanish speakers invest their linguistic identities into the production of these texts in an environment that actively promotes cross-lingual transfer and language awareness and that encourages students to view their multilingual talents as a valued component of their identities (Cummins et al., 2005). However, it is not only the Japanese speakers and Spanish speakers who invest their identities into these texts’ production; it is the entire community investing their identities into these texts as the foundational authoritative utterances of the community. The identity that is invested in the case of Miei and Tomo may be
their linguistic identity as “Japanese speakers”; however, Graham and Kaylee are equally invested in these texts. This is because linguistic identities are not limited to the theoretically bounded group of linguistic resources we label as “languages”; rather, linguistic identities can include “multilingual speaker” (able to speak many of these “languages”), “translingual speaker” (able to communicate across these “languages”), “cosmopolitan speaker” (able to transcend the divisions between these languages in a global way), and “linguistically inclusive speaker” (able to include speakers of other “languages” in an inclusive way). It is these meta-linguistic-identities that are invested into the words “yuki” and “pura vida.” Once these identities are invested, the repeated intertextual use and re-use of these utterances in situated practice creates cultural and symbolic capital for its speakers—it co-creates their cosmopolitan “cool.”

In conclusion, the findings in this chapter support educational policies and practices that encourage students to draw on all of their diverse meaning-making resources. In an era marked by super diversity, embracing plurilingual practices in our classrooms prepares not only our English language learners, but all of our students for success in a complex and unpredictable social future. However, an appreciation of diversity along does not create citizens devoted to local and global equity and inclusion. Other aspects of critical pedagogy (access, power, and design) are explored in the following chapters.
Chapter 6: Access

6.1 Diversity and Access

While building cultural capital for diverse semiotic forms and their speakers is an important part of creating an inclusive community, diversity without access to diverse and dominant forms of language and literacy is not enough. To the extent that dominant forms remain unchallenged, encouraging diversity without explicitly teaching these dominant forms "ghettoizes" students (Janks, 2009, p. 26; Delpit, 1988), denying them access to the discursive practices and roles associated with power. Janks describes the challenge of balancing diversity and access as the "access paradox": "How does one provide access to dominant forms, while at the same time valuing and promoting the diverse languages and literacies of our students and in the broader society?" (2009, p. 24). Further, as is explored in chapter 8, how does one provide access to historically dominant forms without reifying these dominant forms? The access paradox is a community as well as a pedagogical problem: its solution lies not only in the balanced approach taken by teachers, but also in the identity positionings taken by members of the community. In the Communication Crew, the coordinator offers Language Buddy pairs with tools to provide access to the English-dominant discourse of the community. These tools have been developed by the Communication Crew and the coordinators over the years and include vocabulary sheets and one-sentence summaries of upcoming sessions, overt instruction on paraphrasing and multimodal communication, and guided opportunities for Language Buddies to exchange linguistic resources, sharing the sounds and meanings of words and phrases in each other’s languages. During workshops, session-leaders use “Language Buddy breaks” to give Language Buddies the opportunity to check for comprehension and clarify any points that may
be lost. This role of providing access across diverse and dominant semiotic forms affects the identity positionings and relationship between Language Buddies.

This chapter focuses on the Language Buddy relationship and the discourse around Language Buddies providing access. After defining the related concept of empowerment, I focus on the data from the Communication Crew classroom discourse of one Language Buddy team, and data from the research interviews of two Language Buddy pairs. While the classroom discourse analysis is brief, the analysis of the interview data draws on small stories narrative analysis (Georgakopoulou, 2007), Cummins’ (2009) empowerment, and Norton’s (2000) concepts of identity, investment, and imagined communities and futures to explore the Language Buddy identity, practices, and power relations.

6.2 Access and Empowerment

“Empowerment” is a term often used but also often criticized in critical education. Advocates of critical pedagogy critique notions of empowerment that focus only on “empowering” students to speak in their own languages and literacies. Giroux and McLaren (1986) instead link the notion of empowerment to diversity, access, power, and design:

Empowerment is gained from knowledge and social relations that dignify one's own history, language, and cultural traditions. But empowerment means more than self-confirmation. It also refers to the process by which students are able to interrogate and selectively appropriate those aspects of the dominant culture that will provide them with the basis for defining and transforming, rather than merely serving, the wider social order. (p. 229)

Giroux and McLaren emphasize that “self-confirmation” of cultural and linguistic diversity is not
enough: empowerment also requires access to and critiquing of dominant cultures and languages. Freire similarly insists on the importance of access for true empowerment: “It is through the full appropriation of the dominant standard language that students find themselves linguistically empowered to engage in dialogue with the various sectors of the wider society” (Freire & Macedo, 1987, pp. 152). For Giroux and Freire, linguistic “empowerment” is linked the access paradox: it is honouring linguistic diversity on the one hand while providing access to dominant linguistic forms on the other. If discussions about societal power (see chapter 7) and the transformation of societal power (see chapter 8) are to occur in an English-dominant environment, first we must ensure that all students are invited into the conversation.

Other critiques of empowerment centre on the theory of power that it implies. In her critique of critical pedagogy, Ellsworth defines empowerment as teachers “sharing, giving, or redistributing power to students” (Ellsworth, 1989, p. 306) and questions the deeper contradictions of critical pedagogy that such “empowerment” implies. Specifically, Ellsworth draws attention to the asymmetrical power relations between students and an “emancipated” teacher who asserts authority to provide access and shift power relations. This not only assumes that the teacher is able to effectively emancipate him or herself from the “learned and internalized oppressions” of society—including his or her own institutional authority as a teacher—but also assumes that power is something that the teacher can share, give, or redistribute democratically and at will. Gore (2014) critiques uses of the term “empowerment” on the basis of “an overly optimistic view of agency, a tendency to overlook context, and overly simplistic conception of power as property, the theoretical pronouncement of discourses as liberatory,” and “a lack of reflexivity” (p. 15). As is described further in 2.3 and in chapter 7, this study instead understands “power is not something held but something practiced,” (Nealon,
2008, p. 24 in reference to Foucauldian power) in this case something practiced in interaction between Language Buddies.

The definition of empowerment used in this study comes from a social practice perspective. Jim Cummins (2009) defines “empowerment” as “the collaborative creation of power” and opposes it to “the coercive creation of power.” This redefinition from “sharing, giving, or redistributing power to students” (Ellsworth, 1989, p. 306) to “the collaborative co-construction of power” shifts the concept of power away from something that one person actively gives to a passive other towards something that is actively co-constructed between actors and is potentially discursively analyzable as it is collaboratively co-created between people in interaction. Similarly, Gore draws on Foucault’s conception of power and redefines empowerment as “the exercise of power in an attempt to help others to exercise power” (Gore, 2014). Transformative multiliteracies pedagogies are founded on empowerment as they enable “educators, students and communities to challenge the operation of coercive power structures” (p. 9). Cummins notes that, “this analysis raises the issue of why privileged groups in society… would want to engage in a dialogue about the roots of students’ underachievement which has the potential to delegitimize their own privilege” (p. 9). Here Cummins is referring to educational policy makers; however, this question can apply to all privileged groups in society, including students who speak the dominant language. Why would a speaker of the dominant language want to engage in a dialogue about the roots of their fellow students’ marginalization when this dialogue has the potential to delegitimize the speaker of the dominant language’s own privilege? How do educators create circumstances in which diverse students will participate in the practice of collaborative co-construction of power? While he does not answer “why”, Cummins (2009)
does offer a four-step process of collaborative dialogue that suggests “how” the collaborative construction of power might be achieved by policy-makers and educators:

1. Identify and reach out to those within dominant groups who are prepared to engage in meaningful dialogue; this includes many policy-makers and educators who are either committed to social justice or just want their society to function effectively

2. Identify shared goals and common vested interests that transcend more superficial *Us versus Them* divisions between dominant and subordinated communities

3. Demystify research findings related to the issues under dispute

4. Promote programs that explicitly challenge “*Us versus Them*” divisions and demonstrate, in a concrete way, the advantage for all in establishing collaborative relations of power. (Cummins, 2009, p. 9)

The *Communication Crew* approach to enhanced linguistic integration reflects this pattern. On the first day, when participants are invited to join the crew, it is those who are outside the dominant linguistic group and those within the dominant linguistic group who are prepared to engage in meaningful dialogue that are targeted (Cummins’ Step 1). As we will see in the analysis below, those outside the dominant linguistic group seem to be invested in the program through a desire to understand and be understood in the community of practice. Those within the dominant linguistic group seem to volunteer partly out of a commitment to social justice or a desire to see the community function effectively, but also because they indicate a vested interest in accessing the diversity of the community. Over the course of Communication Crew, we go through the process of identifying shared goals and common vested interests (Step 2) and demystifying topics such as linguistic privilege and discrimination (Step 3- see chapter 7 for analysis). Through the buddy pairing system, the *Us versus Them* is dissolved as each diverse
pairing or small group becomes a team working towards the common goal of enhancing communication (Step 4). In this way, the program is for the advantage of all and establishes collaborative relations of power.

Another way to frame the process through which someone in a dominant group would engage in a dialogue about exclusion and marginalization (lack of access) that might delegitimize their privilege is through Norton’s notion of *investment*. Norton (2000; 2013) reframes the psychological dimension of motivation in language learning as the sociological dimension of investment in language learning. Learners will invest in linguistic practices to the extent that these practices offer access to their imagined identities and imagined communities. While Norton’s research and the extensive body of worked inspired by her concepts focuses on the acquisition of languages, the concepts also effectively apply to investment into extra-linguistic or meta-linguistic communicative practices such as participation in a Communication Crew, engaging in dialogue with someone with less fluency in the dominant language, slowing one’s speech to accommodate comprehension, or using gestures. Like grammar or vocabulary, these communication skills can be “taught” and “learned”; however, to put these skills into communicative practice is a social choice that reflects, negotiates, challenges and constructs identities, power relations, and meaning in interaction. The social choice to abandon coercive power relations in favour of collaborative power relations is a social practice that indexes certain identities. In order for power to be reframed in terms of collaborative co-creation, identity and practices need to be reframed as well. The data analysis below examines the collaborative co-construction of narrative practices, power, and identity. The analysis attempts to understand discursively what access and “empowerment” look like in practice and how challenging “us vs.
them” divisions affects identity as the locally-produced “Language Buddy” identity replaces the ESL/non-ESL divide.


Check-ins form a core part of Communication Crew meetings and allow the Language Buddies to practice and discuss negotiating access. Here we see the Language Buddies practicing access. The data for this section come from a Communication Crew meeting on the fourth day of the program in the second year of the study. There were more than thirty Communication Crew members in the room, and they had found a place to sit in their Language Buddy teams, as was common Communication Crew practice. I had written three questions on the board and had asked them to discuss them in their Language Buddy teams:

- How are you?
- What is difficult for you?
- How can we help?

These questions were based on my observations that the dominant speakers of languages other than English had seemed overwhelmed in the first few days, approaching me frequently for translation. The Japanese participants especially had approached me as a group to say they did not understand what they were supposed to do during the morning session. As a result, during this meeting I had clarified that they should all check-in with each other, but that as the “Communication Crew,” we were most concerned about those who may be struggling with communication, so to give most talking time to the English language learner in their team. While it may be ambiguous, the “we” in “How can we help?” references the Communication Crew as a whole—what can we as the Communication Crew, do to improve communication for
anyone finding anything difficult? The excerpt here is from “Team Yuriko,” comprised of the following four members:

Prior to the following excerpt, Yuriko’s cultural and linguistic resources were drawn upon. Because the first question is “how are you?”, Vero began by asking Yuriko how to say “how are you?” in Japanese and Yuriko demonstrated and explained “genki desuka?” and they all practiced. Later, as they were talking about Yuriko’s difficulty understanding the vocabulary of the Five Principles discussion such as the word “humility,” Laura asked what “humility” looks like in Japan and Yuriko shared examples of being controlled at school (sitting up straight, not crossing one’s legs, no eating, facing front) and the rest of the group watched with nodding and encouragement. Here Yuriko’s cultural and linguistic resources were drawn on to increase the symbolic capital of the Language Buddy Team as they asked questions about Japanese language and culture. This interest and honouring of diversity gave Yuriko a strong voice in the conversation. However, diversity is not enough to ensure that Yuriko’s voice is heard in difficult
discussions such as the Five Principles consensus process. Thus the third question: “how can we help?” is important. Laura and Vero directed the focus of the conversation to this topic:

Excerpt 6.1: How can we help you understand more English?

1 Laura: [Okay

2 [Looks at whiteboard.

3 Vero: So.

4 Yuriko: Leans in towards Vero.

5 Vero: Is there any way we can [help you

6 [gestures left hand out

7 Vero: <I mean like with [discussion buddies [I can help you

8 [brings hands together [Hands from chest to Yuriko

9 [with languages [but is there any other way [we can help you

10 [hands open to side [pointer fingers circle [Points from chest to out

11 [during camp?>

12 [Left hand gestures downwards


14 Vero: Smiles.

15 Laura: Yeah?

16 Yuriko: Smiles.

17 Laura: What would you like us to do?

18 Yuriko: Looks at whiteboard. [Wakanai! [Sorry.

19 [Falls forward, dropping arms. [Smiles

20 Vero: Okay. Straightens posture. Brings hands to chest. (.)

21 Yuriko: Looks up. Leans towards Vero.
After Laura draws the group’s attention back to the task at hand, Vero attempts to ask Yuriko how they can help her (ll. 3-11). While her question is characterized by the multimodal support of many gestures (see ll. 6, 8, 10, 12), it is also spoken quickly and continues without pause with extra information after the initial question (ll.5-7). Although Yuriko indicates physically that she is trying to understand by leaning in and giving Vero her full attention (l. 4), it slowly becomes clear that she does not understand Vero’s utterance and must negotiate access and comprehensible input. Her first attempt is very subtle: she simply turns silently to Laura (another Language Buddy) and nods slowly and deliberately as though to say, “paraphrase, please.” However, Laura misinterprets this nod to be an answer to Vero’s question meaning, “yes, there are other ways you can help me” and asks “what would you like us to do?” (l. 17),
which does not help Yuriko negotiate the meaning of Vero’s initial utterance. Yuriko’s second action to understand is to glance at the whiteboard for multimodal support. However, this does not seem to be enough, and her third action is to admit her lack of comprehension. She declares “Wakanai!” in Japanese (“I don’t understand!”) and apologizes “sorry!” as she collapses physically as though in exasperation and defeat. This leads Vero to rephrase her question, this time drawing carefully on all of her cross-linguistic communication skills. She straightens up and repeats her question slowly and with clearer gestures and simpler syntax. Claire also steps in to offer a suggestion, which also serves as an exemplar of a contextually-appropriate response: “like hand gestures?” (l. 25), also spoken slowly and itself supported by a clear hand gesture. Yuriko is then able to voice her support for this suggestion and also request, “please slow… speaking a little bit” (ll. 27-32), with “a little bit” and its accompanying pinched finger gesture functioning to soften the request. Vero especially responds to this suggestion, perhaps in a moment of self-awareness and reference to her earlier rapidly-spoken utterance. This is the role of the Language Buddy in providing access: English dominant Language Buddies hone their skills to provide comprehensible input for their English language learning partners. These include slower speech and the use of gestures, but also normalizing the discursive practice of offering comprehensible input. In order for this to happen, English language learning Language Buddies hone their skills and normalize the practice of asking for help. I argue that even a practice as asymmetrical as “helping” can be empowering in the sense of a co-construction of both identity and power between the Language Buddies. In the next section, I analyze the narratives of the Language Buddies as they reflect upon their role in providing access, but also continue to co-construct access, power, and their Language Buddy identities in research interviews.
6.4 Access Narratives: “We Are the Most Good Team”

The data for this section focus on the interviews with two Language Buddy pairings in 2010. The first is the Language Buddy interview between myself, Japanese-dominant Yusuke, and English-dominant Louis. Yusuke, from Tokyo, Japan, was sixteen at the time of the study and came to the youth leadership program through his English as Foreign Language school. My impressionistic assessment of Yusuke’s English expertise was this it was the least target-like of the fifteen focal participants. By his own estimation, when asked to draw his linguistic resources, he identified his linguistic resources as fluent Japanese with less-fluent English (high school English and EFL classroom experience). In the interview, he said that he wanted to be a part of Language Buddies for what I understand to be linguistic and social reasons: “maybe yeah I’m not good at speaking English” and “I want to have a- yeah deeply friend.” At the time of the study, Louis was a seventeen-year-old Vancouver student entering grade twelve at an International Baccalaureate school. He identified his linguistic resources as being fluent in English and less fluent in French. In the interview, he said he wanted to be a part of Language Buddies for what I interpret to be linguistic and empathetic reasons: “I uh am interested in linguistics and I think that um that I’d like to learn a little bit more about other languages and also I want to help people because I’ve been in a situation where I can’t speak the language in a foreign country.” Observations during the program were that Louis and Yusuke seemed particularly committed to each other, often requesting extra time to complete tasks together. Both grew in prominence in the community, performing multiple times at the final show (Yusuke sang in Japanese and did a judo demonstration; Louis sang in English and danced). The interview was twenty-five minutes long and took place on the last full-day of the program. In
particular, the analysis focuses on their answers to three interview questions: “How was the Five Principles consensus session?”; “How was the overall Language Buddy experience?”; and “How can you be a ‘Language Buddy’ when you return to your hometown?” Additional data for this chapter come from the Language Buddy interview between Tracy, Natsumi, and myself (details in 6.4.1.2). These excerpts were selected as telling cases (Sheridan et al., 2000) because they thematically explore the “Language Buddy” identity and its associated practices, first looking at an excerpt that highlights the co-constructed nature of the Language Buddy identity, then an excerpt that highlights the co-constructed nature of the Language Buddy practices, then an excerpt that highlights the connection between the identity and the practices, and finally an excerpt that highlights the potential of carrying these identities and practices into other future communities of practice. Each excerpt features a small story that is co-constructed between the three interlocutors.

6.4.1 Being Language Buddies: Co-constructing narratives of successful identities

During the interview, the Language Buddies engaged in explicit identity work co-constructing their own and each other’s identities. Narratives in particular allow for rich identity work as the Language Buddy identity is constructed at three levels of positioning (see section 4.3.2). As was also noted in the analysis of chapter 5, Language Buddies seemed to actively build positive characterizations of each other. Yusuke in particular spoke frequently and fondly of Louis in the paired interview. For example, when asked how the Language Buddy experience was, Yusuke took the opportunity to evaluate his partner positively:

Excerpt 6.2 “Louis I am so changed”

1 Kim: How about for you- what was it [the Language Buddy experience] like.
Yusuke: A:h Louis is so intelligent=
Kim: =Mm.
Yusuke: And he efforts to everything.
Kim: Mm.
Yusuke: Mm. But I don’t- I didn’t like effort and I couldn’t effort to something.
Kim: Mm. Okay.
Yusuke: But yeah a:h Louis’s- Looks and gestures towards Louis. Looks back to Kim. Louis I am so changed. So now I want to effort English so much and other things like world issues- something like- I want to effort. And yeah uh I’m glad to have such a good friend. Places left hand on Louis’ right shoulder.
Louis: Smiles.
Kim: Aw.
Yusuke: Yeah. Lowers arm to lap.
Louis: Looks at Yusuke. You put lots of effort in.
Kim: Yeah.
Louis: You tried so hard. Gestures forward motion with both hands.
Yusuke: Heh heh heh.
Kim: You’ve been trying so hard for twenty days.
Yusuke: Heh heh heh.
Kim: It’s really good. Heh heh.
Louis: Your English is so much better now too. Raises right hand, palm parallel.
Yusuke: Really?
Kim: Yeah.
This excerpt can be separated into two sections: lines 1-11 in which I ask a question and Yusuke responds with a small story, and lines 12-25 in which Louis and I respond to Yusuke’s small story by negotiating his self-characterization. In the first section, instead of directly commenting on the Language Buddy experience, Yusuke comments on his Language Buddy, evaluating Louis as “so intelligent” (l. 2) and someone who “efforts in everything” (l. 4). He then contrasts this positive evaluation of Louis with his own self-evaluation: “But I don’t- I didn’t like effort and I couldn’t effort to something” (l. 6). Here the rejoinder “but” and the negative “I don’t” signal a clear distinction. However, in the same turn Yusuke shifts the tense from present “I don’t” to past “I didn’t” and “I couldn’t,” setting the scene for a small story linking the past to the present. The characters in this small story are himself, beginning as someone who did not, could not, and did not want to make an effort, and Louis, someone with high intelligence and an ability and willingness to try hard. The entire plot of the transformative narrative is expressed in five words: “Louis I am so changed” (l. 8), with the result that “so now I want to effort English so much and other things like world issues- something like- I want to effort” (ll. 8-9). According to Yusuke’s narrative (positioning level 1), Louis’s intelligence and effort inspired him to change and “want to effort” both “English so much” and “other things like world issues” (ll. 8-9). In Yusuke’s story, Louis’s identity has offered Yusuke a transformed imagined identity as an English speaker and social activist. He narrates a desire to invest his new identity in the practices of English speaking and global social change. Yusuke signals the end of his narrative and brings the focus back to the narrating present (positioning level 2) with the positive evaluation, “And yeah uh I’m glad to have such a good friend” (ll. 10-11). As he says this, he
places his arm on Louis’s shoulder, mirroring his constructed social connection with a physical connection. Here the “intelligent” and effort-making Language Buddy is evaluated as also “a good friend” (l. 11), linking their identities together through a close social bond. By choosing to offer this small story of related identities in answer to my question about his Language Buddy experience, Yusukeforegrounds his relationship and identification with Louis as the most definable feature of the Language Buddy experience. Tellers design their narratives for certain addressees (Bakhtin, 1986), and here (as in many of the paired Language Buddy interviews) the addressee of the narrative is multiple: Yusuke’s narrative was produced in answer to my research interview question, but it was also produced in front of his Language Buddy and “good friend”, Louis. By praising Louis in front of Louis and in a research interview situation, Yusuke generously builds social capital for his Language Buddy partner—capital that he does not explicitly relate to Louis’s identity as a white Canadian native English speaker (positioning level 3), but rather to his identity has an intelligent hard worker. It is this identity and its associated social capital that Yusuke now shares through their Language Buddy relationship and narrated social interconnectedness.

In the subsequent turns, Louis and I respond to Yusuke’s narrative in ways that continue to build social and cultural capital for the pair. Louis’s smile (l. 12) and my “aw” (l. 13) assesses his account as touching and thus contributes to Yusuke’s construction of closeness and fondness. Louis then offers his own small story that disputes the original contrast that Yusuke has made between Louis as hard-working and Yusuke as not putting in effort: “You put lots of effort in… you tried so hard” (ll. 16-18). Louis’s choice to respond to Yusuke’s narrative suggests that he recognized his role as a recipient or addressee of the narrative. Yusuke responds with laughter (l. 19, l. 21) and I continue Louis’s positive characterization of Yusuke: “You’ve been trying so
hard for twenty days…. It’s really good” (ll. 20-22). Louis draws on Yusuke’s linguistic practice as evidence to Yusuke’s effort: “Your English is so much better now too” (l. 23). In these turns, Louis and I co-construct a re-evaluation of the characters Yusuke had introduced. These re-characterizations do not dispute Yusuke’s transformative narrative; rather, they negotiate the moment of transformation and place it near the beginning of the program. In this narrative (positioning level 1), the only character is Yusuke, and he has put in a lot of effort, tried hard for twenty days, and has improved his English proficiency. Yusuke questions this renegotiation of narrative and identity: “Really?” (l. 24), but when I affirm with “yeah” (l. 25), he accepts with “thank you” (l. 26). By seeking affirmation from me in this final negotiation, Yusuke imbues my assessment with the authority of an “expert opinion,” making my evaluation of his improved English an authoritative utterance (Bakhtin, 1986). This allows him to transfer the positive evaluation I have offered to his own self-narrative. In this excerpt, we see Yusuke and Louis co-constructing each other’s identities as intelligent, capable, and hard-working members of the partnership. In doing so, they are collaboratively co-constructing social capital for each other, for themselves, and for their Language Buddy pairing. The resultant narrative characterizes Yusuke as a dynamic character who gains linguistic and social capital (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991) while Louis appears as a static character who neither gains nor, crucially, loses capital through the pairing. This lack of loss of social capital of a fluent English speaker paired with a non-fluent English speaker is significant in the field of diversity education. Whereas the “ESL” identity has been characterized as a low cultural capital category that can keep English language learners separated from their mainstream peers and silenced by a lack of power to speak or impose reception (see, for example, Norton 2000, 2013; Talmy 2004), Yusuke and Louis co-construct their Language Buddy identity as a high cultural capital category. As the narrative stands, the
net gain of power in the relationship is positive: it is not that Louis gives up social power in order to empower Yusuke; rather, they co-construct power together.

Like Louis and Yusuke, Tracy and Natsumi use their responses to perform and negotiate relational identities that are the basis for empowerment. While the previous narrative demonstrates the increase in Yusuke’s capital through the pairing, Natsumi and Tracy’s narrative demonstrates an increase in capital for both partners and more clearly shows the relational aspect of the Language Buddy identity. At the time of the study, Natsumi was a sixteen-year-old participant also from Tokyo, Japan who identified in her linguasphere diagram Japanese as her dominant language and English as a much smaller second language. Tracy was a sixteen-year-old participant from Toronto, Canada, who identified English as her large-circle dominant language and French as a second language so small it is represented as a dot on her linguasphere diagram (see chapter 3 for discussion of linguasphere diagrams). Throughout the program Natsumi and Tracy spoke less in large-community interactions than other participants (including Yusuke and Louis) and spent a lot of time together laughing and sharing jokes with each other. The interview is a twenty-five minute interview on the last full day of the program in the first year of data collection. The analysis focuses on their answers to the questions “Why did you want to be a Language Buddy?” and “What did you learn or gain from this exchange?”. I open the interview by asking the interviewees why they wanted to be Language Buddies:

Excerpt 6.3 “I wanted to help others”

1  Kim: So on the first day I asked you why you want to be a Language Buddy. Do you remember what you said? Why did you want to be a Language Buddy, [Tracy].

2  Tracy: Because I said I wanted to help others.

3  Kim: Mm.
Tracy: And learn more about different languages.

Kim: Nice. And now twenty days later do you feel that you could do that?

Tracy: Yeah so I(h) glances at Natsumi [smiles

Natsumi: Glances at Tracy [smiles

Tracy: [Know many Japanese expressions. heh heh.

Natsumi: [Yeah. Nodding

Kim: Yeah. Like what. Do you want to give me one?

Tracy: Like we talk about ikemen.

Natsumi: Heh heh heh.

Kim: Heh heh heh. Okay. And how about helping others. Did you feel like you succeeded in that?

Tracy: I hope so- Turns to Natsumi. Did I? Heh heh heh.

Kim: Let’s find out. Turns to Natsumi. Hi Natsumi.

Natsumi: Heh heh.

Kim: Why did you want to be a Language Buddy?

Natsumi: (3.0) °Language Buddy.°

Kim: Yeah. Why did you want to do it.

Natsumi: (3.0) Mm because I can’t speak English=

Kim: =Mm.

Natsumi: And.

Kim: Mm hm.

Natsumi: Mm I can’t understand. By myself so I wanna be a good speaker=

Kim: =Mm. Mm hm. And did it help you? Did Tracy help you?
Like Louis and Yusuke, Tracy and Natsumi co-construct the narrative of their Language Buddy experience with my questions shaping the narrative into a statement of goals and an evaluation of their achievement. Again, this excerpt can be split into two parts: in the first part, Tracy offers her account of the experience; then Natsumi responds. Like Louis, Tracy cites two desires that she invests into the practice of participating in the Language Buddies program: “to help others” (l. 3) and “learn more about different languages” (l. 5). Helping others is the most frequently cited reason for English-dominant speakers to join the Communication Crew. It recalls the pre-Cummins definition of empowerment as having power that one gives to a relatively passive other. Her second reason, also the second most frequently cited reason, is to increase her own linguistic resources. Through the modifier “more”, Tracy constructs herself as already having access to various linguistic resources, and through the modifier “different”, she marks some perceived norm of learned language(s) (presumed by the Canadian context and her linguasphere diagram (see section 3.5) to be the languages she already has access to: English and French) from the “different languages” that she would like learn about. I uptake her answer with “nice” and then ask if she feels now that she “could do that.” Here I am asking Tracy to evaluate her Language Buddy performance: if her narrated goal is to help others and learn different languages, the success of the protagonist lies in achieving these goals. Tracy says, “Yeah so” and glances at Natsumi who glances back and they simultaneously smile. With laughter, Tracy continues: “I (h)... know many Japanese expressions. Heh heh.” (ll. 7-9) and Natsumi
simultaneously affirms this statement both through words and gestures “Yeah nodding” (l. 10). When I ask, “Like what. Do you want to give me one?” (l. 11), I am offering my recognition that the two interviewees have a shared understanding of something they may or may not want to share with me as program coordinator and research interviewer outside their Language Buddy connection. These in-joke moments can be understood as shared stories (Georgakopoulou & De Fina, 2012), known to the Language Buddies but unknown to me, whose retellings have been condensed to minimal phrases or single word references “intricately dependent on aspects of the local context, including participant roles and relations” (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012, p. 109). Norrick (1997) has shown how these references to familiar tales foster group rapport and ratify group membership. In-joke moments are frequent throughout the Language Buddy interviews as the participants perform their close relational identities (positioning level 2). Sometimes, my role as an adult and/or as a researcher with recording equipment running means that the full story is never told and the joke remains between the two interviewees as a coded reflection of their rapport and in-group membership. Often I am not offered the privilege of an explanation of the joke (such as when Graham and Tomo from Chapter 5 shared an in-joke involving a gestured reference to a beard): in this case I am (at least partially). The two again share a smile and Tracy offers, “like we talk about ikemen” (l. 12). “Ikemen” is a current and colloquial Japanese term that can be roughly translated in terms of referential content and use as “hot guy(s)”. By using this term without a gloss, Tracy orients towards me as a speaker of Japanese, and my shared laughter indicates my recognition of both the term and its significance: this shared term narrates (positioning level 1) an ongoing (present tense) shared situated practice of using this term in semi-coded discussions of their attractions, a sign of intimacy in their connection that goes well beyond “helping” and “learning… languages.” The use of the term
also positions both Tracy and Natumi in larger cultural discourses (positioning level 3). The Japanese origin of the term indexes Natumi’s identity as a Japanese-speaker, and its use and usability build symbolic capital for that identity (similar to *yuuki* as discussed in chapter 5). However, the Japaneseness of the term is overshadowed by the cultural discourse *ikemen* indexes: its use indexes its users’ shared identities as teenage girls engaged in gender-specific heteronormative talk between Language Buddies beyond language barriers.

I then explore her other reason for joining Language Buddies. When I bring her attention to “helping others”, asking “did you feel like you succeeded in that?” (ll. 14-15), Tracy turns again to her co-interviewee: “I hope so- did I? Heh heh” (l. 16). Here Tracy invites Natumi to co-participate in the narration of her story. This is significant because co-participation in story-telling can “enhance a sense of understanding and cooperation [by providing] an occasion for tellers to propose their own values and for others to create and display solidarity” (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012, p. 95). This part of her story Tracy cannot tell— the participant that Tracy has hoped to have helped is present and is constructed as the evaluator of her Language Buddy identity and the one with *tellership rights* (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012; Sacks, 1974) of the rest of the story. Tracy’s imagined and desired identity as a successful Language Buddy is relational: it depends on another in order to be ratified. I acknowledge and play up this dynamic of the interview by saying to Tracy, “let’s find out” and greeting Natumi, “hi Natumi” as though Tracy had not known that Natumi had been listening to her answers. Instead of inviting Natumi to continue the narrative where Tracy left off by asking, “did Tracy help?,” I first ask “why did you want to be a Language Buddy?” (l. 19). After I reiterate the questions to ensure understanding, Natumi offers, “Mm because I can’t speak English… and… I can’t understand. By myself so I wanna be a good speaker” (ll. 22-26). Here Natumi first positions


herself (positioning level 1) linguistically as having no access to English either as a speaker or as a listener. However, she then qualifies this inability to speak or understand English as an inability to do so “by [her]self (l. 26). The implication here is that alone she cannot access dominant linguistic resources and be the “good English speaker” that she desires, but with and through Tracy she can. Finally I return to the completion of Tracy’s narrative and the ratification of Tracy’s identity: “and did it help you? Did Tracy help you” (l. 27) to which Natsumi offers an emphatic “yes!” (l. 28). Tracy celebrates this response with a “yay!” (l. 29) and Natsumi repeats it, “yes!” (l. 30), re-emphasizing the situational significance of this affirmation. Tracy’s desired identity and situated practice as a “helper” and “speaker of different languages” is as dependent on Natsumi as Natsumi’s desired identity and situated practice as a “good English speaker” is dependent on Tracy. In this way, their identities are co-related and co-constructed. The capital that they have collaboratively co-constructed between them includes Tracy’s increased access to Japanese linguistic resources, Natsumi’s increased access to English linguistic resources, Tracy’s celebrated identity as a successful Language Buddy helping another, Natsumi’s celebrated identity as a Language Buddy better able to communicate, and both Tracy and Natsumi’s increased social capital of performing a close bond, co-creating narratives and using their shared linguistic resources like “ikemen” to share in-jokes and social cohesion. In a field that values diversity (see chapter 5), these increases in symbolic and social capital are relevant and thus make the Language Buddy identity desirable and its associated practices worthy of investment.

6.4.2 Doing Language Buddies: A narrative of successful practices

This section focuses on the situated practice of doing Language Buddies: what they say they did and what they say they learned through the process. The co-constructedness of
empowerment is apparent through the co-constructed accounts of how they successfully engaged in the process of engaging in accessible discourse. Knowing that discourse practices have been shown to play a central role in the creation of consensus (Fairclough, 2001; 1989), I begin by asking Yusuke about his experience of the Five Principles consensus-building process (see Chapter 5 for an explanation of this process):

Excerpt 6.4 “That is so: cool”

1 Kim: And I know that was a very difficult session. It was also the first session for you to
2 work together.
3 Louis: Mm hm.
4 Kim: So I’m wondering how that was for you. The first time.
5 Yusuke: Five Principles-
6 Kim: Yeah.
7 Yusuke: Guest speaker?
8 Kim: No before that um when you chose “yuki” and open mind and-
9 Yusuke: Ah!
10 Kim: Yeah.
11 Louis: It was in Max Bell.
12 Yusuke: That is so: cool!

In the first line of the extract, I not only play the role of interviewer in defining the topic of conversation (the Five Principles session), I also offer an evaluative frame (Bakhtin, 1986) (that “I know that it was a very difficult session”). Asserting that “I know” how the session was is especially strong considering I am here in the authoritative roles of educator, researcher, and
Louis is first to take a turn, uttering “mm hm” in line 3 in acknowledgement, comprehension and possible uptake of the premises I have offered. However, this is then followed by several turns in which Yusuke actively negotiates the meaning of the question, first by repeating my statement, “Five Principles” in line 5, then by questioning, “guest speaker?” in line 7, and finally indicating comprehension, “ah!” in line 9 before offering his own evaluation, “that is so: cool!” in line 12. In between his turns, Louis and I offer various details to help ground comprehension of the topic, naming some words that were used in the session (“yuki” and “open mind”, (l. 8)) and the location of the session (“It was in the Max Bell”, (l. 11)). These turns construct both myself and Louis as helpful interlocutors, providing Yusuke with access to participation in the interview that is in a language in which we are fluent and he is not. These same turns also construct Yusuke as a skilled communicator, using repetition, educated guesses, and exaggerated expressive intonation to negotiate meaning. Access, meaning, participation and power are negotiated and co-constructed through this three-way interaction indicative of how Louis and Yusuke have come to communicate. Finally, Yusuke’s evaluation of the event, “that is so: cool” (l. 12), completely contradicts my own supposedly “authoritative” evaluation of the subject. Georgakopolou and De Fina summarize the pivotal concepts in narrative research that relate to how power is constructed in narrative: “control over linguistic resources, authority, telling rights, truth, ideology and ownership” (2012, p. 125). While the narrative is being negotiated in English and framed by an interviewer in a position of authority, Yusuke manages to control the flow of the interview at this point by negotiating linguistic resources in a way that allows him to enter effectively into the conversation. Once communication is clear, he gains authority to tell his narrative and assert his “truth” through his ownership of his first-hand experience. The ease with which Yusuke actively requests clarification and Louis and I provide
it can be attributed to the Language Buddy identity as part of his role is to request clarification, and part of Louis’s role as Language Buddy (and mine as Communication Crew coordinator) is to provide comprehensible input (Krashen, 1982). This has become the discursive norm of the Language Buddy community, something that is very difficult to achieve when “ESL” is a marked identity on the periphery of the community of practice with only their ESL teacher as a reliable guide to full participation.

In the proceeding turns, Yusuke extrapolates on his initial “so: cool” statement that functions as a Labovian abstract (Labov & Waletzky, 1967), or short summary of what his narrative is about:

Excerpt 6.5 “Maybe it is I like the most very”

13 Kim: So cool? Alright. Tell me about it.
14 Yusuke: Yeah. Uh- I say all opinion
15 Kim: Yes.
16 Yusuke: I say my all opinion.
17 Kim: Yes.
18 Yusuke: -and share that.
19 Kim: Yes. Yeah.
20 Yusuke: Yeah uh. Ev- I can un- everyone opinion I can heard
21 Kim: Yes.
22 Yusuke: and I understand.
23 Kim: Yes.
24 Yusuke: So yeah very good discussion I think. Yeah.
25 Louis: Mm hm,
26 Kim: Wow good for you because I think it would be very difficult in English.

27 Yusuke: Oh, maybe it is I like the most very.

Here Yusuke constructs his account of spending three hours negotiating in English to reach a community consensus on Five Principles as being an example of ideal communication. In it, he is the main character and active protagonist (positioning level 1) who was able to “say all opinion” (l. 14) and “everyone opinion [he] can heard… and [he] understand[s]” (ll. 20-22). In terms of both linguistic production and linguistic reception, the discursive event is constructed as being highly successful with extreme-case formulations (Pomerantz, 1986) such as “all” (l. 14) and “every”[one] (l. 20) used to legitimize his claim and create a sense of complete success. He narrates the result of this opinion-sharing and opinion-hearing as “so yeah very good discussion I think. Yeah” (l. 24). “Good” is a clear positive evaluation of the event, and “very” intensifies that positive evaluation. In the following two turns, Louis and I respond, with Louis again uttering “mm hm” (l. 25) which may be read as both a positive uptake of Yusuke’s account as well as a signal that he is ready to speak, and my tie back to my initial evaluation: “wow good for you because I thought it would be very difficult in English” (l. 26). Here I evaluate Yusuke’s account with “good for you”, a form of praise that gives recognition to the identity he has constructed. Yusuke’s final utterance on the subject is another extreme case formulation serving to legitimize his claim (Pomerantz, 1986) and positive evaluation: “Oh, maybe it is I like the most very” (l. 27). Here, though the grammar suggests a speaker not fully fluent in the dominant language, the overall character he is constructing within the narrative is of a successful communicator with the symbolic capital to not only participate in a consensus process, having his voice heard and fully comprehending the voices of others (positioning level 1), but also the
symbolic capital to negotiate the framing of the event in an interview situation (positioning level 2), countering the adult/interviewer/researcher/educator/English speaker’s assessment in exchange for his own. Taken together, his identity as “successful communicator” is made more relevant than his identity as “ESL” (positioning level 3), in the narrative, in its narration, and as a portable identity beyond the current or narrated situation. This “successful communicator” identity is a goal of the Language Buddy program for all participants, regardless of their English fluency.

Yusuke seems to have come to his final evaluative stance on his narrative of successful consensus communication, so for further explanation I turn to Louis, who also draws upon his identity as a “successful communicator” as he takes up the narrative:

Excerpt 6.6 “Yeah yeah yeah we did them together”

28 Kim: Okay. Huh. Alright so I’m surprised. Maybe you can help me- why did that work so well? Do you remember?
29 Louis: Well we uh- [Heh heh yeah.
30 Kim: [How?
31 Louis: It was the first time we were together and we were both working really hard
32 Yusuke: Yes.
33 Louis: to understand
34 Yusuke: Yeah.
35 Louis: and I- we were testing out different techniques as well.
36 Yusuke: Yeah.
37 Kim: Nice.
38 Louis: Writing them out- I copied out all the- the options which worked well
39 Yusuke: Heh heh.
Kim: Yes.

Louis: And uh- and then drew- we drew some diagrams to- to represent them. Like empathy was a hard word to explain so we drew a little diagram.

Kim: Yes.

Louis: That sort of explained it a little bit (more.)

Kim: Cool. I’d love to see that diagram. heh heh.

Louis: Y(h)eah. Um.

Yusuke: And writing a picture

Louis: Yeah yeah yeah we did them together

Yusuke: Yeah. Heh.

I open the discursive space by stating my “surprised” reaction to Yusuke’s account and seeking “help” from Louis, thus framing his narrative as an explanation. Whereas Yusuke’s narrative includes only Yusuke as a character, here Louis adds himself both as a narrator (positioning level 2) and as a character (positioning level 1). In terms of content, Louis includes in his account various requirements for effective communication. First, effort: “we were both working really hard… to understand” (l. 32-34). Second, strategies: “we were testing out different techniques as well” (l. 34). He lists these strategies as “writing [all the options] out” (l. 38), a strategy he evaluates with “which worked well” (l. 38); and “we drew some diagrams to- to represent them” (l. 41), a strategy he evaluates modestly but positively as “that sort of explained it a little bit (more)” (l. 44). Yusuke also co-constructs the list of strategies with “and writing a picture” (l. 47). Between Louis and Yusuke, concerted investment in multimodal practices (writing, diagrams, and pictures) is presented as an explanation for a successful communicative event.
Their use of multimodal strategies to communicate across linguistic, cultural, and personal differences is consistent with the findings of research in multiliteracies ESL pedagogies (Ajayi, 2008; Cummins, 2009; Cummins & Early, 2011; Early & Marshall, 2008; Stein, 2000), the communication model of the Canadian Language Benchmarks (“Can Do Statements,” 2013), and the discourse of diverse inclusion at PSYL (see chapter 5). Through suggestions from Language Buddies and overt instruction in Communication Crew meetings, multimodal communication has become a discursive norm in the Language Buddy community and “multimodal communicator” is part of the high cultural capital “Language Buddy” identity.

Beyond the “what” of Louis’s narrative is the “how” of its construction, which further reveals both a possible explanation for Yusuke’s positive account and indicate the kind of identity work in which Louis is engaged during this narrative. Notable in the construction of his narrative is Louis’s frequent use of the first person plural, “we.” Discourse analysts such as Billig and Stanley (2004) have shown the rhetorical significance of pronoun choice in narratives. Subject pronouns indicate agency and power within narratives, so it is significant that Louis uses the first-person plural “we” three times in succession in the first few lines, “well we uh… it was the first time we were together and we were both working really hard” (ll. 30-32, my emphasis). Louis then continues to use it, even correcting his use of “I” to “we”: “I- we were testing out different techniques” (l. 36, my emphasis); “and then drew- we drew some diagrams to- to represent them” (l. 40, my emphasis). These self-initiated self-repairs (Schegloff, Jefferson, & Sacks, 1977) can have linguistic and social significance and address a “trouble source” (Schegloff et al., 1977, p. 363) in the conversation or an ideological dilemma in the discourse (Billig & Stanley, 2004). For Louis, the “trouble source” seems to be the grammatical exclusion of his Language Buddy from the narrative. Within the narrative (positioning level 1), the false
starts and corrections serve to create the effect of deliberately extending the agency of the narrated actors to both himself and his language partner. Interestingly, the one use of the singular pronoun that is left unaltered is as the subject to the process “copied”: “I copied out all the- the options” (p. 38). In comparison to the processes of the other sentences, “working really hard”, “testing out different techniques”, “writing then out”, and “drew some diagrams”, the one process he claims as his alone holds less agentive value: “copying” is more of a chore that he completes for his partner in contrast to the creative processes he completes with his partner. At the second level of positioning, in response to Yusuke’s contribution to the co-construction of the account “and writing a picture” (l. 48), Louis offers an immediate and enthusiastic uptake of the suggestion and re-emphasizes the co-constructed agency: “Yeah yeah yeah we did them together” (l. 48). Yusuke affirms this co-constructed account with “yeah” (l. 49). At both the narrated and narrating levels of positioning, Louis expands the agency of the narration to include his Language Buddy partner. This role of being a “cooperative/inclusive communicator” is also part of the high cultural capital Language Buddy identity.

Louis then shifts his narrative from an account of the strategies used to an evaluation of the time that it took:

Excerpt 6.7 “It took much, much longer”

50 Louis: And uh it took a- it took a little bit of time.
51 Kim: Yeah.
52 Louis: I think it took much, much longer than it would uh- than I expected it to really.
53 Kim: Right.
54 Louis: Um but I think we really really communicated well.
55 Yusuke: Yeah.
His first cautious statement that “and uh it took a little bit of time” (l. 50) is strengthened and expanded to, “I think it took much, much longer than it would uh-than I expected it to really” (l. 52). Here Louis moderates his account of the length of time it took first with a diminishing modifier “a little bit” and then with “I think” to indicate that this is a personal subjective account rather than a statement of universal fact. “I think” in this case does not give the analyst access to Louis’s inner thoughts or feelings, but rather is a discursive move that functions like “a little bit” to soften the account and also to acknowledge that others may have opposing views (Antaki, Billig, Edwards, & Potter, 2003). Significantly, Louis makes another self-repair when he cuts off his initial utterance with “uh”: “I think it took much, much longer than it would uh” (l. 52). Had Louis completed this conditional statement indicated by the modal “would”, he may have placed himself in the discursive position of having to describe his partner in a way that limits Yusuke’s cultural and symbolic capital. Instead, Louis as narrator abandons this grammatical line of reasoning in favour of “than I expected it to really” (l. 52), thereby avoiding any possible disempowering construction of his partner, either within the narrative or as present in the interview interaction. If anything, his chosen discourse is self-deprecating in that he admits that he was wrong in his expectations of how long the process would take. Finally, Louis uses the rejoinder “but” to turn his final evaluative stance back to a positive narrative: “but I think we really really communicated well” (l. 54), an assessment that Yusuke takes up with “yeah” (l. 55), and finally Louis summarizes with “and it worked well” (l. 57). These final positive words serve
to return the overall evaluation of the communicative event to a positive narrative of a successful event. I accept this with “nice. Okay. Cool” (l. 58), accepting the overall co-constructed narrative of to highly successful cross-language communicators working hard together despite the longer timeframe and using effective strategies to understand difficult content and to have their voices heard. Here Louis displays the role of “compassionate communicator,” another element of the Language Buddy identity.

In this section I have analyzed the narrative account of the Five Principles consensus process is co-constructed between the three interlocutors. The narrative (positioning level 1) is animated first by myself in a short evaluative statement of its difficulty, then re-told in a divergent account first by Yusuke as a positive narrative of idyllic communication that was, in fact, his favourite experience of the entire program; and then by Louis (with interjections from Yusuke) as a nuanced narrative of two hard-working skilled multimodal communicators constructing meaning across language barriers in a successful manner despite the more-or-less long time that it took. In Yusuke’s narrative, he is the lone actor who speaks his entire opinion and hears and understands the opinions of others for an overall “very good discussion” (l. 24). While there is the logical implication of another, he focuses on his own agency in offering and receiving opinions, presumably all in English. In contrast to his present struggle to understand the initial question, here he narrates a past self that understood everything. His identity is thus of a capable communicator, despite what may be initially perceived in the interview process. Louis’s account does not contradict this account, opening up the actors’ agency to include Yusuke’s agency in all of the communicative successes. Louis here demonstrates himself to be a skilled and generous communicator (positioning level 2), carefully constructing an account that both informs the interviewer of the struggle that must have been inherent in the process,
evidenced by the fact that they “were both working really hard” and that it took “much much longer” than his expectations, while also protecting the identity and agency of his Language Buddy sitting next to him and co-constructing the account. Here again, Louis’s identity as a Native English Speaker and Yusuke’s identity as English Language Learner are not as relevant as their newly constructed identities as “Language Buddies” (positioning level 3). Throughout this narrative, Yusuke and Louis enact aspects of the Language Buddy identity as successful cross-language, multimodal, cooperative, and compassionate communicators. In addition, the Language Buddy identity is a relational identity: Louis and Yusuke need each other and need to understand each other in order to take on the identity of successful “Language Buddy”. Rather than an “I” who speaks one language and a “he” who speaks another, there is a “we” who work together to co-construct identities, practices, and meaning. We will see these aspects of the Language Buddy identity as well as other nuances in the excerpts below.

6.4.3 Asking for help: Co-constructing access across the Us/Them divide

As was seen in the Communication Crew meeting data (section 6.3), asking for help and offering help consistently emerge as key roles played by Language Buddies as they negotiate equitable discursive access. Breaking down the us-vs.-them divide is a central aspect of effectively ensuring this access to community conversations.

The interconnectedness of empowerment, co-constructed identities, and transformed practice is shown in different ways in this later extract from the interview with Tracy and Natsumi. Like Yusuke’s active requests for clarifications during the interview (Excerpt 6.5), Natsumi’s narrative highlights the agency of the English Language Learner in negotiating access to the dominant discourse:
Excerpt 6.8 “I have to ask”

1 Kim: What did you learn or gain- what did you learn from this exchange together.

2 Natsumi: Mm. I have to ask when I can’t understand because they are talking- they are- they are talking very fast so I can’t understand what’s h(h)appened

3 Kim: Right.

4 Natsumi: So I learned about we ha- I have to. Ask.

5 Kim: Yes. Good one.

24 …

25 Natsumi: When I didn’t understand, I asked her- I ask her

26 Kim: Yes.

27 Natsumi: And very helped me.

Here Natsumi identifies her main learning as having the agency and initiative to ask for help when she doesn’t understand. Her narrative sets up an us-versus-them dichotomy. The actors are the “they” who “are talking very fast” (ll. 2-3) and an “I” who “can’t understand what’s h(h)appened” (l. 3). The narrative “I” states that she learned “about we ha- I have to. ask.” (l. 5). Here Natsumi temporarily collectivizes her subjectivity to include others, presumably the other Japanese or non-English-dominant participants, but then uses a repair strategy, suddenly dropping and re-starting (Billig & Stanley, 2004), to keep her learning specific to her case. The importance of asking for help and receiving it in level-appropriate language is well-documented in the language learning literature: Krashen’s (1982) theory of comprehensible input (i+1) and Vygotsky’s (1980) zone or proximal development describe how learners need access to linguistic input slightly above their level, and Lave and Wenger (1991) describe the importance of access.
to legitimate peripheral participation as learners attempt to enter a community of practice. However, also well-documented is the social challenge faced by learners who find that their ESL identity does not provide them with the social capital needed to confidently assert their agency and receive this help across the ESL/mainstream divide (Norton, 2000b; Talmy, 2010b; Morita, 2004). In a separate excerpt, Natsumi breaks the us-and-them dichotomy by clarifying “I asked her- I ask her… and very helped me” (ll. 25-27). No longer is there merely a “they” that speaks quickly and an “I” who does not understand; now there is a “her” who transcends the superficial us-versus-them division to “very [help]” her. This is the important social role that a Language Buddy can have in terms of empowerment: between the two, they have constructed a collaborative power relationship so that the language learner is offered the means in terms of discursive norms to ask for clarity and receive access.

In turn, Tracy’s ability to “help” Natsumi understand is based on her ability to empathize with her situation and for the two of them to create a transformed collaborative communicative space to create meaningful utterances together. Tracy’s role in breaking down the us-vs.-them dynamic is explored as I turn to Tracy and ask her the same question:

Excerpt 6.9 “It was more of like a compassion thing”

7 Kim: What did you learn?
8 Tracy: Um (3.0) It’s not really what I learned, it’s sort of just different perspectives that I got.
9 Kim: Mm hm.
10 Tracy: Like um I just really learned what I would feel like to come from another country not knowing the language like I learned how hard that would be.
11 Kim: Mm hm.
After my direct question “what did you learn?” (l. 7), Tracy deflects the question in several ways. First, she offers a filler “um” followed by three seconds of silence. Then she refutes the premise of my question that she “learned” anything: “It’s not really what I learned, it’s sort of just different perspectives that I got” (l. 8). She then expands on these “different perspectives”: “I just really learned what I would feel like to come from another country not knowing the language like I learned how hard that would be… And how brave Natumi is to come here” (ll. 10-13). The use of “would” shifts the narrative into a conditional space— an imagined reality other than her own lived experience. In Tracy’s narrative version of her learning process, she has gained Natumi’s perspective and has learned about her character, identifying Natumi as “brave”. Taking the perspective of an imagined or real other breaks down the self-other divide and shifts one’s identity in empathic ways. She then again tries to refute the premise of my question: “So it’s not that I really- I didn’t really learn anything new- Like I learned like Japanese like I learned some sayings but like- I- it was more of like a compassion thing you
know what I mean- and like I began to like feel for all the people who are here who English isn’t their first language. And- I just- I can understand how difficult that might be.” (ll. 13-20). Here Tracy distinguishes between “learning anything new” like learning “Japanese” or learning “some sayings” and her own experience. For her, what she gained was not “learning” but “more of like a compassion thing.” The difficulty of explaining and categorizing compassion and empathy is shown as she uses “like” and “thing” to modify the compassion that she has gained and adds “you know what I mean” as an indication that her words may not be exactly what she means. “You know what I mean” has also been identified by small stories analysts as an example of “metalinguistic formulations that aim at creating shared assumptions” and invite the narrative audience to participate in the telling of the story (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012, pp. 95–96) as Tracy aims to create a shared understanding of what it means to “learn” “compassion”. Tracy’s own definition of “compassion” is “to like feel for all the people who are here who English isn’t their first language” and the ability to “understand how difficult that might be” (ll. 20). Discursively, she demonstrates this compassion communicator identity and resulting empowerment by engaging in the co-construction of her and Natsumi’s identities together.

As seen in the above excerpts, Language Buddies create a communicative space between them that allows the English Language Learner to ask for help and the other Language Buddy to gain compassion and skills in providing that help. Significantly, this access is not limited to the space between the pair. As Louis and Yusuke demonstrate through narrative and narrating, their empowerment practices also build a voice for Yusuke in the wider community. Prior to this excerpt, I had asked Louis and Yusuke to share their strategies for communication. Louis shared multimodal strategies such as “I took notes and he could read” and “expressing with your hands,” “exaggerate” the “intonation of your voice,” and “speak slowly.” Yusuke then interrupts
to share more detail about Louis writing notes for him so that he could “concentrate” and “[share] my opinion.” Both interviewees had to this point addressed their narratives to me, referring to each other as “he.” However, at this point, Louis physically turns to Yusuke and makes a reference to another of their communication strategies:

Excerpt 6.10 “We are the most good team”

1 Louis: What also worked is if you wanted to- to raise your hand and say a question-

2 Yusuke: Yeah.

3 Louis: -you asked me first.

4 Yusuke: Y(h)eah.

5 Kim: O:h.

6 Louis: and I help you and then (.) yeah.

7 Kim: Nice. So you say “I have a question: [is this okay?

8 Yusuke: [Yeah. “I have a question. Can I- Can I say

9 it like this? Yeah yeah yeah yeah.

10 Kim: Oh that’s great. Because I’ve noticed you’ve raised your hand many times.

11 Yusuke: Oh.

12 Kim: And maybe that’s why

13 Yusuke: Yeah.

14 Louis: Mm hm.

15 Yusuke: You know (.) for (.) (all) for is help.

16 Kim: Ah.

17 Yusuke: Yeah.

18 Louis: Heh heh.
In lines 1-4, Louis is offering a narrative of another communication strategy. In this narrative, the characters are Yusuke who wants to raise his hand and ask a question, and Louis who helps him. At the narrated level (positioning level 1), this is an example of empowerment as the two Language Buddies negotiate meaning so that the non-English dominant Language Buddy can have his voice heard at the community level. At the narrating level of positioning (positioning level 2), there are many discursive moves made that also aim to negotiate meaning so that the non-English dominant Language Buddy can have his voice heard in the research interview. By introducing this strategy with “what also worked well,” Louis links his narrative to Yusuke’s narrative as either a continuation or a “second story,” (Sacks, 1974) designed to be similar to the previous narration. Either way, this kind of building on one story with another has been shown to be a powerful resource for “doing friendship” and displaying connection (Coates, 2001). Significantly, Louis is addressing this narrative in which Yusuke is the primary actor to Yusuke rather than to the interviewer: “if you wanted to- to raise your hand and say a question… You asked me first” (ll. 1-3). This contrasts with all of the previous examples they had given, in
which they had addressed me and referred to each other in the third person. The difference in this case may be that to this point in the conversation Louis had offered four strategies while Yusuke had only offered one, indicating that it may still be Yusuke’s “turn” in the conversation. Or the difference may be that this narrative features Yusuke as the principle figure, wanting to ask a question and asking Louis. By telling Yusuke this story rather than me, it is as though Louis is handing the narrative to Yusuke to animate with his own agency. Though he pauses several times, Yusuke does not (cannot or will not) take Louis up on the offer, instead passing his turn with a simple “yeah” (l. 2, l. 4). My “o:h” in line 5 indicates my interest in the narrative, encouraging either interviewee to continue. Louis does, but then drops the narrative realizing that Yusuke cannot or will not step into the role of teller: “and I help you and then (.) yeah” (l. 6). Significantly, even here as I have stepped in as a potential addressee of the narrative, Louis continues with one last attempt to maintain Yusuke, who he seems to indicate as the rightful animator, as the addressee before dropping the narrative with a pause followed by an inconclusive “yeah.” As first explored in section 5.4.2 with regards to divergent accounts of Spokes Council participation, the tellership rights of narratives are important as they is connected to ownership and power relations. Typically, the one who “owns” the experience “owns” the narrative and the right to tell it (Sacks, 1970/2010). However, when there is an imbalance of power between interlocutors, often it is the speaker with the most power who tells the story (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012). As De Fina and Georgakopoulou note, “speaking on behalf of another… raises issues of entitlement (i.e. who has the right to tell whose story?) and can be contested on the grounds of lack of ownership” (2012, pp. 146–147). This is one of several cases where the English-dominant Language Buddy provides the abstract for a story that features the non-English-dominant Language Buddy as protagonist. In these cases, the English-dominant
Language Buddies often attempt to offer their Language Buddy the ownership and tellership rights to the narrative. This process is not always successful, creating tellership negotiations like this one between Yusuke, Louis and me. However, I understand it to be an example of co-construction of narrative power as the English-dominant Language Buddy attempts to empower their partner to tell his/her “own” story at the narrating level of positioning, just as he does at the narrated level of positioning.

In lines 7-13, I step into Louis’s role to attempt to coax a co-narrated account out of Yusuke, taking on Yusuke’s voice in the narrative, “So you say ‘I have a question: is this okay’” (l. 7). This seems to have the effect of offering Yusuke a clear utterance to build from. He accepts my animation of his voice and finally takes on the role of co-animator, animating his own voice in the narrative: “Yeah. ‘I have a question. Can I- Can I say it like this?’ Yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah” (ll. 8-9). I offer another positive evaluation of this account “Oh that’s great” (l. 10) and place myself as an actor within the narrative: “Because I’ve noticed you’ve raised your hand many times… And maybe that’s why” (ll. 10-12). Here my contribution to the narrative is to suggest that Yusuke has raised his hand frequently because he has been using the strategy of checking with Louis before asking a question. Yusuke responds to my version of the narrative with “oh” (l. 11), deferring uptake of my assertion that he has raised his hand “many times.” Instead, Louis utters “mm hm” (l. 13), uptaking the account that Yusuke and I have animated on his prompting. To this, Yusuke first laughs and then continues to defer acceptance of agency in the narrative, instead focusing on the role of Louis’s help: “You know (.) for (.) (all) for is help” (l. 15). Though the grammar makes the meaning of the utterance unclear, the reference to “help” shifts the agency in the narrative back to Louis. Louis laughs, perhaps to indicate his own understanding that Yusuke has again turned the agency back to him and his helpfulness (l. 18). I
summarize the overall negotiated account as “good team” (l. 19), allowing space both for Louis’s acknowledgement of Yusuke’s agency asking questions and Yusuke’s acknowledgement of Louis’s agency in helping him. Louis responds with more laughter to this positive evaluation, which I repeat and join him in laughter. Yusuke interrupts the shared laughter with an incomplete utterance “maybe our” (l. 22). I encourage him to finish this utterance “mm” (l. 23) which he does with his own superlatively positive assessment of the narrative: “we are the most good team” (l. 24), an extreme-case formulation (Pomerantz, 1986) that both Louis and I respond to with particularly strong laughter. In this excerpt, the collaborative co-construction of power and identity is evident as Louis and Yusuke exchange accolades of agency and play hot-potato passing the right to speak and animate the account back and forth. As they negotiate narrative identities, playing with the roles of teller and actor, they are also playing with language-related roles of competent English speaker, effective communicator, and successful Language Buddy. These are the larger roles that go beyond the narrative and have the potential to transform future practices in imagined communities of practice outside PSYL.

6.4.4 Continuing Language Buddies: Future narratives

Narratives of future or hypothetical events are also included in the widened definition of “small stories” (Georgakopoulou, 2007) and can likewise be analyzed for how they position the teller and others within the narrative (level 1), during the narration (level 2), and in connection with grand narratives (level 3). In addition, these narratives of imagined futures help to explore what kind of identity investments (Norton, 2000) participants are making into the linguistic practices of being a Language Buddy. Near the end of the interview, I turn to a question about whether the participants can imagine taking what they have learned in Communication Crew and
applying it in their home contexts, such as starting their own group focused on improving communication in their community or being an ally to those who do not speak the dominant language. These narratives of future selves provide insight into the identities and social practices that may be transportable and become part of their ongoing stories of self.

I ask Yusuke if he can imagine being a Language Buddy when he returns home to Japan:

Excerpt 6.11 “I do Language Buddy?”

1 Kim: Can you be a Language Buddy in Japan?
2 Yusuke: If he comes to Japan?
3 Kim: A:h.
4 Louis: Yeah.
5 Yusuke: I don’t know.
6 Kim: Yeah [and
7 Yusuke: [If he comes to Japan I- I do Language Buddy?
8 Kim: Yeah [and
9 Yusuke: [Of course of course.
10 Louis: Heh.

Here, Yusuke’s immediate assumption is that in order to “be a Language Buddy in Japan” (l. 1), Louis will logically have to come to Japan: “if he comes to Japan?” (l. 2). The story of being a Language Buddy requires two actors: Yusuke and Louis. I respond with a surprised utterance, “a:h” (l. 3) indexing that this response was in fact unexpected. Louis encourages Yusuke’s interpretation with “yeah” (l. 4), an ambiguous statement that may mean he is taking up Yusuke’s interpretation of the question (“yeah, she means if I come to Japan”) or that he is
responding positively to the condition Yusuke has mentioned (“yeah, I’ll come to Japan.”). Yusuke says, “I don’t know”, which in this context seems to mean more that he is uncertain of the question than of his response. I try to both agree with his interpretation and move him to a wider interpretation: “yeah and” (l. 6) but do not finish the reinterpretation as Yusuke once again seeks clarification and confirmation of his interpretation of the question: “If he comes to Japan, I- I do Language Buddy?” (l. 7) to which I again try to both agree and expand “Yeah and” (l. 8), and my attempt to reinterpret is again overlapped by Yusuke’s unambiguously enthusiastic response “of course of course” (l. 9). Louis laughs in response, indexing either recognition of the misunderstanding that is happening or of Yusuke’s enthusiasm for helping him out should he ever go to Japan. Yusuke’s immediate assumption that Louis is a required element of the story of being a “Language Buddy,” even when I have shifted the setting of the proposed future narrative across the Pacific Ocean, indexes the strong relational quality of the identity. It is not immediately apparent to the interviewees (as is repeated in other pairings) that the identity could exist outside the program or without their current Language Buddy. His unambiguously enthusiastic response to being a Language Buddy should Louis ever visit indexes an investment into the social practices of being a Language Buddy to Louis: these social practices seem to align with well with his imagined future and imagined community of being friends with Louis. If nothing more, the Language Buddy approach seems to cement a compassionate linguistic relationship between those who are paired.

I then attempt to finally complete my original intent of the question by disassociating Louis from this future narrative:

Excerpt 6.12 “I want to be Louis”

13 Kim: And if he doesn’t come to Japan is there other people?
Yusuke: A:h sometimes-
Kim: Yeah.
Yusuke: -My school has another country’s student.
Kim: Yes.
Yusuke: And mm yeah. Maybe I can.
Kim: Nice okay.
Yusuke: Yeah I want to do.
Kim: Mm. Great. Okay.
Yusuke: I want to be Louis.
Louis: Heh heh heh claps.

In a projected future narrative where Louis is replaced by unknown international students, Yusuke’s narrated investment initially wanes (positioning level 1). After acknowledging his school’s occasional “another country’s student” (l. 16) as other possible future actors in the continuing relational Language Buddy narrative, he considers, first tentatively: “and mm yeah. Maybe I can” (l. 18) and then with more certainty, “Yeah I want to do” (l. 20) and finally, offered perhaps as an explanation for his desire to do so, “I want to be Louis” (l. 22), a statement to which Louis responds with much warm laughter and hand clapping. In the interview situation, constructing a narrative in which he wants to become Louis builds immense social capital between the pair, constructing Louis as an exemplary character (positioning level 1) and Yusuke as a loyal and admiring friend (positioning level 1 and 2). Here it is also clarified that while “Language Buddy” is applied to both Yusuke and Louis, it is an ambiguous term. Applied to Yusuke, it seems to mean “non-fluent speaker of the dominant language” while applied to Louis
is seems to mean “fluent speaker of the dominant language who helps the non-fluent speaker of the dominant language”. By saying that he wants to “be Louis”, Yusuke expresses his imagined identity and draws on all of the attributes that have applied to Louis in the present and ongoing discourse: kind, intelligent, hard-working, communicatively competent, helpful and holding a great deal of symbolic capital. At positioning level 3, the difference between the “Language Buddy” identity and a simple “native speaker” identity is that the former is more clearly a situationally-constructed form of symbolic power: though it is true that in this space Louis has more symbolic capital than Yusuke, the notion of power is fluid enough to simultaneously recognize that upon returning to Japan, Yusuke will have the opportunity, the capacity, and the stated desire to hold and shape that same role and its accompanying symbolic capital in relation to and for the benefit of another non-dominant speaker.

I then turn to ask the same question of Louis, intending to similarly ask whether he can imagine being a Language Buddy in Vancouver. However, I do not ask the question overtly:

**Excerpt 6.13 “There are lots of ESL students in my- at my school”**

25  Louis:  Uh, well there are lots of ESL students in my- at my school.
26  Kim:  Mm hm.
27  Louis:  And cause this like this kind of showed me how I express myself outside language.
28  Kim:  Yeah.
29  Louis:  Like with hands and drawing and-
30  Kim:  Yeah.
31  Louis:  -and um other ways of communication.
32  Kim:  Yeah.
Here, Louis also begins by naming the other actors with whom he could potentially continue to co-construct a Language Buddy narrative and identity: “uh, well there are lots of ESL student in my, at my school” (l. 25). Significantly, this is the first time the term “ESL” has been used by either participant in the interview or otherwise. In fact, this is a similar case across all 14 interviews in 2010: the term “ESL” was not applied by Language Buddies except in reference to their home school communities where that is the identity position offered by the institutionalized high school academic field. Louis then continues to list the skills that he feels he has gained that he could bring back to this community with many ESL students: “this kind of showed me how I express myself outside language… like with hands and drawing and… and um other ways of communication” (ll. 27-31). As in the previous excerpt, Louis constructs multimodal practices as indexing successful Language Buddy practices. His final evaluation of what he has learned is “but it’s worked really well” (l. 33). While it is interesting that Louis uses the oppositional conjunction “but” here, the overriding statement is the continued positive evaluation of multimodal communication and its value in performing an identity as a skilled communicator.

Noticing that Louis has so far eluded answering the question, I push him further, offering a possible explanation for his unwillingness to answer with a clear affirmative (when in fact the reason may be that I never asked a clear question):

**Excerpt 6.14 “We don’t have the same opportunities”**

34 Kim: Because I know it’s difficult to do what we do here.

35 Louis: Mm hm.

36 Kim: You know the drawings the gestures- can you imagine doing that at your school?
Louis: Yeah it might be a little difficult just because we don’t have the same opportunities,
Kim: Right.
Louis: but even the little things like-like writing something down-
Kim: Right.
Louis: -or sharing notes.
Kim: Notes or something.
Louis: Yeah yeah all those things will help.
Kim: Yeah.
Louis: Like the little-
Kim: Cool.
Louis: Mm hm.

My suggestion that he may not be able to affirmatively agree to be a Language Buddy in Vancouver because “it’s difficult to do what we do here” (l. 34) is not immediately taken up by Louis, who passes his turn with a simple “mm hm” (l. 35). I continue with an explanation “you know the drawings and gestures” and finally the clear question I had intended to ask, “can you imagine doing that at your school?” (l. 36). Then finally Louis takes up my evaluation: “yeah it might be a little difficult just because we don’t have the same opportunities” (l. 37). Here, Louis seems to acknowledge that there are institutional and pedagogical shifts required in order to create the “opportunities” for the Language Buddy identity to be fully available as a social identity in the field of high school. However, he also acknowledges that some practices do not require institutional support: “but even the little things like- like writing something down… or sharing notes… yeah yeah all those things will help… like the little” (ll. 39-45). Here the
multitude of possibilities of the Language Buddy program is boiled down to sharing notes in the context of the institutionalized mainstream classroom. The use of gesture and drawing apparently cannot be transferred to the discursive space of a high school where the written word dominates and the “opportunities” for meaningful semiotic exchange between “ESL” and “non-ESL” students are minimized.

Similar to Yusuke, when asked about being a Language Buddy in Japan, Natsumi talks about how there are “a lot of foreigners” at her school with whom she often speaks “in Japanese. So I wanna tell Japanese culture and Japanese.” Similar to Louis, Tracy cites institutional differences as a barrier to continuing the practices of Language Buddies. However, Tracy also offers an innovative way to alter these institutional barriers in a projected future narrative. Before I can ask a question about how she can apply what she learned (excerpt 6.9), Tracy segues from her description of the new perspectives, understanding, and compassion she has gained into an imagined future at her school in Toronto:

**Excerpt 6.15 “Like the ESL stuff”**

23  Tracy:  And my school has like a really good ESL program so like I think you know when I go back to school I’ll learn- like I’ll take the things that I learned here and apply them.
24  Kim:  Great. That’s wonderful. So can you picture yourself being a Language Buddy in your school and-
25  Tracy:  Well they don’t really have that.
26  Kim:  Yeah. But-
27  Tracy:  But I can see myself like going into-
28  Kim:  Yeah.
29  Tracy:  Yeah.
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Kim: Going into what.

Tracy: Just like doing more things but like the ESL stuff.

Kim: Yeah.

Tracy: Because there are ESL clubs but I never really thought of joining them.

Kim: Yeah.

Tracy: But I was thinking what if I got some of my friends to join and we can help out and everything.

Like in all of the Language Buddy interviews, the term “ESL” used here is only used in reference to the mainstream school setting, replacing the more descriptive (and thus perhaps more empathic) “people who are here who English isn’t their first language” (excerpt 6.9, ll. 18-19) used only a few lines before in reference to her Language Buddy and others in the alternative educational context. When she says that she will “take the things I learned here and apply them,” the “things” and “them” are co-indexed with the compassion, perspectives, and understandings she has gained (see excerpt 6.9). New perspectives are new identity positions that are portable beyond the given situation, thus positioning the speaker as a compassionate communicator beyond the past narrated situations and the present narrating situation. She also constructs the ESL program at her school as “really good” and even begins to construct a statement that “when I go back to school I’ll learn-.” Though she does not complete this sentence, presumably she was projecting her future character learning more about languages or communication from the “really good” ESL program at her school—a remarkable notion for a fluent English speaker. Tracy is the first of the interviewees to spontaneously suggest taking what they have learned at Communication Crew and applying it to their mainstream schooling.
context, and I commend this suggestion saying “Great. That’s wonderful” (l. 25). I then paraphrase what I think she is saying “So can you picture yourself being a Language Buddy in your school and-.” However, Tracy interrupts my paraphrasing to correct: “Well, they don’t really have that” (l. 27) where “that” is presumably “Language Buddies.” Here, Tracy is noting like Louis that the opportunities for meaningful partnership and support are not institutionalized and thus not easily imaginable in her mainstream school context. However, Tracy clarifies that she can see herself “going into-“ (l. 29); another incomplete utterance as she lets it trail off and does not name what precisely she sees herself going into until I ask for clarification: “Just like doing more things, but the ESL stuff… because there are ESL clubs but I never thought of joining them” (ll. 33-35). Here the institutionalization and stigmatization of ESL as a distinct category is clear. There are “ESL students” in the “ESL program” who do “ESL stuff” in “ESL clubs”; it is thus no surprise that a fluent speaker of English “never thought of joining them” (l. 35). The very programs and clubs that are designed to provide necessary specialized support—Janks’s access to high capital texts and codes—also separate the English learners from the fluent English language speakers, to the detriment of all (a lack of Janks’s diversity). Tracy’s projected narrative represents a powerful transformative act: “I was thinking what if I got some of my friends to join and we can help out and everything” (l. 37). Tracy’s imagined future community is not just her in the ESL clubs; it also includes “some of [her] friends” as actors whom she would get to join, thereby creating ripples of influence and magnifying the potential impact of the integrative and inclusive act. By transforming her understanding of self to empathetically include speakers of languages other than English, Tracy transforms her own linguistic practices, identity, and imagined future in her home community of practice. Ultimately, these
transformations have the potential to transform that community of practice to make it more inclusive of diverse speakers.

### 6.5 Discussion and Conclusions

In this chapter, I have offered an analysis of the Language Buddy identity and practices as an example of how transformative multiliteracies pedagogies can break down the us/them divide typical of ESL/mainstream identities and empower students as they co-construct identities, practices, and access to powerful community discourse. The Language Buddy identity is shown to be distinct from an ESL/mainstream identity in that it is relational: just as the English language learning partner relies on the English fluent partner in order to be a successful communicator in the English-dominant community, the English fluent partner relies on the English language learner to ratify his or her identity as a successful communicator across languages. In addition, the Language Buddy identity has been shown to include the roles of multimodal, cooperative, and compassionate communicator. Associated discursive norms mirror those supported by the Canadian Language Benchmarks (“Can Do Statements,” 2013) and include some multilingual communication (e.g. *ikemen*), linguistic clarification (and asking for clarification), providing comprehensible input, multimodal communication (including gestures, drawings, and writing), and sharing power in conversation. Above all, the Language Buddy identity is marked by a close social bond: a successful Language Buddy team is a successful friendship. This close social bond is performed in the Language Buddy interviews through various discursive means including explicit positive constructions of each other’s characters, physical closeness, co-participation in narration, references to familiar tales or inside jokes, frequent laughter, and shared agency at the narrated and narrating levels. This social bond is also
extended into the projected future, as well as transformative strategies such as sharing culture with foreign students, using multimodal strategies to help ESL learners, and moving beyond institutionalized barriers to join “ESL” clubs. As an alternative to the “ESL” identity or the unmarked “mainstream” identity, the “Language Buddy” identity works to mark both English Language Learners and fluent English speakers with a relational identity that provides access to cultural, social, and linguistic capital. The high capital of the identity encourages all members of the community to invest (Norton, 2000) in its related practices and transform the community of practice to be linguistically inclusive of all.

The Language Buddy identity is constructed and performed as a relational identity unique to this environment that is difficult to imagine transporting to the mainstream environment due to a lack of opportunities available in the field for constructive interaction between fluent and non-fluent speakers of the dominant language. Yusuke clarifies that Language Buddy most commonly means “dominant language speaker who helps dominant language user”, and that this identity has a relative amount of situated symbolic capital that he desires. Natsumi looks forward to an opportunity to combine her fluent Japanese identity with her new Language Buddy identity and “talk with- with foreigners in Japanese” saying “I wanna tell Japanese culture and Japanese.” Tracy sees transformative potential as she considers bringing her Language Buddy identity into the ESL clubs at her school. Louis links Language Buddy practices with multimodal communicative practices beyond the linguistic, and indicates that these practices worked well here but have little symbolic capital in the field of mainstream schooling where the clearest help he could offer would be to share written notes. Louis’s response in particular demonstrates there is a need for several pedagogical shifts to occur before the mainstream schooling community could offer the “opportunities” offered in this alternative educational
environment, not least of which may be a higher valuation of non-linguistic modes of communication.

The Language Buddy pedagogies, identities, and practices work against the “subtle and pervasive” ways that schools inadvertently sequester newcomers and prevent legitimate peripheral participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 104). The findings here support pedagogical approaches that view culturally and linguistically diverse students as the “mainstream” of our educational systems (Cummins & Cameron, 1994; Morita, 2004) and that purposefully and judiciously integrate English language learners with their English language fluent peers. In order for culturally and linguistically diverse members of our communities to have access to dominant forms in a sustainable way, the speakers of those dominant forms need to invest (Norton, 2000) in the practice of making their utterances accessible. Overt instruction (New London Group, 2000) of accessible utterances often comes from teachers in segregated ESL classrooms, programs, and clubs. This is an important part of a support system, especially in academic English environments. However, by separating culturally and linguistically diverse students from their English-dominant peers, such systems limit the consciousness-raising and identity-enhancing capacity of the diversity of the community. This inadvertently reinforces the status quo of the Us-Them hierarchical divide (Cummins, 2009), and the discourse of the community of practice remains unchanged. When the only linguistic identity offered to English speakers is “speaker of the dominant language”, this identity tends to be invested into linguistic practices that lead to the exclusion of English language learning members of the community. Further, when the only linguistic identity offered to culturally and linguistically diverse members of the community is “ESL,” it is difficult to find the symbolic capital (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991) needed in order to invest into speech practices and have their voices heard.
The Language Buddy identity is a co-constructed identity that builds perspective-taking shifts in subject positions. This can be understood as a form of empathy as the self is co-constructed with the other. The identity opens up investment options in communicative practices that create a more inclusive environment. As a relational identity, its value is dependent on mutual investment into its discursive practices. There is a mutual investment return on the discursive practices of slowing down, using gestures, drawing images, and solving communication challenges together. The situated definition of communicative competence (Lave & Wenger, 1991) shifts away from fluency in the dominant language (which may lead to dominating communicative practices such as speaking quickly, using complex vocabulary, or winning a debate) towards co-creating meaning between diverse speakers. Achieving consensus across a language divide, drawing images and diagrams to represent “empathy”, and gossiping about *ikemen* become the situated practices that mark competence for both linguistically dominant and linguistically diverse members. As these practices come to mark an inclusive community, they provide the opportunity for consciousness raising and identity shifts for speakers of the dominant language in powerful ways that allow them to imagine their futures differently: continuing to seek ways to include diverse speakers and continue their own learning as multilingually and multimodally-competent members of a diverse community. This is explored further through a focused examination of Owen’s narrative in chapter 8. Culturally and linguistically diverse members of the community are also able to shift their identities, drawing on the symbolic capital built in the Language Buddy relationship to find the confidence to continue to have their voices heard and shift their communities of practice, speaking out when they don’t understand and recognizing the moments when they are in the position to “be a Language
Buddy” for others. This is further explored through a focused examination of Andrew’s narrative in chapter 7.

In response to what Janks has called the access paradox (Janks, 2009), the paired approach of Language Buddies allows a balance between access and diversity. It values and promotes diversity: the defining feature of the Language Buddy relational identity is linguistic diversity and one of the defining features of successful Language Buddy practice is modal diversity. At the same time, it provides access to dominant forms: a defining feature of the relational identity is a willingness to invest in learning or providing access to the dominant language, and a defining feature of successful practice is the completion of linguistically challenging tasks such as reaching consensus. When the relationality of the Language Buddy identity is invested into successful Language Buddy practice, a community solution to the access paradox is possible.
Chapter 7: Power

7.1 Linguistic Power and Privilege

As is mentioned in chapter 1, diversity and access without a theory of domination risks “the naturalization of powerful discourses without an understanding of how these powerful forms came to be powerful” and “a celebration of diversity without any recognition that difference is structured in dominance and that not all discourses/genres/languages/literacies are equally powerful” (Janks, 2009, p. 26). Critical framing (New London Group, 2000) is needed in order to reveal how symbolic forms can be used to maintain power relations. With this realization comes the possibility that because these power relations are maintained in discourse, they can be changed in discourse. Giroux and McLaren (1986) write about the critical dimension of education for “transformative intellectuals”:

Transformative intellectuals are not merely concerned with empowerment in the conventional sense, that is, with giving students the knowledge and skills they will need to gain access to some traditional measure of economic and social mobility in the capitalist marketplace. Rather, for transformative intellectuals, the issue of teaching and learning is linked to the more political goal of educating students to take risks and to struggle within ongoing relations of power in order to alter the oppressive conditions in which life is lived. (Giroux & McLaren, 1986, p. 226)

After reviewing the literature on linguistic privilege, this chapter offers a report of classroom dialogue during the Linguistic Privilege session of the Communication Crew. The third section outlines small stories from diverse Communication Crew participants that narrate the individual effects of English privilege. Finally, the fourth section focuses on the narrative—multiple small
stories analyzed using tools from both the small stories (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008; Georgakopoulou, 2005, 2007) and other narrative traditions (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012; Labov & Waletzky, 1997)—of Andrew, a facilitator from Uganda whose story of self is particularly shaped by linguistic privilege and transformed through critical framing.

7.1.1 Linguistic privilege and grand narratives

The importance of critically framing linguistic privilege is most extensively explored in the literature on multicultural teacher education. Gallagher-Guertsen (2007), for example, argues, “awareness of [linguistic] privilege and the unearned power that it brings those who have it is a crucial aspect of becoming a multicultural educator” (p. 40). In her argument, she uses McIntosh’s framework of White Privilege to construct her own list of the “hidden privileges” that “protect power systems (such as schools) that maintain the high status of native standard English” (Gallagher-Geurtsen, 2007, p. 42). Her list includes the following:

- I do not feel the need to make my name more like “everyone else’s”, for example, Anglicizing Beatriz to Betty or Marta to Martha.
- I can learn my first language/culture first and my second language/culture second, etc.
- I do not feel the need to eliminate my accent.
- My friends and family are in awe of my bilingualism and/or biculturalism.
- Most of the time, I feel that I understand what my teacher says and does. (Gallagher-Geurtsen, 2007, p. 42)

Writing from an American perspective, Gallagher-Geurtsen connects these unacknowledged linguistic and cultural privileges to the following grand narratives: “(1) English is a naturally superior language; and (2) To be American is to speak only English” (p. 43). She notes that
“grand narratives about language/culture are sustained, with unrecognized cultural/linguistic privileges mutually maintaining one another in a cyclical process. The privileges of native English speakers, in essence, are the grand narratives in action” (p. 43). The grand narratives of English being privileged as a global, common, or dominant language sustain and are sustained by the situated practices of social interaction. Linguistic privilege is Bourdieu’s *symbolic violence* (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991) in action. It is the perpetuation of the misrecognition of one language and its speakers as having more symbolic capital than other languages and their speakers (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991).

### 7.1.2 Linguistic imperialism and grand narratives

*Critical framing* (New London Group, 2000) involves acknowledging these unacknowledged privileges and examining unexamined ideological assumptions in order to interrupt the cycle. Rather than unquestioningly assuming that English is the global, dominant, or preferred target language, it is important to ask how this came to be, who it benefits, and who it disadvantages. Pennycook (2007) refers to these grand-narratives of English as an International Language as “myths” and calls for their “demythologisation”:

The myth (or myths) of English as an international language (EIL) can be understood as making the local contingencies of English appear to have broader ontological and temporal validity and a natural justification. The myth(s) of EIL erase the memory that English is a fabrication, that languages are inventions and that talk of English as an international language is a piece of intellectual slippage that replaces history of this invention with a belief in its natural identity. The myth of EIL depoliticizes English, and does so not by ignoring English but by constantly talking about it, making English innocent, giving it a natural and eternal justification, a clarity that is not that of a
description but an assumption of fact. The myth of EIL deals not merely with the invention of English, but with the strategies that constantly keep that invention in place, with the relentless repetition of the stories and tales about this thing called English. We need to disinvent English, to demythologise it, and then to look at how a reinvention of English may help us understand what it is we are dealing with here. (Pennycook, 2007a, p. 109)

Although pluralilingualism (Lin, 2013; Taylor & Snoddon, 2013), multiliteracies (Cummins, 2009a; New London Group, 2000), and other emerging approaches to multilingual education increasingly promote the Critical/Transformative (Tsuda, 2008) view of English as an International Language, more classroom-based accounts of demythologizing English as an International Language and critically framing linguistic privilege are needed to assuage fears that such discussions may “demotivate” students or be too complex for a learners’ language ability. Such overt critical framing is an essential part of critical pedagogy and necessary if we are to build societies of socially just citizens.

7.1.3 Linguicism and cultural discrimination

Linguicism is the semiotic realization of cultural discrimination. Linguicism is discrimination based on language and according to Phillipson (1992), “refers to ideologies and structures where language is the means for effecting or maintaining an unequal allocation of power and resources” (p. 55). In his discussion of the importance and significance of African writers writing in their native language, Thiong’o (2006) makes the links between language, culture, and sense of self: “Language carries culture, and culture carries, particularly through orature and literature, the entire body of values by which we come to perceive ourselves and our place in the world” (p. 187). In Anzaldúa’s (2012) eloquent words: “If you want to really hurt
me, talk badly about my language. Ethnic identity is twin skin to linguistic identity—I am my language. Until I can take pride in my language, I cannot take pride in myself… [A]s long as I have to accommodate the English speakers rather than having them accommodate me, my tongue will be illegitimate” (p. 2951). These quotes demonstrate the deep connection between language, culture, and identity. Who accommodates their speech for whom is a question of power and legitimacy. Anzaldúa’s words call for a pedagogy that encourages all members of a community—especially those who are traditionally accommodated—to share the communicative burden.

7.1.4 Linguicism and racism

The connection between linguicism and racism is also a growing area of study. In his study of non-language factors affecting undergraduate students’ judgments of nonnative English-speaking teaching assistants, Rubin (1992) had students listen to a short audio lecture while an image of either a white or an ethnically Asian instructor was projected on a screen. So strong were participants’ stereotypes about race and accent that race alone affected not only students’ perception of whether the speech was “accented,” but also affected their actual listening comprehension (Rubin, 1992). Stephan (2006), whose dissertation asked students to rate their preferred ESL instructor based on race, found that 77% of the participants preferred a white instructor and that a black instructor was rated as the “last resort” (p. 116). The magnitude of the students’ dispreference for a teacher of color affected his sensitivity to his students’ attitudes towards him, bringing up questions about linguicism and racism:

Is the student’s attitude toward me based on my being Black, being a nonnative speaker, or both? It is a question similar to the one people of color in countries such as the United
States, Canada, and England constantly ask themselves: Am I being treated in this particular was because of the color of my skin? (Stephan, 2006, p. 116)

Austin (2009) and Haque and Morgan (2009) also examine how linguicism reproduces racial disadvantage in teacher education. Meanwhile, Kubota and Lin (2010) note that there is a lack of visibility of inquiry into race in second language acquisition and attribute this to “the stigma attached to the term race. It evokes racism which is often interpreted as overt forms of bigotry, rather than structural or institutional inequalities, and this undertone tends to prevent open dialogs” (p. 1). Finally, Luke (2010) draws on Bourdieu’s *habitus, field*, and *capital* to argue that race and language represent capital in schools, and teachers can create conditions for students to draw on this capital and transform the cultural field of their classrooms. Questions of race and its connection to linguistic identity are explored in the narratives of this chapter, particularly when it is raised as a relevant social category by the participants themselves (see especially Andrew’s narrative in section 7.3).

### 7.2 The Invisible Knapsack of English Privilege

In order to challenge the dominance of spoken English, its status as a dominant mode of communication must be critically framed. This *critical framing* (New London Group, 2000) of linguistic privilege is reminiscent of what Giroux identifies as Freire’s view of literacy as “part of the process of becoming self-critical about the historically constructed nature of one’s experience” (Giroux, 1988, p. 64). Giroux’s understanding of critical pedagogy is derived from “a particular form of human community in which plurality becomes dignified through the construction of classroom social relations in which all voices in their differences become unified both in their efforts to identify and recall moments of human suffering and in their attempts to
overcome the conditions that perpetuate such suffering” (Giroux, 1988, p. 70). This section outlines the classroom discourse of the Communication Crew’s session on linguistic privilege in the second year of research. After a session on power and privilege that included a presentation of the “Invisible Knapsack of White Privilege” (McIntosh, 1990) and the “Invisible Knapsack of Straight Privilege” (“Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack II,” n.d.), the Communication Crew discussed linguistic privilege. In the session, participants were asked “why are we speaking English at PSYL?,” “What is good and what is bad about having English as an International Language?,” and finally “What is in the Invisible Knapsack of English Privilege?” A few answers to each question are offered below:

Kim: “Why are we speaking English at PSYL?”

- “Everyone speaks it almost” (Matteo, English-French)
- “We are also in Canada. The yeah. The government speaks English. The language in Canada is English” (Sven, German-English)
- “Maybe it’s like the universal business language as well. If you have international business relations, most of it goes down in English… People don’t accommodate the Japanese person or the French person or the Chinese or the German or Spanish. It’s always the English” (Laura, English-French-Spanish)
- “Cause the UWC Colleges are in English” (Claire, English-French-Spanish)
- Japanese is “only in Japan” (Yuriko, Japanese-English)
- “It’s the languages that are- seem to be most dominant throughout the world are the languages from Europe that went out and- like conquered parts of the world and like spread the language all around the world to different countries” (Sarah, English-French).
The participants highlight English’s status as the official language, as the most common international language, as the language of business, as the language of most United World Colleges, and as a colonial language. These are the master narratives of English that perpetuate English privilege (Gallagher-Geurtsen, 2007). To the extent that they are not questioned, they represent the “myths of EIL” (Pennycook, 2007b). By asking this question, the dominant status of English is opened up to be examined as a constructed discursive phenomena linked among other things to historical imbalances of power.

Kim: “What is good about having English as an International Language?”

- “There is like one language you can go to… at least one common ground you can go to” (Vero, English-French)
- “There are many people who speak English as a second language” (Laura, English-(French))

The next step in the discussion is to encourage the students to evaluate English’s status as an International Language. Instead of assuming that English’s widespread dominance is natural or neutral (Pennycook, 2007), critical framing allows students to think about the benefits and disadvantages of EIL. In their positive statements about English as an International Language, the youth (in this case both English-dominant) highlight the wide reach and communicative convenience of the lingua franca. By asking this question, discursive space is made for an understanding of who is privileged by the current system of power and in what ways it may provide benefits to all.

Kim: “What is bad about having English as an International Language?”
• “Like the assimilation of culture… English is becoming more and more prevalent” (Mary, English-French)

• “English kind of limited your knowledge… There are some things I cannot say in English because there is no word for that” (Klever, Spanish-English)

• “It’s unfair because it’s easier for certain like native speakers in other languages to learn English than in others. Like for example French to English it’s really easy but when you do like I don’t know maybe Asian language to English it’s harder” (Pierre, French-English)

• “I think it gives people a hasty generalization that all the native English first language speakers like think they are high-rankers. No maybe not necessarily but people have this kind of idea” (Wanyi, Mandarin-English)

In their critical statements about English as an International Language the youth (mostly non-English-dominant) highlight its limitations, unfairness, assimilation, and inequality. No longer is EIL “mythologized” (Pennycook, 2007b) as something natural, neutral, or benevolent. Rather it is characterized as assimilating other cultures, limiting knowledge, and creating inequality. Wanyi in particular draws on the term “rank” as a term introduced to the community by another adult coordinator teaching about power relations in terms of gender, age, and other differentials. By asking this question, the discursive space is made for the unfairness of linguistic privilege to be acknowledged. Culturally and linguistically diverse participants especially are able to voice their negative narratives of English privilege, and EIL is further “demythologized” (Pennycook, 2007) and “all voices in their differences become unified…in their efforts to identify and recall moments of human suffering” (Giroux, 1988, p. 61)
Kim: “What is in the Invisible Knapsack of English Privilege? Because I speak English...”

- “I can easily achieve a higher level of education” (Laura, English-French)
- “I can easily gather knowledge and be educated in my language” (Sarah, English-French)
- “I have access to a good education” (Andrew, Lugware-English-Lugandan-German-Spanish)
- “I can get high post in company” (Frank, Japanese-English)
- “I don’t have to learn a new language to be able to communicate with the world” (Nana, Danish-English)
- “I don’t have to learn as many languages” (Tessica, English-French-Cantonese-Mandarin)
- “It’s easier for me to learn other languages like French or Spanish” (Claire, English-French-Spanish)
- “I have a greater opportunity to meet many more international people” (Vero, English-French)
- “I can speak many people all over the world” (Mari, Japanese-English)
- “I can tell people about my country” (Panni, Thai-English)
- “I can communicate with many people very very a lot. And I have a big range of the word. Many many vocabulary” (Yuriko, Japanese-English-Korean)
- “I am able to understand different English accents” (Sven, German-English)
- “I understand English and Chinglish as well” (Wanyi, Mandarin-English)
- “I get a lot of books translated into my language and have the opportunity to read” (Jesse, English-French)
- “I can watch most international sports events” (Mary, English-French-Spanish)
• “Most TV shows and movies are offered in my language” (Mary, French-English)
• “Most of the internet is in my language” (Annabelle, French-English)
• “Items are translated into my language on packages” (Nikki, English-French)
• “You can be sure any airport in the world you go to, they will understand you” (Klever, Spanish-English)
• “I can travel around the area I live without facing any discrimination” (Matteo, English-French)

The interrelations between symbolic, cultural, and social capital (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991), are narrated in the range of English privileges offered by the youth. English offers its speakers symbolic and social capital through access to diverse speakers and access to other (similar) symbolic forms; it offers cultural capital through access to education, travel, books, internet, sports, and pop culture that results from the high symbolic capital; and it offers monetary capital through the high-ranking posts that result from the high social, symbolic, and cultural capital. Finally, Matteo offers a link from these sources of capital to identity—by speaking the dominant language, one avoids *linguicism*, discrimination or being treated unfairly based on an identifier such as language. Through the making of this list, English-dominant speakers are able to perform an empathetic and inclusive identity by acknowledging their rank. In addition, other languages of power were discussed. For example, when it was mentioned that English was spoken at Pearson because UWCs are in English, Klever mentioned that the UWC in Costa Rica was in English and Spanish and that the UWC in Venezuela was in Spanish only. When discussing English as the language of business, Sarah added, “I feel like that’s been changing” and referenced Mandarin as an example of a language that is also increasingly used in international business. Through participation in the complex discussion, participants negotiate
their identities as critical communicators, aware of linguistic privilege and its historical construction. Through the acknowledgement of these usually unacknowledged hidden privileges of English, the community is able to disrupt the “cyclical process” whereby the grand narratives of English sustain and are sustained by English privileges. This disruption can then lead to the design (Janks, 2009) and transformative practice (New London Group, 2000) as examined in chapter 8.

7.3 The Language Loss Behind Linguistic Privilege in the Communication Crew

The linguistic narratives of the participants sketch out vignettes of the effects of the global dominance of English. While there are as many stories as there are participants, the five narratives presented here were selected as telling cases (Sheridan et al., 2000) that challenge the oversimplification of the “native English speaker” or “fluent English speaker” identity and instead show histories of language loss and linguistic longing behind their linguistic privilege. Their stories again give testimony to what Cummins (2005) has described as “the bizarre scenario of schools successfully transforming fluent speakers of foreign languages into monolingual English speakers, at the same time as they struggle, largely unsuccessfully, to transform English monolingual students into foreign language speakers” (p. 586). In their introductions to Communication Crew, Annabelle (French-English-Spanish), Claire (English-French-Spanish), Mitchell (English-Cantonese-Mandarin), Jennifer (English-Heiltsuk), and Emily (English-(French)) position themselves in narratives of linguistic loss masked by linguistic privilege. The visual representations of the linguistic competencies are below for the four available (Fig. 1.7).
It should be noted that throughout the analysis, I draw on Norton’s (2004, 2007; Norton & Toohey, 2011) theories of *imagined communities* and *imagined identities*:

For many learners, the target language community is not only a reconstruction of past communities and historically constituted relationships, but also a community of the imagination, a desired community that offers possibilities for an enhanced range of identity options in the future. An imagined community assumed an imagined identity, and a learner’s investment in the target language can be understood within this context.” (Norton & Toohey, 415)

The use of the term “imagined” is not intended to mean that an identity or a community is not “Real,” but rather that it extends beyond the here and now to include desired and future identity and community possibilities.
Excerpt 7.1 “I’m better at English than French... that’s like not fair”

1. Annabelle: My first language is French, my second language is English, but I’m better at English than French. And that kind of like upsets me because that’s like not fair.

2. Claire: Mm.

3. Annabelle: Like it doesn’t make sense. So I’m like here to work on my French.

4. Kim: Cool. So French was your first language.


6. Kim: But your English [gestures arms’ length width] is bigger than your French [gestures half arms’ length width]. Is that right.

7. Annabelle: My French is like good. I went to school in French but then I don’t have like- I don’t speak like they do kind of like the way we learned it (a lot).

8. Kim: Give me the gestures. How big are they each.

9. Annabelle: Like English [gestures almost arms’ length width].


11. Annabelle: French [“gestures slightly smaller width”].


13. Others: [Applause]

According to Annabelle, who was born in France but moved to Vancouver when she was three, her perceived “second language” English competence exceeds her perceived “first language” French competence. English has come to dominate her speech much as it has come to dominate global communication: a fact that she describes as upsetting, unjust, and illogical (ll. 1-2). When I narrate her story of language loss, she refines my assessment that her French is half the size of her English (ll. 7-8) with her own assessment: “my French is like good. I went to school in
French but then I don’t have like- I don’t speak it like they do” (ll. 9-10). Annabelle’s small story (positioning level 1) features her as a student with “good” French proficiency going to “school in French.” She compares her French ability with they way “they” speak: while it is not clear who “they” are, Annabelle does suggest that there is a target community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 2012) with which her linguistic resources do not align. This can in some ways be understood as a story of language loss for speakers of minority languages. Even in Canada where French is an “official language,” Francophones outside Quebec lack opportunities for social interaction in French (Iqbal, 2005) and thus struggle to maintain their mother tongue despite their high investment (Norton, 2000) in their Francophone identities. This disparity between her Francophone identity and her perceived French competency is presented as something that “upsets” her. While many participants come to the Communication Crew to either improve their English or help others improve their English, Annabelle recognized it as an opportunity to “work on [her] French” (l. 3). By narrating a desire to access and increase her French resources in front of a community devoted to communication, Annabelle positions herself (positioning level 2) in a way that will increase her chances of having her Francophone identity recognized and having other Francophones approach her for conversation. By accessing others with French as a first language in a community devoted to communication, Annabelle is able to invest in the linguistic practices of the Communication Crew and work towards aligning her linguistic resources with her imagined identity as a Francophone (positioning level 3). In this way, the Communication Crew provides learners with the opportunity to invest in the linguistic identity of their choice and seek the communicative resources needed to reconcile their perceived competency with their imagined identities.
Like Annabelle, Claire (English-French-Spanish) narrates a discord between her linguistic identity and her linguistic resources:

Excerpt 7.2 “Oh there’s that freaky Canadian girl that has no idea what we’re saying”

1 Claire: I’m another (Canadian) kid, but I lived in France for a bit. And then my grandmother is Spanish so. She takes me out for lunch and she only speaks Spanish with me. So my Spanish has to get kind of good otherwise it can get kind of lonely.

4 Others: [Laughter]

5 Claire: I’d love to learn- especially Spanish because I have lots of family that are Spanish and I go there and I’m just kind of like in a bubble. They’re like ‘oh there’s that freaky Canadian girl that has no idea what we’re saying.’

8 Kim: So you want to learn…

9 Claire: I’d really like to connect with my family.

In her narrative (positioning level 1), Claire contrasts her identity as “another (Canadian) kid” with “but” followed by two complicating aspects of her cultural and linguistic identity: “I lived in France for a bit. And then my grandmother is Spanish” (ll. 1-2). Like Annabelle, there is a “they” (in this case her grandmother and “lots of family that are Spanish”) that represent a community of practice with which she identifies but from which she is separated: “I’m kind of like in a bubble” (l. 6). The bubble metaphor is a powerful image for communicative disconnect: an invisible barrier that allows one to move freely through a space but not to interact directly (see also Owen’s reference to the “Canadian bubble” in chapter 8). Claire further defines her bubbled Spanish identity by animating the voices of her Spanish family: “they’re like ‘oh there’s that freaky Canadian girl that has no idea what we’re saying’” (ll. 6-7). She voices the Spanish
perception of her as not only “Canadian,” but also “freaky”—markedly different, strange and unusual—because of her complete inability to comprehend what “we,” the Spaniards, are saying. In her narrative, her national, cultural, and linguistic identity resources separate her from her Spanish surroundings, inspiring a desire to gain the linguistic resources to interact more completely: “I’d love to learn—especially Spanish” (l. 5); “I’d really like to connect with my family” (l. 9). Like Annabelle’s narrative, this narrative highlights her Spanish imagined identity (Norton, 2000) (positioning level 3) and functions to position her within the community (positioning level 2) as a Spanish speaker and a Spanish learner. Other participants mention their grandparents as the point of disconnect in their linguistic identities, such as Mitchell who claims he only speaks a small amount of Cantonese because “I only speak it to my grandparents and we don’t have actual conversations. We have like “what did you have for breakfast. What did you have for lunch. How are you feeling” (CC transcript ll. 231-232) and as a result he states “I want to learn more Mandarin and more Cantonese while I’m here” (l. 236). The Communication Crew creates a platform on which these speakers can express their linguistic desires in hopes of gaining access to the linguistic resources they seek. The identities that they invest include their heritage language identities—identities that may be undervalued or ignored in “mainstream” Canadian classrooms, including language learning classes (Cummins, 2005).

While Jennifer is not a member of the Communication Crew, she participated in the end-of-program interviews by her request and provides a valuable indigenous perspective on the issue of global English. Like Claire and Mitchell, her language loss narrative involves a grandparent as a speaker of the language lost between generations. However, in this story it is not a history of immigration that caused the generational loss of linguistic capital:
Excerpt 7.3 “She used to talk in Heiltsuk and I couldn’t understand anything”

1. Kim: Let’s talk about language a little bit. So I know that you speak two languages, right?
3. Kim: Kind of. Yeah tell me about that.
4. Jennifer: Well I speak a little bit Heiltsuk like I know some words but I don’t speak in full sentences.
5. Kim: Mm.
6. Jennifer: I just know some meanings like “love” and (. “hungry” and “thank you”. Heh some stuff like that.
7. Kim: Yeah. So “love”, “hungry” and “thank you”. What is love?
9. Kim: Mm. And what is “hungry”?
10. Jennifer: Hungry is *hamsa.*
12. Jennifer: And *axi’ba* means supper was good the food was good.
13. Kim: Okay. So when do you use that word? For hunger?
14. Jennifer: Um. Usually when we have s(h)eafood.
17. Kim: Okay. And was that- would that be like a feast.
19. Kim: *Japa.* I was trying to remember, okay. A *japa* and then at that occasion maybe you would speak in Heiltsuk. Okay. Okay. And the word love- why do you know the word love?
Jennifer: Mm. Because my gran used to say it-
Kim: Mm.
Jennifer: Used to say it to me all the time.
Kim: Yes.
Jennifer: It’s the only word I can remember. She used to talk in Heiltsuk and I couldn’t understand anything.
Kim: Yeah.
Jennifer: Heh heh that was one of the words she said.

In Jennifer’s pictorial representation of her linguistic resources, she draws English as the largest circle and Heiltsuk as only slightly smaller (see Fig. 7.1). For this reason, I interpret the image and open the interview with what I think I “know”: “So I know that you speak two languages, right?” (l. 1). However, Jennifer does not take up this assertion, instead moderating my statement of knowledge with “kind of” (l. 2). She offers her own description of her linguistic resources: “Well I speak a little bit Heiltsuk like I know some words but I don’t speak in full sentences… I just know some meanings like “love” and (.) “hungry” and “thank you”. Heh some stuff like that” (ll. 4-7). Here Jennifer rhetorically moderates her knowledge of Heiltsuk with “a little bit,” “some words,” “I don’t speak in full sentences,” and “some stuff like that.” To get a fuller understanding of how Heiltsuk is used in context in Jennifer’s life and as a small means of inviting her linguistic diversity into the conversation, I ask her to tell me the words for “love,” “hunger,” and “thank you”. She also adds, “And axi’ba means supper was good- the food was good” (l. 13). She contextualizes the use of these words as “usually when we have s(h)eafod” (l. 15). Recalling an earlier conversation we had had about the significance of seafood and feasts
in her culture, I offer, “And was that- would that be like a feast” (l. 18), which she affirms both by offering agreement, “yeah” and by offering the word for feast in Heiltsuk, “japa” (l. 19). Here she discursively constructs an image of a japa in Heiltsuk with words for hunger, thanking for food, and feast. The word for “love”, however, is not directly linked to feasting, so I ask her “why do you know the word love?” (l. 21). Her response is a touching narrative of intergenerational care and communicative disconnect: “because my gran used to say it- used to say it to me all the time…. It’s the only word I can remember. She used to talk in Heiltsuk and I couldn’t understand anything…. Heh heh that was one of the words she said” (ll. 22-29). In this small story there are two characters: herself as a child and her grandmother. Her grandmother takes the agentive role to “talk in Heiltsuk” and “say [love] to [Jennifer] all the time” while Jennifer takes the passive role of a listener who “couldn’t understand anything” and remembering only the one word, cligis, presumably due to its repetitive use or its emotional significance representing the deep care in their relationship. Cligis carries both their connection (the frequent use of the word “love” seems to index a discursively loving relationship) and their disconnection (it is spoken in a language fluent to the speaker but not fully comprehensible to the listener). At the interactive level of the interview (positioning level 2), by requesting Jennifer’s use of “some words” that she knows in Heiltsuk, I participate in the co-construction of Jennifer’s identity as a Heiltsuk speaker (positioning level 3), even if it is through only a few linguistic remnants.

The role of English in the creation of this disconnection between Jennifer and her Heiltsuk-speaking grandmother is explored in a later section of the interview:

Excerpt 7.4 “The past and the things that have happened”

1 Kim: Yeah. In Bella Bella is it true? That English is a powerful language?
Jennifer: (. .) Mm. (. .) It’s the most (. .) common language

Kim: Yeah. Why is it the most common language?

Jennifer: Because (. .) just of the past and all of the things that have happened like of the potlatch - the banning of the potlatch.

Kim: Right

Jennifer: And the residential schools.

Kim: Yeah. Yeah.

Jennifer: Because my gran - both my - all my grandparents went to residential school

Kim: Ah:. Okay. And so do your grandparents speak Heiltsuk ah- fluently?

Jennifer: Yeah.

Kim: Ah:. They do. But then your parents don’t- that’s where it kind of sto:ps.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Kim: Okay, okay.

While seemingly reluctant to uptake my description of English as a “powerful language” (l. 1), Jennifer describes it as the “most (. .) common language” in Bella Bella (l. 2). When prompted, she offers the grand historical narrative of how English came to be the most common language in Bella Bella, opening with “just” (l. 4) as though what will follow is not especially significant and moves from the vague and nonspecific “just of the past and all the things that have happened” (l. 4) to the more specific naming of the “banning of the potlatch… and the residential schools” (ll. 4-5) as though these specific historical phenomena are practically synonymous with “the past” and “all the things that have happened” (l. 4). Interestingly, there is no agent offered in “the past,” “the things that have happened,” “the banning of the potlatch,” or “the residential
schools.” The white English-speaking colonizers escape naming, agency, and responsibility in Jennifer’s understated narrative. Whether this is because this narrative is constructed in an interview with a white English speaker (post?)-colonizer cannot be ascertained. Jennifer then offers a further step in the direction of specificity and personalization: “because my gran- both my- all my grandparents went to residential school” (l. 9). After this statement, Jennifer does not offer further narrative other than to confirm that her grandparents speak (or spoke) fluent Heiltsuk but her parents don’t and “that’s where it kind of sto:ps” (l. 12), marking the end of the fluency of the language as well as Jennifer’s narrative on the subject.

Taken as a whole, Jennifer’s narrative offers an important perspective on the dangers of the unacknowledged rank of the English language. Without pedagogical honouring of diversity and critical framing, English can be presented as the de facto privileged global language, potentially leading to cultural loss, intergenerational disconnection, and heritage language loss. The large Heiltsuk circle represented in Jennifer’s representation seems to be more reflective of her Heiltsuk linguistic identity than her Heiltsuk linguistic resources. There is a disconnection between her identity and social practices at the periphery of her linguistic narrative. Interestingly, after PSYL Jennifer began to post frequently in the community’s online forum about reaffirming her Heiltsuk identity. She often ends her posts with words in Heiltsuk, complete with pronunciation guides and English translations. She appears to be increasingly investing her Heiltsuk identity into the social practices of communities of practice on line and in Bella Bella. It cannot be assumed that his transformation in identity performance and linguistic social practice is a direct result of pedagogical social practice at PSYL; however, the choice to perform this identity in the PSYL online forum suggests a link. Participating in a research interview about linguistic identities and practices is the kind of discursive opportunity that can
allow for identity and social shifts to occur. In the interview, the complexities of her Heiltsuk linguistic identity and narrative were heard and upheld in their co-construction, recording, and presumed future analysis and distribution. As language researchers and educators, we have the potential and responsibility to create such discursive opportunities for our students and participants.

The intergenerational heritage and ancestral language loss of Annabelle, Claire, Mitchell and Jennifer are examples of how the misrecognition of a dominant symbolic resource as the only legitimate symbolic resource can cause symbolic violence (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991). This pattern of devaluing diverse linguistic resources leads to a symbolic paucity that unfortunately cannot be simply solved by the limited second language classes offered in schools. When Canadian participants from outside Quebec represent the French they have learned in school, the circles they draw and the gestures they make generally index a low level of perceived French competence.

Excerpt 7.5 “I took French in school but you don’t learn that much”

Emily: I am from Spillimacheen, BC. And I speak a lot of English [makes an arms’ length circle gesture] and I took French in school but you don’t learn that much so I kind of learned this much French [makes a two-hand-width circle gesture]. And I also took Spanish in school but it wasn’t very good so I know like this much Spanish [makes a fist-size circle gesture]. But I would really like to learn more and I also love teaching and helping people understand. And also love learning new languages like Japanese and German.

Other participants join Emily in making minuscule hand gestures and drawing tiny dots to represent their school-taught French. Emily distinguishes academic practice—“I took French in
school” (l. 2) and “I also took Spanish in school” (l. 3)—from actual language acquisition—“but you don’t learn that much” (l. 2) and “but it wasn’t very good” (ll. 3-4)—and offers this distinction as the reason that she does not speak much French: “so I kind of learned this much French [makes a two-hand-width circle gesture]” (l. 2-3) and “so I know like this much Spanish [makes a fist-size circle gesture]” (l. 4). Contrary to the assumption that an ineffective language learner is an unmotivated language learner (an assumption countered by Norton’s (2000, 2013) theories of identity and investment), Emily clearly constructs herself as a learner desiring access to increased communicative competence: “But I would really like to learn more and I also love teaching and helping people understand. And also love learning new languages like Japanese and German” (ll. 5-6). As with many of her peers, Emily narrates what I understand to be a discrepancy between her linguistic identity as an eager language learner taking multiple language classes and her linguistic practices as a nearly monolingual English-speaker.

While the participants in this section are all fluent speakers of the de facto dominant language, the linguistic capital of being an English speaker can hide what is actually a loss of linguistic capital as Cummins’ (2005) “bizarre scenario” of heritage and ancestral language loss combined with unsuccessful “foreign language” acquisition plays out in classrooms across the country. Transformative multiliteracies call upon educators to value the multilingual and multimodal practices of our students in ways that counter this narrative of heritage language loss.

7.4 Critical Narrative: “My Story of Identity, Language, and Fitting into a Group”

The remainder of this chapter will focus on the small stories of Andrew, an eighteen-year-old facilitator from Uganda studying at a United World College in America who identified his linguistic resources as Lugware-English-Luganda-(German)-(Spanish):
Andrew is in many ways a particularly telling case (Sheridan et al., 2000) of the connections between narrative, identity, language, and power. When introducing himself to the Communication Crew, Andrew says, “If I get the chance I will share my story of identity, language, and fitting into a group” (C.C. transcript, year 2, day 2), succinctly summarizing a narrative approach to identity investment and language learning in a community of practice. His story is shared four times over the course of the program: first, during facilitator training week in conversation with three other facilitators and me; second, in his introduction to the participants of the Communication Crew; next, as a brief statement to the Communication Crew after the Multilingual Community Building; and finally in greater length during a research interview at
the end of the program. Bamberg and Georgakopoulou (2008) argue that such “continuous and repetitious engagements ultimately lead to habitus (plural) that become the source for a continuous sense of who we are—a sense of us as ‘same’ in spite of continuous change” (pp. 379–380). While a small stories approach allows for the inclusion of the analysis of short—even one line—tellings, oblique references, or refusals to tell stories of the minutia of everyday lived experience, it does not exclude the more traditional analysis of “life stories.” Through its repetitive tellings and carefully constructed narrative arc, Andrew’s narrative recalls the “life story” approach that preceded the shift in the field of narrative analysis to include small stories: “identity is a life story. A life story is a personal myth that an individual begins working on in late adolescence and young adulthood in order to provide his or her life with a purpose” (McAdams, 1993, p. 5). It is also a critical narrative: it draws its significance from Andrew’s ability to critically frame his experiences through overt references to power and race. The narrative arc has him learning English in Uganda, coming to America to find that his accent is not understood, struggling through his first year in America, then coming to PSYL and Communication Crew to become a leader to change the linguistic market of his school in his imagined future. An analysis of this narrative in its multiple iterations provides a telling case (Sheridan et al., 2000) of the effects of linguistic privilege on identity and the transformative power and identity shifts that can occur through its critical framing as well as the power of narrative to position oneself within the discourse of a diverse community. So telling was the case and so compelling was the narrative that I found it easy as an analyst to slip into focusing only on the content of Andrew’s words as he wove together a story of power, identity, and language. However, by maintaining a small stories perspective and moving the analysis beyond the narrative to the narrating context (positioning level 2) and beyond (positioning level 3), I
attempt to honour this story-teller not only for what he said, but also for how he said it and who he is was in saying it.

7.4.1 Narrative 1: Critical discussion of language and power

The first iteration of Andrew’s narrative is constructed in the context of a facilitator meeting for facilitators interested in helping with the Communication Crew. Over lunch, I am joined by Wanyi from China, Andrew from Uganda, and two other facilitators not part of the study. I explain the principle of the Communication Crew—to include diverse speakers in the community—and Andrew offers the following narrative about his experience at a United World College—a school like Pearson that brings hundreds of high school students from around the world together to study the International Baccalaureate curriculum using education as “a force to unite people, nations and cultures for peace and a sustainable future” (UWC International, n.d.). This discussion occurred outside, so the recording is less clear than others in more controlled environments. Where the transcription is unclear, I have either indicated “(inaudible)” or made my best guess and placed the words in brackets.

Excerpt 7.6 “One of the things that made me very very very self-conscious was uh language”

1 Andrew: When I came to UWC-
2 Kim: Yeah.
3 Andrew: -And uh (inaudible) one of the things that made me very very very self-conscious was uh language. And uh English is the official language of Uganda.
4 Kim: Yeah.
5 Andrew: But then there is a very different accent.
6 Kim: Mm.
Andrew: I mean not very different but.

Kim: Sure.

Andrew: Uh it’s for- for- in like American school- growing up in that kind of English is very hard a little slow. So when- you know you’re speaking then someone is asking “what? I don’t get you.” And=

Kim: =Ah.

Andrew: because you’re used to an environment where (this must be you and you are picking up) I was (a little bit) self-conscious but when I was speaking I didn’t- I didn’t really express myself as- as you know more and how- how can I make- how can I make myself be understood by the (Americans).

Kim: Right.

Andrew sets his small story (positioning level 1) in the time that he “came to UWC” (l. 1) and identifies “language” as the thing that “made [him] very very very self-conscious” (l. 3). The “self” in “self-conscious” suggests that this narrative is related to identity: linguistic practices are indexed as the cause of his hyper-awareness of his identity in the UWC context. Andrew then clarifies his linguistic resources: “English is the official language of Uganda… But then there is a very different accent… I mean not very different” (ll. 4-8). Here Andrew constructs his linguistic identity as a legitimate speaker of English (positioning level 3), a form of linguistic stake inoculation (Potter, 2010) that ensures that he is not dismissed as an illegitimate speaker of the language in question (positioning level 2). He first states the official language status of English in his country, claiming his right to speak it with all of the cultural capital that “official language” status can offer. His acknowledgement of Ugandan English’s “very different accent”
and then modification to “not very different” can be understood as the work of constructing a narrative that both maintains his legitimate speaker status as well as allows for an explanation for the linguistic struggle that he endures. In addition, this matter of “difference” is explained as a relative phenomenon—an accent can only be “different” in relation to another accent in a given context. Andrew contextualizes in which context and for whom his accent is considered “very different”: “uh it’s for- for- in American school- growing up in that kind of English is very hard-a little slow ” (ll. 10-11). The “for- for-” (l. 10) abandoned false start suggests an attempt to offer the subject for whom his Ugandan English is considered very different. However, rather than offer “for Americans”, Andrew chooses to further compound and contextualize this difference as first “in an American school,” then as “growing up in that kind of English.” Here Andrew constructs the miscomprehension of his accent as a function of a context. For interlocutors who have grown up in the kind of English spoken in American schools, Andrew’s Ugandan English is “very different” (l. 6) and “a little slow” (l. 10). The result of this contextualized difference is “So when- you know you’re speaking then someone is asking “what? I don’t get you”’’ (l. 11). Here Andrew constructs a powerful image of two simultaneous events: “you’re speaking” and “someone is asking “what? I don’t get you”’’ (l. 11). The narrative use of “you” invites the listeners (in this case the researcher and others interested in linguistic inclusion) to take the narrative position of the character speaking but not being heard. This shift in pronoun contributes to the narrativity of the story as well as the compassion between the narrator and addressees (O’Connor, 2000). Instead of the actor’s speech being received, it is denied with a dismissive “what? I don’t get you” from the interlocutor. In this narrative moment, Andrew the animator or teller (positioning level 2) invites his audience to understand the denial of Andrew the actor’s (positioning level 1) cultural capital and legitimacy as an English speaker:
within the narrative, he does not have the power to impose reception. In contrast, as a leader now participating in a meeting to organize a program to teach linguistic inclusion, Andrew the animator co-creates the space where this narrative of silencing has particular value and gives him the cultural capital to speak and be heard.

The discourse then shifts to the other speakers in the organizing group as other facilitators offer responses to Andrew’s narrative. Wanyi from China offers a narrative of her own experience that seems to try to separate language from culture:

Excerpt 7.7 “It’s just about language and nothing about cultural difference or like discrimination”

1 Wanyi: My close friend is- she is from Africa too and (inaudible) like African (inaudible) but
2 she- (people) is asking her “what are you saying” and she didn’t- but she understand
3 this- like this (thought) as discrimination. She think- she thought they had
4 discrimination on her. But actually they don’t- we just really didn’t understand this
5 language thing right. So it’s kind of hurt her a bit in the beginning. But afterwards
6 when we were become friends I didn’t (know)- that it’s just about language and
7 nothing about cultural difference or like discrimination. But sometimes people do
8 relate language with culture so (.)
9 Kim: Mm.

Here Wanyi links to Andrew’s narrative by offering a related second story (Sacks, 1974; De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012) of her own about her “close friend” who “is from Africa too” (l. 1). When responding to a story with a story, the narrators of the second story aim to construct their stories in a way that rhetorically relates to the first story in order to ensure it is a legitimate response (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012). By identifying the actor of the story as her “close
friend.” Wanyi rhetorically moves to inoculate her stake (Potter, 2010) as a legitimate and well-meaning animator of a legitimate and relevant narrative. In this way, Wanyi aligns her narrative with Andrew’s (positioning level 2) and thus aligns her “close friend… from Africa too” with Andrew (positioning level 1). Just like in Andrew’s narrative, “(people) is asking her “what are you saying”” (l. 2); however, in this case Wanyi continues the narrative to state through her African friend what Andrew had inferred but not stated: “she thought they had discrimination on her” (l. 3). The accusation that “they had discrimination on her” is modified with “she didn’t” (l. 2), “she understands” (l. 2), “she think” (l. 3), and finally “she thought” (l. 4). These modifications weaken the stance of the friend’s position that she had experienced discrimination. In contrast, Wanyi modifies and strengthens the stance of the accused with “actually”: “But actually they don’t” (l. 4). Here Wanyi pits the perception, thought, and misunderstood interpretation of discrimination against the actual reality of no discrimination. At this point, Wanyi enters herself as an actor into the narrative through the use of a first person pronoun: “we just really didn’t understand this language thing right” (l. 4). It is as though the narrative has now been purged of all accusations of discrimination and it is now safe for Wanyi to implicate herself and shift the anonymous third person “they” to the first-person “we.” The use of “just” minimizes the agency and significance of the misunderstanding: she wasn’t actively discriminating; she was simply passively misunderstanding “this language thing”. Here she adds “right” (l. 4) as a rhetorical move (positioning level 2) to seek acceptance of her narrative at this critical plot point where she is pleading her innocence having been accused of discriminating against her close friend and shifting the blame instead to the inanimate “language thing.”

Wanyi then reiterates the narrative as a before-and-after narrative in terms of emotions and relationships: “so it’s kind of hurt her a bit in the beginning. But afterwards when we were
become friends I didn’t (know)- that it’s just about language and nothing about cultural difference or like discrimination” (ll. 4-7). Here Wanyi again modifies her agency as an actor in the beginning, substituting the non-specific “it” as the subject of the weakened “kind of hurt her” further distanced and modified with “in the beginning.” This is contrasted with the more recent and relative “but afterwards when we were become friends” (l. 5), at which point she further pleads her innocence on the basis of ignorance “I didn’t know” and the strong reiteration that “it’s just about language and nothing about cultural difference or like discrimination” (ll. 6-7). The “just” emphasizing that the situation of Wanyi and others asking “What are you saying?” is “just about language” and the “nothing” emphasizing that the situation is “nothing about cultural difference or like discrimination” pleads in absolute terms that separate a linguistic miscommunication from an act of cultural discrimination. Here Wanyi rhetorically links discrimination to culture and rhetorically removes it from language. “Linguistic discrimination” or “linguicism” is not a well-known or widely used concept or term and is socially defensible and freely admitted in Wanyi’s narrative; in contrast, “cultural discrimination” is a well-known and widely used concept and term that is socially reprehensible and denied in Wanyi’s narrative.

Finally, Wanyi explains how the whole misunderstanding occurred: “but sometimes people do relate language with culture so (.)” (l. 7). The “but” functions to shift from the strong declarative statement that “language” and “cultural difference” are two completely unrelated phenomena (a point that is important in order to avoid the risk of being accused of “discrimination” that is associated with cultural difference but not with language) to the issue that “sometimes people do relate language with culture.” Here the implication is that these “people” who “sometimes” make this relation are wrong, misinformed, or misguided. It is this mis-relation of two un-relatable concepts that is causally linked by the rejoinder “so (.)” followed
by a pregnant pause that hangs in the air allowing the listeners to fill it with either Wanyi’s narrative or Andrew’s as they have been discursively linked. In essence, Wanyi’s second story implies that Andrew’s small story mistakenly accuses his American classmates of discrimination and offers a counter narrative that separates linguistic matters from culture and offers simple communication challenges as the root cause of any hurt Andrew may have felt. As researcher and coordinator, my response “mm” (l. 8) confirms the end of Wanyi’s speaking turn but neither accepts nor dismisses the legitimacy of her discourse. Through her narrative, Wanyi engages in positioning at all levels of narration. At positioning level 1, she positions herself as a friend wrongly accused of cultural discrimination when in actuality she simply could not understand her African friend’s speech. At positioning level 2, she positions herself as a legitimate speaker offering a relevant narrative that represents a different perspective to Andrew’s, perhaps in an attempt to comfort Andrew and assure him that he did not experience cultural discrimination. Finally, at positioning level 3, Wanyi works to construct her identity as a critically aware speaker of English.

When Andrew takes his turn to speak again, he offers another small story that can be seen as a deepening of his first narrative as well as a rhetorical response to Wanyi’s narrative about her “close friend… from Africa too.”

Excerpt 7.8 “The issue of power… in language”

1 Andrew: And I was talking about um one- one of the things that has come up especially

2 amongst myself and uh you know my African friends-

3 Kim: Yes.

4 Andrew: -is the issue of power-

5 Kim: Yes. Thank you. Yeah.
Andrew: in language because back home we are we- we are always having people coming as missionaries or doctors- and they’re all white people. We have the media showing us more (foreigners).

Kim: Yeah.

Andrew: And things like that.

Kim: Yeah.

Andrew: And when- when- when we come to (another life) for example when I come here they will- and I go back home definitely they will- if I look the same and the accent seems to have changed speaking some “arrrr” “arrrr” or something like that with language.


Andrew opens this narrative with a false start moving from “when I was talking about um” to “one- one of the things that has come up especially amongst myself and uh you know my African friends” (ll. 1-2), changing the author of the narrative from himself alone to a collective “myself and… my African friends.” This shift in the abstract of the narrative adds the power of numbers to his perspective and also intertextually references Wanyi’s narrative of her “close friend… from Africa too.” Andrew describes the issue that has come up as “the issue of power… in language” (ll. 4-6). I emphatically co-construct Andrew’s right to speak here, uptaking the issue of power with “Yes. Thank you. Yeah.” (l. 5). In this moment, I am grateful that Andrew is bringing up the critical issue that Wanyi seems to have missed in her defense against the accusation of discrimination. Because both Andrew and Wanyi’s identities are embedded into their narratives (connecting positioning level 1 and 3), I had been unsure as to
how to bring a critical perspective into the conversation. Here I am grateful that Andrew is willing and able to offer that missing perspective. My power as an adult and coordinator in this situation adds legitimacy to Andrew’s utterance and creates further discursive space for him to construct his narrative: “back home we are we- we are always having people coming as missionaries or doctors- and they’re all white people. We have the media showing us more… things like that” (ll. 6-10). The setting for Andrew’s narrative is “back home,” presumably in Africa (in his case, specifically Uganda, but by sharing authorship with his African friends, Andrew implies that that this is a collective experience for many “Africans”). The figures now are a “we”- black Africans- and “people” represented as a “they” who are “all white” and “coming as missionaries or doctors” amplified by “the media” who are “showing us more… things like that.” The white “they” are imbued with the agency of coming and showing while the black “us” are passively experiencing people coming and media showing. Andrew then reverses the roles: “and when- when- when we come to (another life) for example when I come here” (l. 12). Now it is the black African “we” that is moving geographically and specifically himself as “I” who is coming “here” where here is ambiguously PSYL, America, or North America: all transitional education experiences that involve coming to an international experience and then going back home or moving on. Whereas in the previous narrative Andrew dealt with his experience of the reaction to his speech by speakers of American English in America, in this narrative, Andrew creates the experience of the reaction to his speech by speakers of Ugandan English upon his return home to Uganda. This narrative is an example of a small story set in the future (Georgakopoulou, 2007): “they will- and I go back home definitely they will- if I look the same and the accent seems to have changed speaking some “arrrr” “arrrr” or something like that with language” (ll. 12-14). Andrew restarts “they will” to “and I go back home definitely they
will” in acknowledgement of the confusion where the “they” that was white missionaries and doctors is now his fellow Ugandans upon his return to Uganda after an international education experience. What exactly his Ugandan peers will “definitely” do is not immediately offered. Instead, Andrew shares what he will do in terms of linguistic practice: “if I look the same and the accent seems to have changed speaking some “arrrr” “arrr” or something like that with language” (ll. 13-14). Here Andrew sets up the possible situation that when he returns to Uganda, he will look the same but sound different: he will look “African” but speak “American.” (Here I reference Andrew’s use of the words “African” and “American”—I do not intend to imply that all Africans are black or that all Americans speak with the same accent.) Linking back to his race-based framing for the narrative, he will look “black” but sound “white.” His social identities and linguistic identities will clash. He characterizes American English with a harsh “arrrr” sound indicating the stronger emphasis on word-final “r” in American English than in Ugandan, British, or many other global varieties of English (elsewhere Andrew distinguishes the American pronunciation of “water” from the Ugandan pronunciation of “wata:”).

Excerpt 7.9 “A very big issue with identity”

16 Andrew: And then when you come back- the thing is when you come back home and you’re-
17 you’re speaking that way some will say “Oh no, he’s a- a step higher” and they look
18 at you “so- so maybe I’m nothing” and when they transition when- when for example
19 when I came (inaudible) when I came to UWC USA I sort of took my position a little
20 bit lower.
21 Kim: O:h.
22 Andrew: Because that is the mentality I grew up with that the white person is- is here [right
23 hand at shoulder height].
Andrew: And the black person is here [left hand at waist height] - I had a very big issue with identity in my first semester.

Kim: Hmm.

Andrew: Things to do with language, things to do with religion and how- how I can read myself.

Kim: Hmm.

Andrew: See I had an interesting (brand) for me.

Andrew then continues his transitional narrative, “and then when you come back-” (l. 16) before restarting emphatically: “the thing is when you come back home and you’re- you’re speaking that way some will say “Oh no, he’s a- a step higher” and they look at you “so- so maybe I’m nothing”” (ll. 16-17). Here Andrew begins to show how power and language are interrelated in his narrative. He switches the character/actor of this narrative to the second person, placing the listener empathetically into the narrative (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012; O’Connor, 2000) to help us understand the “thing” that “is.” The position he puts his listener in is the role of someone who is “speaking that way” and to whom some listeners will say, “Oh no, he’s a- a step higher… so maybe I’m nothing.” Here the high cultural capital of the American English accent in the Ugandan linguistic market places its speaker higher, perhaps in part through association with the American missionaries, doctors, and positive media images he had mentioned earlier. In comparison, the speaker of Ugandan English values himself so low in cultural capital that he is “nothing.” This projected future of being valued highly for his American accent in Uganda
seems to affect how Andrew perceives himself in America: “when I came to UWC USA I sort of took my position a little bit lower… because that is the mentality I grew up with that the white person is- is here [right hand at shoulder height]… And the black person is here [left hand at waist height]” (ll. 19-24). In Andrew’s series of small stories (positioning level 1), it is through his own agency that he takes a lower social position than his white American-English-speaking peers. What these peers are doing, other than asking him what he is saying and telling him that they don’t understand him, is not mentioned in the narrative. Rather, it is an internalized sense of black being lower than white brought from experience in Uganda that is shifting Andrew’s social positioning. By not being understood, Andrew is reminded that he is speaking a less-valued variety of English and extrapolates this to having less value as a person. Andrew summarizes with an evaluation of the relevancy of his narrative: “I had a very big issue with identity in my first semester… Things to do with language, things to do with religion and how-how I can read myself.” (ll. 24-27). Andrew narrates a very explicit understanding of how language and identity are interrelated. It is his experiences played out in linguistic social practice that lead him to have “a very big issue with identity.” It is through linguistic interaction that we negotiate our identity and our power. At the narrative level (positioning level 1), Andrew’s interactions leave him silenced and under-valued, taking a lower social position as a result of the way he is speaking and being spoken to. It affects how he “can read” himself: how he understands his own narrative. In addition to language and self-understanding, Andrew topicalizes religion as another significant factor in his crisis of identity. Religion represents a grand narrative into which we write ourselves, negotiating our positioning in a story larger than ourselves. Unlike language and identity, which Andrew returns to in several iterations of his narrative throughout the program, religion as an aspect of Andrew’s self-narrative is not
mentioned again until the end of his final interview. Meanwhile, at positioning level 2, Andrew continues to use this narrative to build his relevancy and legitimacy in the present discourse of discussing linguistic inclusion.

Excerpt 7.10 “Something to do- do with how we’ve been hardwired”

Andrew: Yeah. And when- and definitely when you go back home they- there is a friend of mine.

Kim: Mm.

Andrew: She is a- she’s she’s- she’s Tanzanian- Canadian- who=

Kim: =Yeah=

Andrew: =She was (born in -) but she’s Tanzanian and she has you know the- the- (American) accent.

Kim: Right.

Andrew: So among- among the- you know us Africans-

Kim: Mm hm.

Andrew: -there is- I’ve got some friends of mine who would think that uh she- she’s ahead of them.

Kim: Mm.

Andrew: So something to do- do with how we’ve been hardwired.

Andrew offers a further small story in which the figure is his American-English-speaking Tanzanian-Canadian friend. He does so to bring his narrative back to “when – and definitely when you go back home” (l. 31). Because he has not experienced this going home yet himself, Andrew switches back to the second and third person narrative. By adding “definitely” here
again, he positions himself as a reliable witness to avoid his narrative being dismissed on the
grounds that he has not personally experienced it. He positions himself further by offering his
friend’s narrative as evidence, first by clarifying her complex identity: “there is a friend of
mine… She is a- she’s she’s- she’s Tanzanian- Canadian- who… She was (born in -) but she’s
Tanzanian and she has you know the- the- (American) accent” (l. 31-35). The relevant
identifiers are her relation to the animator (“a friend of mine”), her official identifier
(“Tanzanian-Canadian”), her birth place (“born in-… she’s Tanzanian”) and her linguistic
identity (“she has… the… American accent”). All of these identifiers are relevant in
understanding the reaction she receives: “So among- among the- you know us Africans… there
is- I’ve got some friends of mine who would think that uh she- she’s ahead of them” (ll. 37-39).
Within this narrative, linguistic capital becomes social capital placing the speaker “ahead” of her
peers. Finally, Andrew offers a summary in explanation for this integral connection between
language and identity: “so something to do- do with how we’ve been hardwired” (l. 41). Here
Andrew essentially offers an explanation to Wanyi as to why, in her words, “sometimes people
do relate language with culture.” He explains her African friend’s accusation of discrimination
without saying that it is Wanyi who is being discriminatory; rather, Andrew’s narrative amounts
to an effective framing of institutionalized racism beyond the personal level. He embeds his
narrative of language and power in the grander narratives of colonialism, race, class, religion,
and transnational migration. In his frequent shifts in subject, Andrew marks this narrative as
both personal and widely-shared as people and linguistic practices increasingly cross borders and
identities become increasingly complex. In addition, he positions himself as someone with
relevant first-hand or second-hand experiences of linguistic, cultural, and racial discrimination
(positioning level 1), as a skilled orator building compassion and connection with his fellow
facilitators through shared stories (positioning level 2), and as an African and legitimate speaker of English(es) (positioning level 3). In addition, in these interrelated narratives he begins to build his identity as a leader of inclusive communication.

7.4.2 Narrative 2: Communication Crew self-introduction

After this meeting with his fellow facilitators, the next opportunity that Andrew has to shape his narrative in a significant way was his initial introduction to the Communication Crew. As a facilitator helping organize the Communication Crew, this introduction was also the first time he was able to speak from the position of a linguistic leader.

Excerpt 7.11 “I’ll share with you my story of identity, language, and fitting into a group”

1 A: [Stands] So: um. I’m from Uganda. And uh I speak- I speak- Lu- Lugwere is my first
2 language which is my ethnic tribal language. So I speak this much Lugwere [hands
3 spread at arms length]. Then I speak English [hands spread at arms length]. Then I
4 speak uh Lusota [hands a few inches closer together], Luganda- where I live- the
5 area where I live but that’s not my tribe- and then I speak some German [hands
6 about a foot apart].
7 Many: Oh:
8 A: Ich spreche Deutsch. [I speak German]
9 Many: Whoa: [claps]
10 A: I speak- I speak some Spanish. And the reason why I’m here is I’ve had ex- you
11 know coming to United World College there are friends of mine who struggle with
12 you know expressing themselves in English and I am here because I feel for you. I
13 want to learn from Kim what- what she’s trying to- to- you know what skills she’s
trying to use to help include all of us so that when I go back to school I will be able
to extend that hand to the people who are- who may feel left out. I’m also here- if I
get a chance I’ll share with you my story of identity, language, and fitting into a

group and I want to be able to help us all.

Here Andrew introduces the complexity of his linguistic identity. Significantly, he frames his
Lugwere (his “first” and “ethnic tribal” language) and his English as being of equal status in
terms of his perceived competency. In doing so, Andrew claims his right as a speaker of the
globally dominant language: English is as much his as his first and ethnic tribal language.
Because of social expectations around race, nationality and language, he claims his right as a
speaker of Lugwere. By linking this right to his competency as an English speaker, Andrew
positions himself confidently in the social market. There is no discernable reaction from his
audience of international peers as he adds that he speaks Lusota and Luganda (which he
identities as “the area where I live but that’s not my tribe”), but when he announces that he
speaks “some German” (l. 7) there is a widespread surprised response from the crowd: “Oh:” (l.
6) and when he demonstrates, a further surprised and appreciative response “Whoa: [claps]” (l.
8). In this introduction of his complex linguistic competencies, Andrew negotiates linguistic
identities and builds social capital by demonstrating a complex pluralilingualism.

Andrew states his reason for being in the Communication Crew: “the reason why I’m
here is I’ve had ex-” (l. 9). Instead of finishing what is presumably “experience”, Andrew shifts
into a small story to show rather than tell this experience: “you know coming to United World
College there are friends of mine who struggle with you know expressing themselves in English
and I am here because I feel for you” (ll. 9-11). Unlike his narrative shared openly with his
fellow facilitators days before, here as a program facilitator speaking in front of program participants Andrew narrates the figures of the struggle for expression in English as “friends of mine” rather than himself. Again, the “friends of mine” figure allows Andrew to negotiate the high relevance but low vulnerability of the narrative: he has relevance as the animator and author of this narrative (positioning level 2) but is not vulnerable as its struggling figure (positioning level 1). Instead, Andrew takes a powerful but empathetic position: “I am here because I feel for you” (l. 11). He is not struggling himself, but he understands the struggle of “you”- those who cannot be understood. He then positions himself as apprentice, wanting “to learn from Kim … what skills she’s trying to use to help include all of us so that when I go back to school I will be able to extend that hand to the people who are- who may feel left out.” (ll. 11-14). His proclaimed desire to learn can be understood at positioning level 3 as the investment of his identity as a linguistic leader who has overcome a linguistic identity crisis into the social practice of linguistic inclusion so that he can expand that identity and play the role of linguistic leader in his imagined community at his UWC.

Finally, Andrew offers a concise and profound summary of his narrative as another reason for his investment in the Communication Crew: “I’m also here- if I get a chance I’ll share with you my story of identity, language, and fitting into a group and I want to be able to help us all” (ll. 14-15). Andrew’s framing of his story highlights the intimate connection between identity, linguistic practice, and imagined community. “Fitting into a group” is negotiating his social positioning as part of a community of practice. This social positioning and identity work is done in and through language. Andrew also reaffirms his imagined future and identity as a linguistically inclusive helper: “I want to be able to help us all.” The object of his desired help is inclusive of everyone in the room, including himself. In order for his story to be told and his
assistance to be offered within the community, there is a condition: “If I get a chance I’ll share
with you.” This is a small story by Georgakopolou’s (2007) definition in that it is a deferral of
telling. While the actual telling of the story is deferred to a later “chance,” by offering even the
abstract (Labov & Waletzky, 1967; also cited by Georgakopolou (2007) in her small stories
analysis) he engages in identity work to be continued at a later opportunity. Community
members need opportunities to take on linguistically inclusive leadership roles: they need overt
instruction and critical framing to know how to transform social practices (New London Group,
2000); they need discursive space to shape and share their stories of language and identity; and
they need discursive space and access to diverse available designs to engage in transformative
practice. Andrew discursively links the sharing of his story to the act of helping, as though he
understands that his narrative and his associated identity (as author, animator, figure, and
principle) are of particular value to this community in its intention to be linguistically inclusive.

7.4.3 Narrative 3: Multilingual Community Building reflection

In the final moments of the Communication Crew debrief of the non-English community
building, Andrew had the opportunity he had been seeking to share his narrative of language,
identity and inclusion. Uncharacteristically silent during the majority of the debriefing
discussion, Andrew waited until we were almost out of time to raise his hand.

Excerpt 7.12 “It put me in that position again”

1 Kim: Okay. So um I’m noticing the time any final words like- Andrew yes.
2 Andrew: Um. I am really- I am- I thought I am frustrated that morning. I was totally in a
different mode. Different level of energy.
3 Kim: Yeah.
Andrew: And I realize that um this community building had triggered some of the moments when I just moved to the US.

Kim: Mm.

Andrew: The difference in accents. I had to repeat so much like five times before somebody- and I volunteered to like type words so that somebody could actually understand what I was saying.

Kim: Ye:s.

Andrew: If I told a joke it would no longer be a joke because it- I told it again. So all of those feelings just were on the inside of me and just reminded me that they’re actually- I mean it put me in that position again.

Kim: Yeah.

Andrew: And it sss- there’s more for me to take action to create more environment. And I’m actually looking forward to going back to- to UWC USA New Mexico and have you know things like Com- like Communication Crew.

Kim: Yeah.

Andrew: You know just learning from here. And I’m so grateful to- for coming- for having such an opportunity.

Kim: Right.

Andrew: Thank you.

Kim: Thank you.

Many: Clapping.
The lack of speech prior to this point and the uncertainty with which he begins with the filler “um” and several false starts shifting ambiguously between the present and past tense seem to index a hesitancy to speak. Throughout his narrative, I frequently interject indicators of positive uptake such as “yeah,” “yes,” and “right.” Andrew eventually orients his narrative in the Multilingual Community Building past: “I thought I am frustrated that morning. I was totally in a different mode. Different level of energy” (ll. 2-3). Andrew’s reported feeling of frustration is marked as a distinctly “different mode” and “different level of energy,” setting the experience as being emotionally contrastive to his usual PSYL self. Andrew then shifts into a different narrative by linking this frustration—a negative feeling association with an inability to change or achieve something—with a frustration he had felt in the past: “And I realize that um this community building had triggered some of the moments when I just moved to the US” (ll. 5-6). “Triggered” is a word used in the discourse of the community to mean that an emotion that we are feeling in the present is actually created from association with an experience in the past. In this case, Andrew constructs his frustration at the community building as being a trigger from his frustration in not being able to achieve communication when he first moved to America: “The difference in accents. I had to repeat so much like five times before somebody—and I volunteered to like type words so that somebody could actually understand what I was saying… If I told a joke it would no longer be a joke because it- I told it again” (ll. 8-12). As a result of the difference in accents, Andrew narrates the increasingly frustrating experience of not being able to achieve communication: first having to repeat himself multiple times, then still not being able to achieve communication so needing to write down his words, then still not being able to communicate his meaning because written and repeated words lose their humour or other desired effect. Andrew concludes this past narrative by linking it back to his feelings in the more
recent experience through a coda (Labov & Waletzky, 1967): “So all of those feelings just were on the inside of me and just reminded me that (there) actually- I mean it put me in that position again” (ll. 12-14). The frustration of being unable to communicate reminds him of the past (or of the reality of others in the present) and once again socially positions him at positioning level 1 on the outside of the community of linguistic practice.

This shift from the inside to the outside creates an empathetic connection between his present self unable to communicate at the community building and his past self unable to communicate at his school; this empathetic connection is then transferred to others who are still struggling to communicate at the periphery of both PSYL and his home community of practice: “There’s more for me to take action to create more environment. And I’m actually looking forward to going back to- to UWC USA New Mexico and have you know things like com- like Communication Crew… you know just learning from here” (ll. 16-20). Here Andrew reanimates his present communicatively-competent self (positioning level 3) with the power to “take action” to change the community of practice and “create” a more linguistically inclusive “environment.” By investing his linguistic leader identity (positioning level 3) into the social practices of “things like… Communication Crew” and other “learning from here,” Andrew narrates a belief that he has the power to shift the culture of his community of practice. Whereas given the painful narrative he has shared about linguistic exclusion in his school community his audience may expect that Andrew is dreading his return to the UWC, Andrew reports he is “actually looking forward to going back” because he has a vision of an imagined future in which his identity as inclusive leader (positioning level 2 and 3) gives him both a sense of belonging and a purpose in shaping the community of practice. Andrew concludes his speech with a statement of gratitude and thanks: “I’m so grateful to- for coming- for having such an opportunity… thank you” (ll. 20-
To which I respond “thank you” (l. 24). While Andrew’s gratitude is indexed with the Communication Crew experience, which includes overt instruction, critical framing, and transformative practice of linguistic inclusion as well as the opportunity to construct and share narratives of linguistic identity, my gratitude is offered to Andrew for sharing his narrative with myself, the community of participants, and the future community of scholars who have the opportunity to gain valuable insights from his words. His peers’ subsequent clapping can be understood as an expression or construction of gratitude for both Andrew’s narrative and the Communication Crew experience.

Andrew’s linguistic identities are expressed and formed not only in the stories he tells, but also in the way that he tells them (positioning level 2). His identity as a legitimate, competent, and skilled English speaker is constructed and performed in the structure of his narratives. He speaks eloquently, offering rich description and crafting his narratives for maximum cognitive and emotional affect. In addition, Andrew’s identity as a linguistically inclusive speaker is constructed and performed in his speech. He speaks slowly, pauses often, and uses expressive gestures, intonation, and facial expressions. The Communication Crew has given him a platform to create, invest, negotiate, and display his linguistic leader identity. While at the narrative level he is positioned as being limited in situated symbolic capital, at the narrating level, he is positioned as being incredibly rich in situated symbolic capital. This power-building narration continues in the research interview.

7.4.4 Narrative 4: Research interview

The final iteration of Andrew’s language and identity narrative came in his interview with me on the final day of the program. While it can be seen as one longer narrative made up of
a series of small stories, it has been split up for the purposes of analysis. Excerpts 7.13-7.15 are analyzed first at the level of positioning level 1 (the narrative level) with common comments about their positioning level 2 and 3 following. During the interview, Andrew weaves race and ethnicity back into his narrative as he responds to my question “why did you want to participate in the Communication Crew?”

**Excerpt 7.13 “Maybe it’s because I’m black”**

1. Andrew: I wanted to learn more on how to create a more inclusive community.
2. Kim: Right.
3. Andrew: Because I personally have had um cases of language and identity and it played so much in the life the very first time I went from home- from Uganda to UWC USA New Mexico that was last year, last summer.
5. Andrew: I- you know I came in definitely had a different accent.
6. Kim: Mm.
7. Andrew: But then I’ve been studying in English ever since I stepped in class.
8. Kim: Right.
9. Andrew: So when I moved to- when I moved to school in the US um because of the difference in accents.
10. Kim: Mm.
11. A: There- I uh- you know I had there are some things I had to repeat like five times for somebody to understand and it really- it really hurts so bad.
Andrew: And you know for the different groups who came in um definitely there are people who have been speaking English all their life so they are really quick.

Kim: Yes.

Andrew: They are very fast and at times I feared to ask “could you repeat that” because you know moving very very fast and let’s say this I’m telling a joke that is really a joke to me.

Kim: Yes.

Andrew: And I have to repeat it three times it just does not become a joke.

Kim: It’s not funny by the end.

Andrew: Yeah. So I was actually pushed to- because of the surrounding and the way I perceived myself because things um you know my ethnicity came up during that time like maybe it’s because I’m black that I maybe I can’t do something significant in this community.

Kim: Yes.

Andrew: So my very first semester in school I spent it in my room.

Kim: Mm.

Andrew: I- I- I backed off. I didn’t- and people went for responsibility- but if you actually- see, if you- if you take a look at whoever stepped up in positions of responsibility in the first semester they are all first- you know first- native speakers of English.

Kim: Interesting.

Much of this narrative is similar to its previous iterations: Andrew’s investment in the Communication Crew is constructed to be an investment of his identity as someone who has
overcome a communication challenge and is now a leader wanting to “create a more inclusive community” (l. 1). The challenge came as a result of a clash between his identity as an English speaker—“I’ve been studying in English ever since I stepped in class” (l. 9)—and his interactive experience as a Ugandan-English speaker in America—“there are some things I had to repeat like five times for somebody to understand and it really- it really hurts so bad” (ll. 14-15). This narrative differs from previous iterations in that Andrew expands on the theme of power and identity. First, he discusses the linguistic diversity of his school “for the different groups who came in” (l. 17) and his place in this linguistic market. Although Andrew maintains his English competency as someone who has “been studying English ever since I stepped in class,” he contrasts this with “people who have been speaking English all their life” (l. 17) with the main difference being the speed of speech: “they are really quick” (l. 18); “they are very fast” (l. 20); “moving very very fast” (l. 21). While Andrew has frequently mentioned his frustration in not being able to be understood, this is the first time in the data that he has mentioned his fear of not being able to understand: “at times I feared to ask ‘could you repeat that’” (l. 20). His offered reason for this fear is the same reason for his frustration: if someone is telling a joke and it has to be repeated for comprehension, in my words, “it’s not funny by the end” (l. 24). Here Andrew constructs a small story in which he is again positioned as a legitimate speaker of English who nevertheless struggles to have his voice heard in the interactional environment of his school.

In this iteration of the narrative, Andrew expands on the consequences of this miscommunication. He begins “So I was actually pushed to-” (l. 25) but does not offer what he was pushed to do until much later when he offers “So my very first semester in school I spent it in my room” (l. 29) and “I- I- I- backed off” (l. 31). Between these lines, Andrew qualifies what he means by being “pushed to” do these things. Rather than placing blame on the figures who
have “pushed” him, Andrew places the blame on the context and his own interpretation of his place in that context: “because of the surrounding and the way I perceived myself” (l. 25). He further expands on his self-perception: “because things um you know my ethnicity came up during that time like maybe it’s because I’m black that I maybe I can’t do something significant in this community” (ll. 25-26). The concept of his “ethnicity [coming] up” recalls research done by Critical Race Theorists such as Ibrahim (1999) whose study of “becoming black” looks at how blackness is constructed when black Africans immigrate to predominantly white contexts (in Ibrahim’s participants’ case, Toronto; in Andrew’s case, New Mexico). Whereas blackness is not a significant social construct in a context where the majority is black, it becomes socially significant and has profound effects on identity and discourse in other contexts. In his narrative, Andrew’s inability to interact in his new community of practice triggers larger questions for Andrew about his value as a black, Ugandan-English speaker in what he constructs to be the dominantly (though not necessarily predominantly) white, American-English speaking community of practice. Further, he narrates that his belief in his inability to contribute significantly to the community in fact causes him to not contribute significantly to the community: this narrated self spent the first semester “in [his] room” (l. 29) and “backed off” (l. 31) from social responsibilities. Andrew indicates the linguistic inequity of those taking positions of power: “if you take a look at whoever stepped up in positions of responsibility in the first semester they are all first- you know first- native speakers of English” (ll. 31-33). This can be read as the self-perpetuating cycle of coercive power structures (Cummins, 2009) and symbolic violence. Because language is so central to how we construct meaning in our communities of practice, those who perceive that they do not have power to contribute meaning linguistically may feel that they do not have the power to contribute meaning in any significant
way to the culture. They may withdraw from interaction and the power relations of the community remain unchallenged and unchanged.

Excerpt 7.14 “Maybe- maybe it doesn’t count”

Andrew: It affected me very much that I became very conscious of myself.

Kim: Yeah.

Andrew: I thought there are times where I couldn’t heh I couldn’t express myself. Even if I had an opinion I would sit back and feel maybe- maybe it does not count.

Kim: Uh.

Andrew: And maybe if I try to explain myself then the whole place is quiet I’m like “um. Did I say something wrong?”

Here Andrew continues to use narrative as a resource to position his past self as a sympathetic character struggling with issues of self-worth connected to themes of identity and language. This narrative has value in the narrating situation (positioning level 2) as it has deep resonance in a study about linguistic inclusions; and it has value for his overall identity beyond the narrated and narrating contexts (positioning level 3) as it is ultimately integrated into a linguistic leader identity. Returning to the narrative (positioning level 1), not being able to participate fully and fluently in the dominant linguistic practices of the community affects Andrew the character “very much” and makes him conscious not only of his linguistic practices, but of his self (l. 1). It is not for lack of vocabulary or grammar skills that Andrew narrates that he “couldn’t express [himself]” (l. 3); it is for lack of perceived value of his utterances: “even if I had an opinion I would sit back and feel maybe- maybe it does not count” (ll. 3-4). Here Andrew as figure is judging not only his utterances but also the opinions that his utterances would express as
worthless based on the linguistic market of the community. This self-judgment effectively silences this version of his past self as he “sit[s] back” (l. 4), passively deferring agency and discursive space. This passivity is narrated as the alternative to the experience of speaking without being understood where the response to his utterance is “the whole place is quiet” (l. 6) and he is left wondering “did I say something wrong?” (ll. 6-7). “Wrong” here does not seem to refer to grammatically wrong; instead, “wrong” is socially or morally wrong. The judgment may go deeper than grammar to the depths of identity and esteem. In Andrew’s narrative, he chooses to silence himself to avoid facing the humiliation of silencing his peers.

The role of ethnicity can be further explored in an excerpt later in the interview:

**Excerpt 7.15 “Where there is white and then there is black”**

1 Andrew: In Uganda we- I mean I didn’t really have that kind of consciousness.
2 Kim: Ah.
3 Andrew: Because we’re all the same.
4 Kim: Yes.
5 Andrew: And bring in the fact that we all have the same skin color.
6 Kim: Yes.
7 Andrew: It was- it was all- I mean if somebody- back home- no, the thing is heh.
8 Kim: Yeah.
9 Andrew: Back home if you made a mistake in English. Ah people would laugh at you.
10 Kim: Heh.
11 Andrew: They’d make fun of you- you’d find it written on the wall.
12 Kim: Heh heh.
13 Andrew: And so- so that you know- you-you- you have that pressure of I have to get it right.
Kim: Yeah.

Andrew: Almost all the time. But having—having that I think one of the things I think affected me a lot more was the change of atmosphere and having different ethnicities coming.

Kim: Hm.

Andrew: Where there is white [R hand at eye height] and then there is black [L hand at waist height].

Kim: Hm.

Andrew: It— It— I became very very conscious of maybe it’s the way I speak you know where you— you— you pronounce “water.” “Water” is “water” with a “t” you— I— I— I stress the “t.” And then you got I got the US it sounds “wader” and there’s that “ar” thing.

Kim: Yeah.

Andrew: And when you mention “water” to (others) they’re like “What what what?” until you have to explain much more so it’s— there is a weight just drains you know that energy to keep going and I get sucked back and I gave up for a certain time because you know I think it’s not worth it, right?

Kim: Yeah.

As Andrew continues his narrative, he sets up a contrast between the value of his linguistic resources in Uganda and these same resources in America. Andrew narrates that linguistically and ethnically in Uganda “we’re all the same” (l. 3) and “we all have the same skin color” (ll. 4-5). This sameness means there isn’t “that kind of consciousness” (l. 1) of constantly connecting one’s identity to one’s skin color and language accent. While this does not reflect the actual linguistic and ethnic diversity of Uganda, within the narrative Andrew draws on this “sameness”
as a resource to make a contrast between the two contexts: a “sameness” in terms of ethnicity and English accent in Uganda as compared to the differences in ethnicity and accent in America. This contrast is key to his narrative of struggle as the character represented by his past self contends with this contrast. He highlights the contrast by comparing the differences in consequences for making a “mistake” in English in the different contexts he has created. The consequences in his Ugandan context include public humiliation: “people would laugh at you,” “they’d make fun of you,” “you’d find it written on the wall” and “you have that pressure of ‘I have to get it right… almost all the time” (ll. 7-15). Although the content of Andrew’s explanation may suggest a negative experience of humiliation and intense social pressure to learn, the discursive construction suggests otherwise: Andrew smiles broadly throughout the explanation and introduces it with a familiarity and laughter: “back home- no, the thing is heh… Back home if you made a mistake in English. Ah people would laugh at you” (ll. 7-9). The repeated emphasis of this context as “home” and his own laughter frames this home narrative as relatively positive. In contrast, Andrew’s narrative construction of making communicative “errors” (or simply being misunderstood) in America is more strongly negative: “But having- having- that- I think one of the things I think affected me a lot more was the change of atmosphere and having different ethnicities coming… where there is white and then there is black” (ll. 15-18). The public humiliation of speaking grammatically incorrect English in Uganda and having his words written on the wall and constant pressure to speak grammatically correct English is constructed as nothing compared to the more subtle interactive humiliation of speaking perfectly grammatically correct but slightly accentually different English in America and having his interlocutor respond with “what what what?” (l. 24). In Andrew’s Uganda, English errors emphasize community sameness: they are all learning the same variety of English
together. In Andrew’s America, English diversity emphasizes community difference: he is marked as different by not being able to be understood.

Throughout these excerpts (7.13-7.15), Andrew does extensive positioning work within the narratives (positioning level 1), working across different contexts. At the same time, he is doing positioning at the level of the narration (positioning level 2). His willingness to offer a lengthy personal narrative indexes an understanding of the tellability of the narrative (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012; Sacks, 1974): he understands the value of his narrative in the context of a research interview about language and power. He is performing an identity as a critically-aware communicator who has gained legitimacy through a combination of linguistic oppression and linguistic capital (as a legitimate English speaker). He further connects his narrative to master narratives of race and racism, international migration, and colonialism, positioning himself as a black African English speaker geographically migrating to a North American context (positioning level 3). Ultimately, he is building his capital as a legitimate and capable communicator in both the African and North American contexts and as a legitimate linguistic leader.

Later, Andrew’s confidence in the value of his narrative is indexed as he creates discursive space to add a missing piece to his narrative:

Excerpt 7.16 “How I transitioned from there to now”

1 Andrew: And one thing that I have not mentioned is how I transitioned from there to now.

2 Kim: Yeah! Yeah.

3 Andrew: I would say that uh it came partly because of my faith.

4 Kim: Hmm.
Andrew: I- When I kept reading- when I kept reading the Bible I could (certain things) you know I am actually special. I can- you know I can actually step up. It- it does not matter what people think about me it’s what God thinks of me. So it helped me gain that ground. So if people could hear that encouragement more from human beings telling them “you know you can actually step up to this” just like you did with the Japanese students who are here and say “I encourage you, ganbatte” you know “you can do it.”

Kim: Yeah.

Andrew: If they have that support base they can- you know they look back they think “why does- why does Kim keep telling me I can do it? Maybe she has seen something that I don’t see” so they step and- and go for it.

Kim: Mm.

Part of Andrew’s constructed linguistic identity is one who has overcome a language barrier and linguistic self-consciousness. Here, he utilizes a small story as a resource to position himself as having overcome the struggle and explain how he was able to transition from “there to now” (l. 1): from someone who doubted his ability to contribute meaningfully to his community of practice to someone invested with the motivation and the power to change the entire culture of his school. In his transition narrative (positioning level 1), Andrew cites his “faith” as the cause of the transformation (l. 3). While his social interaction with the other members of his community of practice led this narrated past version of himself to conclude that he had nothing to contribute, his textual interaction with the Bible told him otherwise: “you know, I am actually special. I can- you know I can actually step up. It- it does not matter what people think about...
me, it’s what God thinks of me” (ll. 5-6). By placing his own narrative of self and identity within the Christian narrative (positioning level 3), he is able to devalue his perceived opinion of what the other people in his community of practice and instead place value in the comforting narrative of what God thinks of him, which is that he is special and of value. Placing himself as a figure in the Christian narrative of God’s unconditional love helps him “gain that ground” (l. 6): the identity position from which he can draw the right to speak and the power to impose reception and contribute to his community of practice. This small story is a useful resource for Andrew as it positions him (positioning level 3) not only as a Christian, but also as a linguistic leader who understands what language learners need in order to succeed: rather than suggesting that all learners seek God as a source of self-worth, Andrew suggests that it is the social practice of receiving encouragement from a significant external source that can make the difference: “if people could hear that encouragement more from human beings telling them “you know you can actually step up to this” just like you did with the Japanese students who are here and say “I encourage you, ganbatte” you know “you can do it”… “If they have that support base they can- you know they look back they think “why does- why does Kim keep telling me I can do it? Maybe she has seen something that I don’t see” so they step and- and go for it” (ll. 7-14). By bringing me as a character into his narrative (l. 9-14) and voicing his encouragement to learners through my words, Andrew skillfully links his ideas to my own and builds capital simultaneously for my own actions in the Communication Crew and his proposed future actions as a linguistic leader (positioning level 2). Here Andrew has skillfully transitioned his narrated character from the position of a sympathetic figure struggling with linguicism and questions of identity to a confident linguistic leader and model participant in a research interview on linguistic inclusion.
In addition to encouragement, Andrew cites several other social practices at PSYL as empowering social practices for diverse speakers:

**Excerpt 7.17 “They started to realize they had value in the community”**

1 Andrew: …I think Language Buddies would really work well at school where uh the sec- now
2 for the second years who are at the UWC now.
3 Kim: Mm hm.
4 Andrew: They- say they’re from Japan. They speak- they speak English.
5 Kim: Sure.
6 Andrew: People from Germany they do understand English so we can work with them so that
7 they are first years as they come in you know we pair them up or have more people
8 just like we had here to help them feel- to help the people who are coming in feel
9 more included.
10 Kim: Nice.
11 Andrew: We could have also dif- we could have activities and- so one thing I really saw from
12 one of the Japanese students who came here after their performance on stage and
13 everyone applauded.
14 Kim: Yes.
15 Andrew: They started to realize that they had value in community.
16 Kim: Yes.
17 Andrew: And I think having activities where they get to show off their talent they get to show
18 off their ability.
19 Kim: Mm hm.
20 Andrew: Would help a lot.
Kim: Yes.

Andrew: In this because it would- it would help them feel as though they have something to contribute to our community.

Kim: Yes.

Andrew: I also- uh one other thing that I really- I really loved was the platform you created in the Communication Crew.

Kim: Mm.

Andrew: Because had we not had a meeting space- let’s say you pair people up.

Kim: Yes.

Andrew: And say this is your Language Buddy but you don’t really follow up on that.

Kim: Right.

Andrew: You could never hear from you know some of the ESL participants.

Kim: True.

Andrew: But one thing I realized with Communication Crew- that every other day you had people coming in and there was a platform where the ESL participants felt um you know they felt they could speak they could express themselves I saw- I saw- I- I- especially the Japanese students I saw them really come out during that time- I wish this is what it would be like in community building sessions.

Kim: Yes.

Andrew: And it was- it was such- it was really exciting so I want to create that platform.

Kim: Mm.
Andrew: At least- at least once a week where you meet and check-in on how people are doing.

Here Andrew alternates between a future small story of an imagined linguistic-inclusion program in the context of his school and a past small story of how the English language learners (specifically the Japanese language speakers) benefited from the linguistic-inclusion program in the context of PSYL. In his narrative, Andrew constructs Language Buddies, shows, and the Communication Crew as three examples of interventions with the potential to empower learners of the dominant language in a community. The Language Buddy system is reimagined in the UWC context to be upper-year students pairing with their first-year country-mates to share with they have learned and “help the people who are coming in feel more included” (l. 8). Because the upper-year students are assumed to speak both their home language (in Andrew’s narrated example, German) and are assumed to have increased access to the dominant language of the community (in this case, English), they are positioned to provide legitimate peripheral participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991) in interaction across languages with their first-year buddies. For activities such as shows, Andrew offers a small story as evidence for their empowering potential: “one thing I really saw from one of the Japanese students who came here after their performance on stage and everyone applauded… They started to realize that they had value in community” (ll. 10-13). Here the multimodal practice of performing on a stage (the Japanese participants performed the soran bushi dance and demonstrated martial arts during the first show) and the positive gestured response of “everyone applaud[ing]” is constructed by Andrew as an identity affirming and empowering moment of positive evaluation of self beyond language. In Andrew’s evaluation: “I think having activities where they get to show off their talent they get to show off their ability… would help a lot in this because it would- it would help
them feel as though they have something to contribute to our community” (ll. 15-21). Finally, Andrew cites the Communication Crew as a “platform” that allows the community to co-create a voice for the “ESL participants.” With Language Buddies but without the Communication Crew, “You could never hear from you know some of the ESL participants” (l. 30.) Andrew again offers a small story as evidence with the Japanese participants as figures: “there was a platform where the ESL participants felt um you know they felt they could speak they could express themselves I saw- I saw- I- I- especially the Japanese students I saw them really come out during that time” (ll. 34-36). The “platform” of the Communication Crew is a Community of Practice within a Community of Practice. In this context, the communicative practices affirm the identities and experiences of the “ESL participants.” Their identities are affirmed as competent and valued speakers and their experiences are affirmed as community members facing the challenge of communicating beyond their communicative norms. These affirmations allow the ESL participants to invest their identities in the practices of the learning community and “come out” (l. 36) knowing that their identities would be accepted. Andrew ends by contrasting the Communication Crew to the daily Community Building sessions: “I wish this is what it would be like in community building sessions” (l. 37). Andrew indexes a desire for further change in the wider community of practice and for his own academic community of practice: “I want to create that platform… at least once a week where you meet and check-in on how people are doing” (ll. 39-41). Through constructing a narrative that evaluates the Communication Crew in a positive way, Andrew continues to build his own capital as a helpful interviewee (positioning level 2), and linguistic leader apprentice (positioning level 3). In his future narrative, Andrew’s imagined identity as an inclusive leader and change-maker allows him to express his agentive role in the creation of a new community of practice within his home community.
Finally, Andrew talks about his excitement for returning to his school and creating an inclusive community:

Excerpt 7.18 “I think we should create more opportunity for people to wake up”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Andrew:</th>
<th>Kim:</th>
<th></th>
<th>Andrew:</th>
<th>Kim:</th>
<th></th>
<th>Andrew:</th>
<th>Kim:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>But I really think this is going to be something big.</td>
<td>Yeah.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>I’m so excited!</td>
<td>I’m excited too- I’m so excited.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Yeah. By the time the- the truth of the matter is there are times even in the Communication Crew.</td>
<td>Yeah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Where I couldn’t hold it. There’s- there’s a session where I left and I shed a few tears because it’s really- remember- definitely just like any other human being they have other issues that are demanding and then this- this (rolls up on them) – what I would say like all humanity we need that place of inclusion. We all have that need to belong.</td>
<td>Yeah.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>If I went to- if I went to Germany and all they speak is German, without English, I would definitely feel the same way.</td>
<td>Yeah.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>And one thing I realize especially when we had the- communica-community building in-</td>
<td>Mm hm.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>In Japanese and Spanish and German.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Kim: Yes.

Andrew: I realize that we don’t realize that there are people who are being left out until we are left out ourselves.

Kim: Yeah.

Andrew: And I think we should create more opportunity for people to wake up.

Andrew’s enthusiastic investment of his identity as inclusive linguistic leader into transformative practices in his UWC community is indexed with his statement “I think this is going to be something big” (l. 1) and his expression “I am so excited!” (l. 3). “Something big” may index something relevant, something transformative, or something wide-spread. The reason for his intense investment is such big plans is offered through a small story about the “times even in Communication Crew… where [he] couldn’t hold it” (ll. 6-8). Specifically, Andrew offers an account of “a session where [he] left and [he] shed a few tears because it’s really- remember- definitely just like any other human being they have other issues that are demanding and then this- this (rolls up on them)” (ll. 8-10). Through this narration (positioning level 2), Andrew constructs himself as an empathic observer to the struggles of those dealing with their own issues and then also facing a significant communication challenge. Andrew concludes and frames this small story narrative with a moral: “What I would say like all humanity we need that place of inclusion. We all have that need to belong” (ll. 10-11). This moral is infused with the emotional power of his narrated tears. He calls powerfully for transformative practices that include all members in a community. He discursively includes himself in the “we” who “need that place of inclusion,” drawing on both his identity as a linguistic leader and his identity as one who has suffered symbolic violence. Andrew then offers another short small story about this
transformative realization during Multilingual Community Building: “I realize that we don’t realize that there are people who are being left out until we are left out ourselves” (ll. 20-21). Andrew’s positioning here, as throughout his narrative, is complex: within his narratives, he creates a self that has been on both sides of the leaving out and has thereby developed a critical consciousness. I connect this with Luke’s (2004a) definition of “critical”:

To be critical is to call up for scrutiny, whether through embodied action or discourse practice, the rules of exchange within a social field. To do so requires an analytic move to self-position oneself as Other even in a market of field that might not necessarily construe or structurally position on as Other…. This doubling and positioning of the self from dominant text and discourse can be cognate, analytic, expository, and hypothetical, and it can, indeed, be already lived, narrated, embodied, and experienced. (p. 26).

This “doubling and positioning of the self” leads to his final moral statement calling for transformative practice: “and I think we should create more opportunity for people to wake up” (l. 23). This waking up is what Janks refers to as “changing consciousness” (2009, p. 24) or what Freire (1974) has called critical consciousness. This transformative aspect of Andrew’s narrative is explored further through Owen’s transformative narrative in chapter 8.

7.5 Discussion and Conclusions

This chapter outlines the discourse of diverse youth making sense of a critical reading of linguistic hierarchies. Their stories of intergenerational heritage and ancestral language loss, linguistic impoverishment, and linguistic exclusion demonstrate the effects of symbolic violence and the need for critical framing and transformative practice to work towards its eradication. Where there is a discrepancy between their imagined linguistic identities and their social
linguistic positioning, these participants are willing to invest in practices to change either their own linguistic resources or the linguistic landscape of their communities. The findings of this chapter support what Morgan and Ramanathan (2005) has called the “critical turn” in language and literacy education through what Matsuda (2008) calls the critical/transformative view of English as an International Language. Overt instruction on linguistic privilege creates discursive space for participants to examine the power structures of their world and understand its social construction. Organizing and being interviewed about transformative practices creates discursive space for the youth to re-design their world and re-negotiate their subject position within it. Their own stories of communicative struggle become relevant and valued discourses in the field and can be crafted and re-crafted to become narratives of transformation that project an imagined future in a transformative and transformed community of practice. Power is negotiated, constructed and reclaimed through narratives such as Andrew’s as he uses it to educate and motivate his peers and himself to invest in inclusive linguistic practices.

Andrew’s narrative begins with him as a voiceless member of an unfair community of practice with reified power structures. Through discovering his worth as a human being, he finds his value as a speaker within the field, finally achieving access even as he fears losing his diversity. However, it is only through the additional critical framing and opportunity for transformative practice at PSYL that Andrew finds his value as a transformative leader within the field. Now he no longer wants to find ways to work within the given power structures of his school: he wants to transform them. Transformative multiliteracies pedagogies are effective because they insist on this transformation of power structures: access to dominant forms is not enough if such access leads to a diminishing of identity and consequent loss of diversity. This is why critical literacy includes both “changing dominant discourses as well as changing which
discourses are dominant” (Janks, 2009, p. 27). Empowering our students to do so honours their voices and creates their agency in a way that strengthens our communities as a whole.

These participants narrate their identities as change-makers: as their t-shirts proclaim, they are one of the stories changing the world. As their identities shift, so do their stories, their imagined futures, their social practices, and thus their communities. Through critical framing, these identity shifts come with a power shift: they recognize their own power as change-makers and their ability to co-construct power with diverse community members. Their identities as change-makers committed to socially inclusive practice is recognized and valued in the learning environment of the program and the research project. This recognition and positive evaluation offers the participants the sustained social practice they need in order for sustainable identity and power shifts to take hold into their imagined futures. What our students learn about who they are shapes the stories they tell and the worlds they create.
Chapter 8: Design

8.1 Multilingual Community Building: Designing Communication

In the preceding chapters, the culture of this community of practice engaging in transformative multiliteracies pedagogies has been examined through the lenses of diversity, access, and power. The final orientation to critical literacy offered by Janks (2009) is design—the process of “challenging and changing existing discourses” (p. 25). The New London Group (2000) calls this Transformative Practice—creating new meaning through redesigning the norms of practice to match new contexts and creating new texts, new identities, and new experiences in the discipline. As Janks (2009) emphasizes, diversity, access, domination and design are “crucially interdependent” (p. 26). Thus it is not surprising that elements of design and transformative practice have already been woven throughout the analyses in the previous chapters. However, design warrants a chapter in its own right: while access and diversity provide the resources for meaning-making, it is design that gives the opportunity to harness these resources and challenge or change existing discourses. According to Janks (2009), access and diversity without opportunities for redesign “maintains and reifies dominant forms without considering how they could be transformed” and fails to realize the “potential” for transformation that “the means, the ideas, [and] the alternative perspectives” of diversity provides (p. 26). In addition, “the deconstruction of dominance, without reconstruction or designs, removes human agency” (Janks, 2009, p. 26). This chapter offers an analysis of what was cited by many participants and noted in my observations as a key transformative moment in the communication practices of the community: Multilingual Community Building.
Change and its relation to agency and identity feature strongly in the authoritative discourse of the PSYL community. “Be the change you wish to see,” a quote often attributed to Gandhi, is featured prominently on the website, in promotional materials, and in the words of the program coordinators and the participants themselves from the early days of the program. The promotional video for the program (www.psyl.ca) offers nine questions, most of which relate to either identity, change, or both (italics are my addition):

1. Who am I? (identity)
2. What kind of leadership can I offer? (identity)
3. What kind of community do I want to live in? (identity)
4. What can I do to make change? (change)
5. How can I be the change I want to see? (change and identity)
6. What’s my passion? (identity)
7. How can I make this fun?
8. How can I learn about issues I care about?
9. How can I transform my everyday decisions and choices into positive forces for change? (identity and change)

The participants themselves then build on this discourse. Within the first week of the program, program participants design and vote on an image and a slogan for the t-shirt they will receive at the end of the program. In both years, change and its relation to discourse was featured. In 2010, the slogan was “we are one of the stories changing the world” and the image was of a community of stick figures taking down a wall brick by brick and re-building it into a heart encircled by the names of every member of the community. The image on the front featured the Five Principles of the community, including yuuki in both its Anglicized version, yuki, and its
Japanese version, 勇気, kai, pura vida, agape, and fluss. (Fig. 8.1). In 2011, the slogan was simply “we speak the language of changemakers” (Fig. 8.2)

With change so highly valued, it was not surprising to me that the community was deeply invested in opportunities to transform their community and themselves. In both 2010 and 2011, the idea emerged in Communication Crew to redesign the dominance of English in the linguistic hierarchy by temporarily exploring a non-English discourse. Together, they planned a non-English community building session (also referred to as a “Multilingual Community Building” or, in 2011, “Trilingual Community Building”), whereby the community would be invited to participate in their daily morning meeting without using English. These morning sessions are
essential and authoritative discursive moments in the community: check-ins are done, energizers are offered, the daily flow of the day’s activities is shared, changes to the schedule are highlighted, problems are discussed, and discussions that build community are held.

When the community arrived for their community building session in the morning about half way through the program, Communication Crew members were there holding signs that said “Welcome to Multilingual Community Building”; “No English Please ☺”; and “Can’t understand? Be patient, smile, use Muglish!” (“Muglish” is a reference to another communication activity originating from the Communication Crew: participants were asked to use only gestures and the word “mu” to communicate phrases charades-style to explore non-verbal communication and encourage more gestures, facial expressions, and communicative creativity). In 2010, the Communication Crew invited the use of any non-English language; in 2011, they chose to limit it to the three non-English languages of the Communication Crew members (Japanese, German, and Spanish) and to include a hand-out with basic phrases in these three languages. Non-English dominant Communication Crew members began with a check-in in multiple languages, asking the community “How are you?” in Japanese, German, Spanish and (in 2009) other languages. Then a Japanese-dominant girl (2010) or group (2011) lead a translated Japanese version of an already-familiar call-and-response with gestures energizer (Watermelon Tai Chi). Other Spanish or German songs and dances followed. Then, as with every community building, the space was open for announcements: typically changes in the schedule, requests for computer use, sign-up procedures for upcoming events, birthdays, lost and found, and other such requests. In both years, it created an opportunity to critically frame and transform the right to speak (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991) and the power to impose reception in the community of practice.
For speakers of languages other than English, this activity can provide an opportunity to draw on diverse semiotic resources and perform multilingual identities. For speakers of English, the activity can create different identity shifts. Activities such as the Multilingual Community Building serve as temporary shifts for English speakers from a place of linguistic privilege; it is a chance for these speakers to start to imagine a world in which the symbolic violence of linguistic domination might be minimized. It is important to note that, in line with the theoretical frame of this study, I do not debate whether a one-hour session in languages other than the dominant language truly allows linguistically dominant participants to effectively understand the long-term struggles of linguistic exclusion; instead, I focus on how the participant-suggested community intervention features in participants’ narratives as a site of symbolic struggle (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991) and transformation. This chapter begins with a brief discourse analysis of the Multilingual Community Building Session from 2010. This is followed by an analysis of short excerpts from various Language Buddy interviews from 2010. Finally, the analysis is focused on the transformative narrative of Owen, a non-Language Buddy participant from 2011 whose narrative represents a particularly telling case (Sheridan et al., 2000) of the transformative potential for identity shifts to occur when communicative practices are redesigned.

8.2 Multilingual Community Building Analysis

Even a brief analysis of the video data from this multilingual session shows a few features of this marked session. First, the symbolic capital and communicative competence of many of the English language learners was apparent. As Julie leads the check in, she speaks clearly and uses clear actions:
Excerpt 8.1 “Check-in”

1 Julia: Check-in.
3 Julia: Ah. Fühlst du dich {gut tün Sie hände oben und wenn fühlst du dich {nicht gut tün Sie hände unten
4 {Rises hands.} {Lowers hands}
5 Kim: {Rises hands, smiles} {Lowers hands; frowns.}
6 Julia: Okay?

The German words she selects are simplified to the point that I (a non-speaker of German) was able to easily understand word-for-word her statements. Translated loosely, she is saying “If you feel good, raise your hands. If you feel not good, lower your hands” (l. 3). In German, as in English, there are countless ways to express this imperative with more complexity, formality or slang, but she has chosen a form that will be most widely understood. It is concise, matches clearly with gestures, repeats words, and takes advantage of the Germanic roots of English by using close cognates “hände,” “gut,” and “nicht gut” (l. 3). She also begins with a clear statement of purpose, “Check-in” (l. 1) (accented in German, but clearly comprehensible), and finishes with a check for understanding, “Okay?” (l. 6)

As Mana leads an energizer, she demonstrates similar communicative strategies and competencies:

Excerpt 8.2 “Blah blah blah”

1 Mana: {Shizuka-ni shitte kudasai!
2 {Finger to lips in “shushing” gesture.
3 Others: (2.0)
4 Mana:  
6         Eto.  
7         {Watashi-ga ittara, tsugni-ite kudasai  
8         {Points to self. {Points to crowd.  
9         Kim:  
10        Hai.  
11        Mana:  
12        Heh.  
13        {O:kina suika.  
14        Kayla and others:  
15        {O:kina suika.  
16        {Raises arms up.  
17        Mana:  
18        {Futatsu-ni kirimasu  
19        {Arms cut down.  
20        Kayla and others:  
21        {Futatsu-ni kirimasu.  
22        {Arms cut down.  
23        Mana:  
24        {Hanbun-o motte.  
25        {Mimes taking object.  
26        Kayla and Others:  
27        {Hanbun-o-motte.  
28        {Mimes taking object.  
29        Mana:  
30        {Tonari-no- Migi-no hito agemasu.  
31        {(Off camera)  
32        Rie and Others:  
33        {Migi-no hito agemasu  
34        {Arms to right.  
35        Mana:  
36        {Demo irimasen.  
37        {(Off camera)  
38        Sydney and others:  
39        (inaudible)
Man uses engaging facial expressions and tonality throughout. She begins by asking the crowd to be silent. She does so by combining her loud and clear Japanese request (l. 1) with a gesture familiar to her audience of pointing a finger to her lips (l. 2). When no one responds (l. 3), she smiles and nods (l. 4), indicating to her audience that they have in fact “understood” and complied with her request. She then asks, in Japanese, that everyone repeat after her (l. 5). She does this by using clear gestures pointing to herself and then to the audience (l. 6). Again, there is no response except I say “hai” to show that at least I understand (l. 7). She then begins the energizer, “Watermelon Tai Chi,” a practice that is familiar to the community in English that she has translated into Japanese. Like Julie’s choice of words in the greeting, Mana’s choice of words in her translation shows her translingual competence. They follow precisely the pattern of
the original English and are as concise as possible. In fact, they are more concise than the English original. This allows her non-Japanese-speaking audience to follow along in a repeat-after-me style effectively (ll. 8-29). Her audience leans forward to catch each syllable and gives their closest approximation. Their rapt attention can be understood as full investment of their imagined cosmopolitan identities into the practice of trying to speak Japanese. Jean-Luca next to Mana does so as well as he can, and expresses a sense of disengagement only at the end as he adds “blah blah blah” (l. 30) to the end of the final statement. Adding these nonsense syllables communicates that to him all of the utterances in the text at hand are nonsense. However, he does so smiling and only after effectively participating in the repeat-after-me style, negotiating a successful practice while also maintaining a communicative identity not completely congruous with the task at hand. At the end, Mana acknowledges the success of her audience—clapping first to herself (l. 32), then to the audience (l. 35) as she says “Jozu!” (l. 34) or “Well done!”.

Her Language Buddy, Linda, celebrates her success with “yay!” and a high-five as a non-verbal way to congratulate her on leading the entire community so effectively (ll. 36-38). This celebration acknowledges Mana’s identity as a Japanese speaker and competent translingual communicator, the community’s identities as competent translingual communicators, and Linda’s identity as a Language Buddy creating cultural capital with her Language Buddy leader in the moment.

When the community is open for discussion, I make the announcement in Japanese that the computer lab is only open to Credit Crew members that day. Following my announcement, which I accompany with the gesture of typing and includes “Kuredito Kuru” as a Japanese-English cognate of “Credit Crew,” there is a request for the announcement to be repeated in Spanish, a request that exceeds my linguistic capacities:
Excerpt 8.3 “En español? Uh oh.”

1  Kim:  {Kuredito Kuru: dake dekiru. {Okay?

2  {Mimes typing.  {OK sign with both hands. Drops hands.

3  Off camera:  Spanish.


5  Rafael:  (inaudible) los ordinaters no puedas comer. Son solo para el grupo credito.

6  Off camera:  Ah.

7  Off camera:  Mm.

8  Tanay:  Hindi.

9  Kim:  Hindi?

10  Tanay:  {I don’t know!

11  {Hands to side. Smiling.

12  Off camera:  (inaudible Hindi).

13  Tanay:  {Me no ishay kiero kyodai! [Hindi]

14  {Hands to side. Looking across circle.

Up until this point, I have maintained control and certain amount of power within the circle as I ask each participant to lead their check-ins and energizers and make announcements in languages I am familiar with. Here, I express my inability to fulfill a request: my lack of Spanish linguistic capital and thus situated symbolic capital. At that point, Rafael steps in and calmly explains the situation in Spanish. Unlike earlier multilingual utterances, Rafael does not accompany his explanation with many gestures or carefully chosen English cognates. Instead, he demonstrates power and linguistic capital by fulfilling the request for the utterance to be made in fluent
Spanish. Several people off camera respond with utterances that indicate that this fluent-Spanish utterance has met its target. Tanay, a Hindi speaker from India then requests that the announcement be made in Hindi. He directs this request towards me, even though he knows I am unlikely to be able to fulfill it. He then says in English “I don't know!” His use of English indicates his desperation to communicate that he is not understanding. As a facilitator, it may index a real concern that he is not understanding something that he needs to understand in order to fulfill his duties. Although I cannot understand the meaning of his Hindi words, he speaks them to the only other Hindi speaker across the circle with the same gesture he uses for “I don’t know” in English and in a tone that seems to index genuine concern.

Gabriele- a Portguese speaker from Brazil- then gets my attention by raising her hand and calling my name (l. 1): She speaks in fluent non-gestured Portuguese as she explains that she has a presentation that evening and so needs to use the computers (l. 3):

**Excerpt 8.4 “J’ai une problème!”**

1 Gabriele:  *Hand raised.* Kim.
2 Kim:  *(Off camera)*
3 Gabriele:  *Lowers hand.* Hay una personas das una ordinatores para trabahay una presentacione?
4 Lucy:  *R hand taps Gabriele with energy.* J’ai une problème! Je veux aller faire- j’ai ma presentation ce soir!
5 Ryan:  O:h. Okay.
6 Mary:  *Inaudible French.*--- ce soir?
7 Lucy:  *Turns to left.*
8 Mary:  -aussi por la crew credit.
The girl beside Gabriele—Lucy, an English-French bilingual from Montreal—is clearly able to understand Gabriele’s request through cognates between Portuguese and French. She demonstrates this understanding through rapid hand gestures and by immediately following Gabriele’s request with a similar statement in French: “I have a problem! I want to go do- I have my presentation this evening!” (ll. 4-5). Ryan responds with an empathetic “O:h” (l. 6) indicating that he understands both the utterance and the problem. Now that French has been introduced, this leads to various side conversations at various levels of French discourse as many of the Canadian participants use their school French to check their own and others’ comprehension of the situation (ll. 7-11). Across the circle, “yo tambien” (l. 12) and “moi aussi” (l. 13) are heard as people express their similar dilemmas. I am aware that at this point that few gestures are being used and more and more rapid French and Spanish utterances are being made. The target audience of these utterances are limited to the fluent French and Spanish speakers in the circle, excluding the Japanese, Hindi, and mono-lingual English speakers entirely. This is reminiscent of the usual level of English discourse as speakers demonstrate either a lack of awareness, intention, or willingness to construct their utterances in inclusive ways.

In general, the utterances of Multilingual Community Building were marked by an increased use of gestures, facial expressions, expressive tones, and checking for understanding. The Japanese, German, Hindi, and Swahili speakers carefully crafted their utterances for the
target audience of the whole community of non-fluent speakers. However, in the case of French and Spanish, there was enough of a target audience of fluent speakers to justify fluent utterances: it seemed to be enough that they were understood by a small group of fluent-speaking peers. The linguistic privilege that usually rests with the English speakers was shifted to the French and Spanish speakers who, unfortunately, in many cases are also fluent English speakers. The speakers of minority languages were by necessity more aware of the need to use extra-linguistic and multimodal means in order to construct a comprehensible utterance.

8.3 Interview Responses to Multilingual Community Building

In the planning of the activity in the Communication Crew, the stated purpose of the non-English community building was to temporarily remodel the symbolic order of the community. Every utterance can be understood as a site of symbolic struggle (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991) over whose sign would be accepted. Meaning was negotiated in multiple languages other than English, multiple linguistic and semiotic resources were drawn upon, and linguistic identities were performed, constructed, and in some cases challenged. This discourse of semiotic negotiation continued in follow-up interviews as narratives constructed the value of a plurilingual identity. This section analyzes the discourse of an interview with a language buddy trio: Miki, a Japanese-fluent speaker and English language learner from Japan; Justine, a French-fluent speaker and advanced English language learner from Quebec; and Arielle, an English-fluent speaker and French and Spanish language learner from Vancouver.

Excerpt 8.5 “I feel like learning more- many languages”

1  Miki: Yes. Yeah. I want to- I felt so comfortable because I heh I can speak Japanese freely.
2  Kim: Yeah oh good!
Miki: But I can’t understand [French, Spanish,]

Arielle: [Heh heh heh]

Kim: [I know.]

Justine: German.

Miki: German.


Miki: But I- I feel um that- I feel that- I feel like to- I feel like learning more- many languages.

Kim: Mm.

Miki: And especially I want to learn French because.

Kim: Yeah.

Justine: [Woo!]

Miki: [the people living here.]

Kim: Yeah.

Miki: May- uh- can speak French.

Kim: Yes.

Miki: So and yes.

Kim: [Okay. So it made you want to learn French.]

Arielle: [Can I- can I tell the story of when I told you how to say “How are you” in heh heh… in French and Spanish?]

In Miki’s Multilingual Community Building small story, she positions herself (positioning level 1) as a character actively engaged in the Japanese portion of the experience, “comfortable” as she
“can speak Japanese freely” (l. 1). Here her identity as a Japanese speaker (positioning level 3) is drawn on as an effective resource within the narrative that allowed her to express herself and feel at ease. She then adds the complicating action of the other languages: “but I can’t understand French, Spanish” (l. 3). Within the narrative of the Multilingual Community Building (positioning level 1), this complicating action creates a contrast with the comfort of speaking and understanding Japanese. In the narrating situation (positioning level 2), Miki is constructing this narrative in the presence of her Language Buddies, Justine—a fluent French speaker—and Arielle—who spoke in both French and Spanish at the Multilingual Community Building. This allows Miki to construct her Language Buddies as rich in cultural capital, stating that she “especially” wants to learn French (l. 12). Justine co-constructs this account by celebrating the high valuing of French (l. 14). At the narrative level, Miki builds symbolic capital for a plurilingual identity that can then be transferred to her French and Spanish-speaking Language Buddies (positioning level 2) as well as to her future imagined identity as a plurilingual speaker of French, English, and Japanese.

After some negotiation about whether the narrative was embarrassing or funny, Miki’s Language Buddy, Arielle, initiates a small story of what happened when Arielle and Justine tried to teach her Spanish:

Excerpt 8.6 “I’m crying because it’s so easy!”

65 Arielle: Heh heh. And so then um Miki asked how to say “how are you” in French so that’s like “comment ça va” and then- and then we practiced. And then- and then you
66 asked how do you say “how are you” in Spanish and I said “como estas.”
67 Miki: Heh heh.
68
Arielle: And Miki you go like “Oh!” like “Miki it’s okay you don’t need to know that” and
Miki goes- do you want to say what you said?
Miki: Y(h)es. When I- when I was sad I’m so- I was so feel like to crying.
Kim: Yeah why?
Miki: Because French and Spanish is so close!
Arielle: Heh heh.
Kim: Ye:s.
Miki: So and- but and I th- I’m Japanese and English is so: different from so I(h)’m so crying.
Kim: A:w.
Arielle: We go- you go “I’m crying because it’s so easy!”
Miki: Heh heh heh.
Kim: Heh heh. Well it’s true.

Arielle and Miki share the animator role as they co-construct a narrative that Arielle assures is “not an embarrassing story, it’s funny” (l. 48). Arielle begins the narrative in which she, Justine and Miki are the actors. She refers to her Language Buddy in the third person: “Miki asked how to say ‘how are you’ in French” (l. 65). She then shifts the narrative into the second person as she turns to Miki “And then- and then you asked how do you say “how are you” in Spanish?” (ll. 66-67). In this narrative, Arielle’s symbolic capital as a plurilingual French and Spanish speaker is highlighted as Miki is in the role of language learner. Arielle then animates the voices of Miki and her self in the narrative: “And Miki you go like “Oh!” like “Miki it’s okay you don’t need to know that!”” (l. 69) before offering the animator role over to Miki for the “punchline” of the
“funny” story: “and Miki goes- do you want to say what you said?” (ll. 69-70). Miki accepts this discursive role: “Y(h)es. When I- when I was sad I’m so- I was so feel like to crying” (l. 71). I create further discursive space for an explanation for this sadness and Miki responds “because French and Spanish is so close!” (l. 73). Arielle’s laughter and my uptake “Ye:s” constructs Miki as a successful story-teller and joke-teller. Miki then takes the narrative a step further: “So and- but and I th- I’m Japanese and English is so: different from so I(h)’m so crying” (l. 76). This utterance is different in genre from the punch line of the joke narrative. Using the contrastive “but”, she moves the narrative into a less comical and more personal tone, highlighting her Japanese identity and how different English is from her own linguistic resources. She ends with repeating the statement of her sadness, though she laughs through it. My response “a:w” (l. 77) indicates a compassionate listener who recognizes that there is pain rather than humour behind this turn in the narrative. Arielle then re-takes the role of animator, rephrasing Miki’s words to bring the narrative back to her frame as a humourous story: “We go- you go “I’m crying because it’s so easy!” (l. 78). Miki laughs and I join, indicating our acceptance of Arielle’s frame as I also add, “well it’s true” (l. 80).

There is both sadness and determination in Miki’s narrative as she commits to invest in multilingual practices beyond Japanese and English. It is as though even fluency in her “home” language and global English are now no longer enough to satisfy her imagined identity as a cosmopolitan community member: after experiencing a moment where her Japanese and English combined was not enough, she is now invested in learning French and Spanish. This is similar to her friend Natsumi, another Japanese-dominant participant whose narrative of the Multilingual Community Building involved a similar shift: “At first I thought I can speak English—only English… But I wanna learn—I wanna learn other language after English” (Natsumi). The
process of redesign in these narratives leads to a shift in identity from characters invested in the practices of learning English to enter an English monolingual community of practice to characters invested in the practices of learning English, French, and Spanish to enter a global, plurilingual community of practice.

Other participants offered narratives constructing a cosmopolitan identity high in plurilingual cultural and symbolic capital during the Multilingual Community Building:

Excerpt 8.7 “We switch the position”

_Julie (French-English)_

1  Kim: Alright and then how about the non-English community building. Heh heh heh. How did that feel?
2  Julie: {Mm. Heh.
3  Julie: {Thumb up.
4  Kim: Thumbs up from Julie. There was a lot of French wasn’t there?
5  Julie: Yes.
6  Kim: So how did that feel for you?
7  Julie: I really liked it heh heh.
8  Kim: Yeah? [Why did you like it.
9  Julie: [Because I can understand- I speak French and I can understand Spanish so.
10  Kim: Mm.
11  Julie: I:. Not-not because I wasn’t like more- because when it’s English I can participate also but just uh- yes to- to the other people can feel that- that we- we switch um- we switch the position-
At first, Julie and I co-construct her identity as a French speaker. I interpret her thumbs up in line four as a sign indicating her pleasure as a French speaker to be able to conduct a community building in her mother tongue: “there was a lot of French wasn’t there?” (l. 5). Julie confirms my interpretation in her subsequent turns, answering she “really liked it… because [she] can understand” (ll. 8-10). This is in line with the Communication Crew’s stated expectation that the community building would allow the non-native English speakers an opportunity to have their voice heard and feel communicative power. However, Julie expands on this basic interpretation in two ways. First, she says not only “I speak French” but also “I can understand Spanish” (l. 10). This challenges any assumption that as an English language learner her only languages are her mother tongue and English as second language and constructs her plurilingual identity as being relevant valuable in the context of the narrative. She then further qualifies her statement that she “really liked it” by expanding her scope to separate herself from the non-English-speaking language-learner identity by clarifying that the reason she liked it is “not because” she wasn’t able to speak in regular community buildings “because when it’s English I can participate also” (l. 11). Here she claims her place as a competent English speaker able to participate in regular community activities. In the same statement, she aligns herself instead with the Communication Crew in general whose task it was to design an empathy building linguistic activity. She furthermore distances herself from the “other people” who would need an activity such as this so they “can feel” and “switch the position” with non-native-English speakers. The false starts in this turn (ll. 11-12) are more frequent than in most of Julie’s speech and cannot
simply be disregarded as language learner “mistakes.” Rather, I read them as the sign of some advanced identity positioning where she is aligning herself neither with the privileged English speakers nor with the less-privileged non-English speakers. Julie’s position in the linguistic landscape of the program is particularly fluid as she embraces a plurilingual identity that incorporates an ease of comprehension between French, English, and Spanish.

Excerpt 8.8 “Oh it’s hard from both sides”

*Julia (German-English)*

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Kim: Another experience we had together was the Non-English c(h)ommunity building-</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Julia: It was cool.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kim: Cool? Tell me about it.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Julia: It was one of the best I think because for me it was cool because during we have to speak other languages so I can speak my mother language.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Kim: Yes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Brian: Heh heh heh.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Julia: I think it was funny because Tanay and Hormuz.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Kim: Yes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Julia: Um talking through the whole circle.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Kim: Yes:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Brian: [Hindi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Julia: [and I with Joni.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Kim: Yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Julia: And the whole crowd talking Spain and French.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Kim: Heh.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Julia: And I—my Spain is not so good but it was funny to see um that they have problems too.

Kim: Mm.

Julia: And that you switch sides that you stand down that you can’t speak this good language and the other person can speak then and to see “oh it’s hard from both sides.”

Julia describes the experience as “cool” (l. 2, l. 4) and “one of the best” (l.4) “because during we have to speak other languages so I can speak my mother language” (ll. 4-5). In Julia’s small story, she values the experience first because the experience valued her linguistic resources. She then narratively describes (positioning level 1) the “funny” (l. 8) multilingual moment of the Hindi speakers calling across the circle to each other, Joni and herself speaking German, and “the whole crowd talking Spain and French” (ll. 8-15). While she admits that her “Spain is not so good”, she contrasts this self-deprecating statement with “but it was funny to see um that they have problems too” (l. 17). Although she did not have the situated linguistic capital (in this case, Spanish) to participate in the “whole crowd” discussion, she narratively indicates that the more important point is that “they”—presumably the usually-dominant English speakers now struggling to communicate—“have problems too.” The “too” may reference the problems that she had not being a dominant Spanish speaker in a Spanish-dominant circle, and/or not being a dominant English speaker in an English-dominant circle. She continues to describe what the “problems” were that the usually-dominant speakers were having: “that you switch sides that you stand down that you can’t speak this good language and other person can speak” (ll. 19-20). In Julia’s small story, she creates an image of two sides: the ones who can speak and the ones who
cannot. At the non-English community building, these sides are switched. Those who are usually dominant now “stand down”—this is likely a translation of the German zurücktreten, a term that can be translated literally as “stand down” or connotatively as “resign” or “withdraw”. The non-dominant “side” that “can’t speak this good language” resigns and withdraws as the now dominant “side” of “other people” who “can speak” steps up and claims the right to speak and control the discourse. As the rules of the discursive space a transformed, the subject positionings shift and those who usually can speak realize “oh it’s hard from both sides” (l. 20). They have seen the discursive space from both the dominant and non-dominant side and make the realization (marked by “oh”) that there are challenges to communication beyond what they may have previously thought.

In addition to the check-in, Julia had lead a song and dance in German. When I ask her about that experience, she constructs a small story:

**Excerpt 8.9 “At first I though oh my god no”**

*Julia (German-English)*

1 Kim: Yeah. And you lead a song [and a dance. How was that?

2 Julia: [Oh. At first I thought oh my god no, I didn’t want.

3 Kim: Yeah. Yeah.

4 Julia: But then when I looked and the people were so friendly and they clap with hands and “woo-hoo” it was cool.

Julia’s small story begins with her past character self first being embarrassed to invest her German-speaking identity into the practice of leading a silly song and dance in front of her peers. Both Julia and her Language Buddy use the word “shy” to describe Julia multiple times during
the interview (positioning level 2). However, within the narrative (positioning level 1), her identity is affirmed and encouraged by the friendly faces, applause, and encouraging cheers from her peers. As an identity text (Cummins & Early, 2011), Julia invests her identity into the dance and this identity is reflected back to her in a positive light by her peers. This moment is narrated as part of a larger process of transformation for Julia as a speaker. In her Language Buddy’s words, “she was as shy as a mouse… doesn’t even want to speak anything... And now you’re all bubbly crazy and going for it” (Brian, interview). This transformed identity is also constructed in the interview (positioning level 2) as Julia actively participates in shaping expressive narratives of her experiences.

For the English-dominant speakers, their narratives of the Multilingual Community Building experience were shaped by their access to plurilingual linguistic resources. For those with significant access to Spanish and French, it was framed as a chance for them to display the full extent of their linguistic resources and associated symbolic capital. Graham, an English-dominant but also French- and Spanish-fluent participant from Powell River says he “loved” the experience because “it was easier for me than I think it was for a lot of people… because I speak a little- but not much Japanese- but I speak a lot of French and Spanish.” Graham goes on to say he also “loved that all the people who were silent normally or quiet normally… were speaking up… and being loud. Like I don’t think I’ve ever heard Julia before… at Community Building and most of the Japanese students as well” (Graham, interview, 2010). He finishes his narrative with “it really kind of turned the tables on the English speakers… in a wonderful wonderful way.” Other English-dominant speakers with less access to plurilingual linguistic resources (especially French and Spanish) narrated the experience differently. For example, Brandy, an English-dominant speaker from Revelstoke, says in her account that she “felt less involved…
and less in control... and you have to try a lot harder... to keep listening for every single word so
that maybe you’ll catch a few and understand and that was difficult” (Brandy, interview, 2010).
She goes on to say, “That was difficult... And when you- when I didn’t understand I felt
frustrated... and kind of excluded in a way.” She is quick to add, “but I know- like it’s
unintentional exclusion and that’s the point of it, to feel in other people’s shoes. But it was
difficult” (Brandy, interview, 2010). This theme of being in someone else’s shoes is repeated
through other participants’ narratives. The remainder of this chapter focuses on the post-
Multilingual-Community-Building narrative of an English-dominant participant from 2011. This
narrative has been selected as a telling case (Sheridan et al., 2000) partly because it mirrors the
pattern of many of the English-dominant participant’s narratives while also standing out as being
particularly well-developed and transformative. This makes it an especially powerful narrative
for empirically understanding current theories about super-diversity (Blommaert & Rampton,
2011; Vertovec, 2007) and how re-designing discourse can re-design identities and imagined
futures (Norton & Toohey, 2011).

8.4  Transformative Narrative: “The Whole Like Literal Walk in Someone Else’s Shoes”

In 2011, one of the notable shifts of voice was in Owen, whom I describe
impressionistically as a particularly articulate, engaged, well-liked, and talkative member of the
community. Owen is a seventeen-year-old from Toronto who pictorially indicates his linguistic
resources as being English-dominant with a tiny circle representing his school-taught French
(Image 8.3):
Rather than use a circle to represent his French, Owen has drawn a dot, as though it were the smallest measurable unit. The smallness of his French is further emphasized with a dotted line between it and the label “French,” as though the dot might be missed if it were not pointed out. Indeed, in interviews Owen skips any reference to a plurilingual or French-speaking identity and refers to himself frequently as an “English-speaker” such as “an English speaker cruising by life” (interview, Owen, 2011). His articulateness was noted in the five values consensus process in which he was a very active member, suggesting new words such as “oembristic” (a combination of open-minded, embrace, and enthusiastic). He also had the social capital to have such suggestions receive a generally positive response from the community. His talkativeness was also apparent at the daily community building sessions when he frequently had something to contribute. Owen’s usual speech pattern is notably fast, complex, and creative-attributes which make his speech highly engaging for fluent English speakers but particularly challenging for the English language learning participants. Like Andrew, Owen’s narrative is repeated multiple times: constructed briefly for his peers immediately after the Multilingual Community Building, re-performed for his peers in the Communication Crew, then finally expanded upon in the end-of-program interview. Following Bamberg and Georgakopoulou (2008), this repetition of
narrative can be seen as building a new *habitus* (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991) over time. Like everyone, Owen engages in linguistic identity construction and negotiation every time he speaks; however, these narratives are particularly rich moments of identity performance, negotiation and creation. In his transformative narrative, Owen contrasts his self before the Multilingual Community Building with his self after the Multilingual Community Building. He uses rich metaphor, voice stylizations, and imagery to narrate this change of self.

**8.4.1 Narrative 1: Multilingual Community Building**

During the Multilingual Community Building, Owen speaks four times. In each case, it is to say “*Gambare!*”, a Japanese phrase meaning “Try your best!” on the cheat sheet given to all members. At the end of the session, I ask for emotional responses as part of the debrief and Owen is the first to energetically raise his hand and offer a response.

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**Excerpt 8.10 “For the first time in my life I was like not able to communicate with people”**

1 Kim: I’d love to hear some reflections about how you felt during it. Checking in with any emotions you might have had. Um. How did it feel to be only able to speak those three maybe four languages.

2 Owen: *Raises hand.*

3 Kim: *Looks at Owen.* Yes. How did you feel?

4 Owen: I just felt (.) like I don’t know just like once- for the first time in my life I was like not able to communicate with people. (2s). Yeah *begins rubbing hands for shooting stars of gratitude.* Yeah and I have the utmost respect for everyone who is ESL here.

5 Others: *Mm.*
“ESL” is “English as a Second Language.” So [begins rubbing hands for shooting stars of gratitude].

In line with the self-awareness-building style of experiential pedagogy used at PSYL, my debrief question is framed around emotions and feelings, giving participants an opportunity for “checking in with any emotions” (l.1). Without pause, Owen raises his hand (l. 4)—the first of the community of over one hundred to do so. He begins his response in the form that intertextually responds to my question: “I just felt” (l. 6). However, this is abandoned as a false start as he is either unable or unwilling to define his emotional response to the experience. Instead, he opts for a small story that builds the significance of the practice: “for the first time in my life I was like not able to communicate with people” (ll. 6-7). By inscribing this experience into his grand life narrative, Owen amplifies its significance and begins to mark it as a “turning point” in his life narrative (Bruner, 1991). This one-sentence narrative functions as an abstract for a narrative that at this moment is not fully told. Looking across the circle, he notices another member rubbing their hands together—a gesture that is the initial stage of a gestured utterance of gratitude common in the community called “shooting stars” (for more on this community-based discursive practice, see 5.4.3). He says “yeah” and begins to do the same, taking up the proffered gesture as part of his own utterance. This shifts his utterance from a narrative of the significance of his own difficult experience of not being able to communicate to the significance of this realization in relation to the participants in the community who struggle to communicate in their non-dominant language every day. He interrupts the shooting stars to once again affirm “yeah” and add words to this sentiment: “And I have the utmost respect for everyone who is ESL here” (l. 6). After others murmur their agreement with Owen’s sentiment of respect, Owen takes
one final turn to clarify the meaning of “ESL.” This can be understood as an example of a transformed communicative practice in Owen’s desire to use inclusive communicative practices. Here we see Owen sharing only the abstract of the narrative of his own Multilingual Community Building experience, positioning himself within the narrative (positioning level 1) as a consistently linguistically privileged communicator who “for the first time” was not able to communicate. Meanwhile, at the level of the narration (positioning level 2), he positions himself as an inclusive communicator, allowing and facilitating the community to interrupt his self-narrative with an act of gratitude and respect to the non-English dominant members of the community and re-phrasing a potentially unknown word to facilitate communication. In terms of transportable social and linguistic identities and grand narratives (positioning level 3), Owen begins to position himself as a previously linguistically naïve individual who is undergoing a transformation.

8.4.2 Narrative 2: Multilingual Community Building reflection

Owen’s temporarily absent voice was mentioned by Claire, an English-dominant but Spanish-fluent participant in the Communication Crew’s reflection session following Multilingual Community Building:

**Excerpt 8.11 “It really kind of shifted the voices”**

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<td>1</td>
<td>Claire: Um. I don’t know but for me it really kind of shifted the voices that were heard in the community.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kim: Mm:.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Claire: Like (..) there was no Owen talking all the time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Many: <em>Laughter.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Claire: (inaudible) all the analogies you know but (.) so (.) it finally gave me and the ESL participants a chance to speak and showed the others what it’s like when you don’t have a voice and even I know like I felt more confident because all the English speakers are usually dominant.

Kim: Mm hm.

Claire: Um. Like I speak (...) like I half speak Spanish so I felt kind of like I had an advantage (over) everyone else so I felt like “oh I can actually say something.”


Here Claire offers her account of how Multilingual Community Building “shifted the voices that were heard in the community” (ll. 1-2) from “Owen talking all the time” (l. 4) to giving her and “the ESL participants a chance to speak” (ll. 6-7). Though Claire is English dominant, she is generally quiet during large sessions (from my observations as well as by her own positioning within this narrative). However, according to her narrative, being able to “half speak Spanish” (l. 11) gave her a perceived “advantage over everyone else”: the confidence, voice, ability, and power to speak. Simultaneously, Claire offers that the experience “showed the others [such as Owen] what it’s like when you don’t have a voice” (l. 7-8). In this narrative (positioning level 1), Claire frames the experience as one marked by voice shifts; she then places her voice alongside the non-English-dominant speakers moving from voicelessness to confidence and speech. She claims the right to speak through the sense that her Spanish resources are legitimized in the field: as the values of linguistic resources shift in the field, her cultural capital increases as Spanish is in low supply and high demand. This seems to give her an advantage and moves her to speech. Simultaneously, Claire’s narrative features Owen as an actor who moves from voice to
voicelessness as his English-only resources are devalued in the field. By sharing this narrative in the Communication Crew (positioning level 2), Claire as narrator positions herself empathetically in line with the English language learners as well as in line with the overall aims of the group to disrupt the linguistic privilege of the community. This narrative, including its portrayal of Owen as a usually talkative but suddenly silenced member is arguably well-received by the group through their laughter and attentiveness.

By coincidence, a few turns later in the discussion, Owen (who is not a member of the Communication Crew) walks through the door:

Excerpt 8.12 “The whole like literal walk in someone else’s shoes”

1 Kim: Owen! How was- how was trilingual community building for you?
2 Owen: O:h!
3 Kim: Heh heh heh.
4 Owen: It was very eye-opening.
5 Kim: Yeah. Tell me more.
6 Owen: Um. Well I’ve always- being an English speaker
7 Kim: Mm.
8 Owen: I’ve always kind of like “yes I’ve- you know I understand there are ESL people so
9 like I slow myself down. But I think that’s like. Fine. Like just (.) you know
10 whatever like <“Hi: my name is”>
11 Kim: Mm.
12 Owen: Seeing- being there not knowing the language that was speaking =Even Muglish I
13 don’t even half understand
14 Kim: Heh

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Owen’s description of the experience as “very eye-opening” (l. 3) functions as a Labovian (Labov & Waletzky, 1967) abstract and sets up a small story narrative in which the main character gains a new perspective and deeper understanding of what it is like not to speak the dominant language of the community. This builds on the small story he had offered during the Multilingual Community Building session and further shapes what is becoming a transformative narrative, a genre noted to have particular power in Western societies as a form of life story centred on change and redemption (Bruner, 1991; De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012). This genre may gain even more power within a setting such as PSYL whose identity text (Cummins & Early, 2011) centres on ideas of change and transformation (see section 8.1). He begins this before-and-after narrative of transformation with “I’ve always- being an English speaker” (l. 7). He identifies this past “I” as “an English speaker”, crediting this social category and linguistic category as being most relevant for this narrative. In his description of how and who he has always been, he takes on a performative voice, disassociating the “I” as the actor in the story (positioning level 1) from the “I” who is animating the narrative now for the audience of his
peers (positioning level 2): “I’ve always kind of like “yes I’ve- you know I understand there are ESL people” so like I slow myself down. But I think that’s like. Fine. Like just (.) you know whatever like <“Hi: my name is”> (ll. 5-6). In this narrative orientation, he does not orient himself as a completely oblivious past self; rather his pre-eye-opening self recognized the presence of “ESL people” and slowed himself down as a transformative practice to aid in communication. However, the former self thinks “that’s like. Fine.” (l. 6). He then gives an exaggerated demonstration of slowing his speech down: “<“Hi: my name is”>” (l. 6). This is reminiscent of what Krashen (1982) called “foreigner speech”: speech linguistically adjusted to be “more comprehensible to less competent speakers” (p. 59). Foreigner speech is characterized by “slower rate and clearer articulation”, “more use of high frequency vocabulary, less slang, fewer idioms,” and “syntactic simplification, shorter sentences” (Krashen, 1982, p. 60). Here Owen as a character at the beginning of the narrative believes that a slower rate alone is enough to be linguistically inclusive. Owen as narrator then gives his account of the experience that changed him: “Seeing- being there not knowing the language that was speaking “ (l. 8) which he analogizes as “just like. Really the whole like literal walk in someone else’s shoes” (ll. 12-13). The resolution and result of this narrative on the speaker is offered as “Now I like… have the utmost respect for any who (.) comes to something like this and does the same thing I do but having a huge language barrier” (ll. 13-16). The emphasis on “huge” further demonstrates that this past self was always aware there was a language barrier; it was just the extent to which this barrier would be an impediment and that slowing down is simply not enough that was realized through this experience: this careful positioning work that allows Owen to construct the necessary before-and-after contrast of self required for his narrative to be understood as transformative while also maintaining inter-cultural capital (Luke, 2004b) as someone who has
always had some sense of how to communicate across perceived language barriers. Finally, Owen performs this new identity of “utmost respect” at the level of the narrative (positioning level 2) by saying to his multilingual audience: “Kudos for everyone who is. Who is that yes” (l. 18). There is in an uncertainty in this final offering of “utmost respect,” perhaps in recognition that if his audience truly understands as little as he did that morning, they would not understand “kudos.” He is on the verge of transformed practices here as he narrates his change narrative, but is struggling to perform his new identity in a congruent manner. The transformation between himself as an English-speaker not fully informed on linguistic inclusion at the beginning of the narrative (positioning level 1) and himself as a more linguistically-aware speaker at the end and during the narration (positioning level 2) suggests an overall master narrative of transformation (positioning level 3) that is further explored in his interviews.

8.4.3 Narrative 3: Research interview

The remaining excerpts in this chapter are from the fifteen-minute video-recorded interview between the researcher and Owen on the last full day of the program. Although most of the interviews were with members of the Communication Crew, I also requested Owen’s participation after his impromptu visit to the Communication Crew above (Excerpt 8.14), and he enthusiastically agreed. In this interview, Owen repeats this narrative using a consistent discourse of opening one’s eyes and walking in someone else’s shoes. As with the analysis of Andrew’s narrative in chapter 7, here the analysis first focuses on the narratives themselves (positioning level 1) across the various tellings during the interview. A brief analysis of positioning levels 2 and 3 follows as it is similar across all tellings:
Excerpt 8.13 “It was eye-opening”

1 Owen: It was eye-opening to like “whoa- This is what it’s like to not know the most like (.)
2 I guess principal language.” It was like (. ) really frustrating.
3 …
4 Owen: And that really put me in the shoes of people … So it was interesting to switch rank
5 roles.
6 Kim: Yeah.
7 Owen: And language privileges.

Like other English-dominant participants (including Brandy and Tracy in 2010), in constructing
his small story about the Multilingual Community Building, Owen describes the feeling of not
being able to communicate as “frustrating.” “Frustration” is a term used especially for the
feeling of being upset, especially “because of inability to change or achieve something”
(dictionary.com). Within the narrative, the use of this word indexes an inability on the part of
the character to achieve communication or change the field in a way that will allow him to
communicate. In addition to repeating his analogy of being put “in the shoes of people” (l. 4),
Owen intertextually draws on power and privilege discussions (see chapter 7) using the terms
“rank roles” and “language privileges” to help express the switch in subject positioning he
experienced being unable to communicate. By drawing on this authoritative terminology in his
narration (positioning level 2), Owen is able to index his connection to the educational discourse
of the community and project an identity beyond the narrative (positioning level 3) as a
critically-aware communicator.
In response to a question about how his communicative practices have changed during the program, Owen offers a narrative of his own moment of realizing responsibility to someone linguistically other than himself:

Excerpt 8.14 “I’m big on inclusion”

1 Owen: And- for example sometimes Yuriko would be like “I don’t understand” I was like
2 “Oh wow- wait a second. Yeah. I have to”- like- and especially if I’m big on
3 inclusion. That’s like one of my main things- I was just like “wow, I’m- like
4 unintentionally excluding people just because of the language we speak.”
5 Kim: Right.
6 Owen: So it was interesting having to be cautious of that.
7 Kim: Yeah.
8 Owen: And change my way of communicating to a more broader “multicultural way of
9 experiencing my voice.”

Here Owen uses voice stylization to represent the voices of Yuriko (an English language learner and fluent Japanese speaker) and his former self. In the narrative, it is when Yuriko’s voice is admitted into the community’s view to express her lack of comprehension that Owen’s former self has a moment of apprehension: “Yuriko would be like ‘I don’t understand’ I was like “Oh wow- wait a second. Yeah. I have to-” (ll. 1-2). Before completing his expression of his newfound responsibility regarding what he “has to” do, he further narrates an apprehension of a discord between his inclusive identity and his monolingual communicative practices: “like- and especially if I’m big on inclusion. That’s like one of my main things- I was just like “wow, I’m-like unintentionally excluding people just because of the language we speak’” (ll. 2-4). Being
“big on inclusion” can be understood as having an imagined identity invested in situated practices that facilitate participation to all members of a community of practice. Within the narrative, this imagined identity contrasts uncomfortably with the realization that he is excluding Yuriko from his discourse. Owen is joined by other English dominant speakers in describing this exclusion as unintentional: “But I know- like it’s unintentional exclusion and that’s the point of it, to feel in other people’s shoes but it was difficult” (Brandy, interview, 2010); “I’m starting to understand a little bit more how we’ve been sort of excluding people- as accidental as it is, it still happened” (Lucy, interview, 2010). Where there is an incongruency between these speakers’ inclusive identity and their exclusive linguistic practices at the level of the narrative (positioning level 1), emphasizing unintentionality in their narratives to minimize their agency and maintain an inclusive identity within the narrating context (positioning level 2). Finally, he expresses the responsibility he feels towards those linguistically other than himself: “It was interesting to be cautious of [excluding people just because of the language we speak]… and change my way of communicating… to a more broader “multicultural way of experiencing my voice”” (ll. 6-10). Here Owen narrates his new engagement with social practices that transform the way he speaks to be in line with his inclusive, “multicultural” identity: perhaps to take on his share of the communicative burden. In this last utterance, Owen uses voice stylization to mark the heteroglossia in his speech (Bakhtin, 1986) as a resource that both emphasizes the multivocality of his voice (he both states and demonstrates that he has multiple ways of experiencing his voice) as well as his possible awareness of the multiple audiences for whom he is constructing his utterances (the “academic-ese” may index an imagined research community addressee). Correspondingly, he simultaneously voices both Owen the program participant and Owen the research participant as he crafts his narrative of transformation across situational identities.
Owen later offers a parallel transformative narrative that links this changed voice to a changed imagined community:

Excerpt 8.15 “Popping my western civilization bubble”

1 Owen: Most of what I learned (.)
2 Kim: Mm.
3 Owen: Was easier communication.
4 Kim: Mm.
5 Owen: Popping my western civilization bubble.
6 Kim: Mm.
7 Owen: I was just like yeah just a Torontonian who’s just easy-English speaker cruising by life. Like not experiencing the world and whether it be not pretty world or pretty other worlds like I was just always a Canadian bubble. Like I hadn’t travelled anywhere but Canada really um. But now seeing all of these different people from all around the world like “wow, this is awesome!” Like my web of just like friends just got global and it’s so cool. Like do you- I just love asking someone “Oh, where are you from?” “Oh Indonesia”. “O:h?” Heh heh. Like even though it’s- there’s a language barrier and that but it’s cool to like meet those people and like=
8 Kim: =Yeah.
9 Owen: Switch up your way of talking differently.

Here Owen characterizes learning as popping the bubble of his previous community of practice: “Popping my western civilization bubble” (l. 5) or “a Canadian bubble” (l. 9). Again Owen sets up a transformative narrative, contrasting his previous self (represented mostly at positioning
level 1) with his present self (represented mostly at positioning level 2). His previous self is described as “a Torontonian who’s just easy-English speaker cruising by life. Like not experiencing the world… like I was just always a Canadian bubble” (ll. 7-9). Owen’s linguistic and cultural identifiers for this narrated character include “Torontonian”, “English-speaker” and “Canadian” characterized by “[easily] cruising by life” (l. 7). He contrasts this former self-narration with “now.” “Now” is defined as “seeing all of these different people form all around the world… like my web of just like friends just got global and it’s so cool” (ll. 10-11). His transformed narrative identity as part of a global web of friends pops his “western civilization bubble” (l. 5) and teaches him to “easier communication” (l. 3) and how to “switch up your way of talking differently” (l. 15). These transformed linguistic practices are linked within the narration to a transformed, globally-situated cosmopolitan cool understanding of self in a global imagined community of practice. These transformations of identity and communicative practices are described as “awesome” and “cool”—teen speak for phenomena valued highly in cultural capital. Through constructing this narrative (positioning level 2), Owen performs an identity as a transformed, cosmopolitan citizen.

By expanding his imagined community and imagined identity from English speaker to global citizen, Owen also expands his narrated capacity to mourn and feel empathy. In the introduction to her *Precarious life: the powers of mourning and violence*, Judith Butler (2006) describes how the capacity to mourn is linked to a culture of violence or non-violence:

Those who remain faceless or whose faces are presented to us as symbols of evil, authorize us to become senseless before those lives we have eradicated, and whose grievability is indefinitely postponed. Certain faces must be admitted into public view, must be seen and heard for some keener sense of the value of life, all life, to take hold. … Without the
capacity to mourn, we lose that keener sense of life we need in order to oppose violence.

(p. xviii)

While Butler’s writing focuses on the perceived ungrievability of life in times of war, physical violence is not the only violence that causes grievable loss. Our framing of the lives we live is formed, negotiated, and expressed in the symbolic realm: here, the violence is symbolic. *Symbolic violence* (Bourdieu, 1991) occurs through the misrecognition of dominant symbolic resources (e.g. languages) as the only legitimate and authoritative symbolic resources. Through symbolic violence, utterances and speakers of the dominant language are valued higher than other diverse voices, which are silenced through this insidious process of misrecognition. Where symbolic violence occurs, physical violence may follow as symbolic violence devalues a life and deems it ungrievable. Owen narrates the power of symbolic non-violence in another transformative narrative near the end of the interview.

The final question asked in the interview was “People often suggest raising the language requirements for PSYL. What do you think about this idea?” In Owen’s response, he connects the presence of non-English speakers to an expansion of his grievability:

**Excerpt 8.16 “Oh now I know you, now I care more”**

1 Owen: That’s just like complete discrimination I would say… Um because just because you don’t speak English doesn’t mean you can’t be a leader- I don’t understand that at all.

2 Kim: Heh.

3 Owen: Like sure it’s sometimes harder to accommodate people but really is that better than excluding them?

4 Kim: Mm.
Owen: Not at all. Um. I think PSYL is as good as it is because of all of the cultural differences. That’s one of my main- whenever I call my mom or a friend I’m like “and there’s someone from Uganda here and Denmark and Japan! … Like wherever you’re from really like I really want to like meet other people and French and all the languages and like (.) really meet them since I never- this is one of the things- like still I never met anyone who was in the Japan earthquakes.

Kim: Mm. Right.

Owen: And although I was sympathetic I was just kind of like “sucks” like- I g- it’s harder to relate to it. I find it harder to something I don’t know. And then when they were giving a presentation I was just like “who:a. Here’s this person who is now my friend who had experienced that and I didn't do all I could do.”… So it kind of really brought me to the emotional point where I wanted to be in terms of that relief.

Kim: Mm hm.

Owen: Just because now I know them and it’s weird “Oh now I know you, now I care more.” But that’s what it is (.) like.

When the previously narrated “Canadian bubble” pops, the character’s frame of reference becomes much wider than previously understood: those outside the bubble begin to matter in way they did not before: “So it kind of really brought me to the emotional point where I wanted to be in terms of that relief… Just because now I know them and it’s weird “Oh now I know you, now I care more.” But that’s what it is like” (ll. 17-21). In this narrative, the point of transformation pivots on the moment the Japanese participants gave a presentation about the tsunami. Prior to this point, he “never met anyone who was in the Japan earthquakes” and
characterizes himself as “sympathetic” but limited in empathy: “it’s harder to relate to… something I don’t know” (ll. 14-15). Empathy within this narrative comes from including the “other” in his imagined community of practice in a way that one can recognize the self in the other. Owen uses voice stylization to narrate his moment of empathic understanding: “who:a. Here’s this person who is now my friend who had experienced that and I didn’t do all I could do” (l. 16-17). The Japanese participants’ situated practice of narrating their experiences of the earthquake have a profound impact not because the information about the earthquake is new to the audience, but because that information is now coming from someone within their own imagined community—it is framed as mattering in a way that it didn’t matter before. For Owen, this situated practice allowed him to align his social practices (in this case mourning and doing “all [he] could do” in terms of relief) with his imagined identity: “it kind of really brought me to the emotional point where I wanted to be in terms of that relief”. Now that his narrated identity and empathy are aligned, Owen constructs a self who invests this identity fully into the social practice of mourning and “doing all [he] can do” “in terms of that relief”. Owen evaluates his own narrative as both subjectively strange and objectively true: “it’s weird “Oh now I know you, now I care more.” But that’s what it is (.) like” (ll. 20-21). This evaluation functions discursively as an effective stake inoculation: by acknowledging that his account sounds “weird” but then strongly maintaining that “that’s what it is (.) like,” Owen constructs a rhetorical device to prevent the undermining of his utterances.

This empathy and apprehension of the other as a grievable self is narrated as the result of situated practice of communication across difference (“Like wherever you’re from really like I really want to like meet other people and French and all the languages and like (.) really meet them” (ll.9-10)), overt instruction on intercultural communication and linguistic privilege (“Most
of what I learned... was easier communication... popping my western civilization bubble” (Excerpt 8.15, ll. 1-5)), critical framing of power structures that divide speakers of one language from those of another (“That’s just like complete discrimination I would say... because just because you don’t speak English doesn’t mean you can’t be a leader- I don’t understand that at all...Like sure it’s sometimes harder to accommodate people but really is that better than excluding them?” (ll. 1-7), and the space to engage in the transformative practice of seeing the self in the other and the other in the self “switch up your way of talking differently” (l. 41). In this way, language educators can use their classroom practices as tools for building transformative practices.

Near the end of the interview, Owen segues from a discussion of how a Spanish-speaking participant has transformed his communicative practices to a discussion of how he imagines altering his own communicative practices in his own imagined future:

Excerpt 8.17 “I want to break the barrier”

1 Owen: But now he’s fine with it and like he’s talking in groups more. And I think hopefully
2 he’s going to take that back and- I hope that everyone’s going to take it back and
3 kind of branch on their communication in a way more broader way. Especially us too
4 I’m going to do it.
5 Kim: Can you see yourself doing it?
6 Owen: I’m going to see myself doing it.
7 Kim: What are you going to do?
8 Owen: Recognize- like whenever I encounter someone who is like extremely ESL
9 Kim: Mm.
Owen: I kind of like encounter it- like it’s nice it’s almost- I don’t want to say like “avoid”
but I do kind of avoid because to- or like hit that barrier.

Kim: Right.

Owen: Um. But now being like on the other side of that barrier.

Kim: Mm hm.

Owen: I want to break the barrier. S(h)o I’m going to really try to break that wall of
communication barrier and use my hands.

Kim: Do it!

Owen: And my big smile.

In his first utterance of this excerpt, Owen makes several significant rhetorical moves to shift
from the known to the desired, from the present to the imagined future, and from the other to the
self. In terms of aspect, Owen shifts from the declarative statement of a known fact “now he’s
fine” and “he’s talking in groups more” (l. 1) to the subjective indexing of a “hope” or a desire:
“I think hopefully he’s going to take that back and- I hope that everyone’s going to take it back”
(ll. 1-2). These same grammatical shifts move the discourse from the known present to the
unknown imagined future. In addition, Owen makes a progressive shift of subject through
changing pronouns: “hopefully he’s going to take that back and- I hope that everyone’s going to
take it back and kind of branch on their communication in a way more broader way. Especially
us too I’m going to do it” (ll. 1-3, emphasis added). Here Owen has progressively shifted the
subject of the discourse of desire from the third person singular he to the third person plural
everyone (grammatically singular but pragmatically plural as demonstrated by its co-indexed
their in the same sentence) to the first personal plural us and finally the first personal singular I.
This discourse sets up an us-and-them dialectic between English speakers and English language learners but then subverts it in an unusual way to shift responsibility and the communicative burden: the talk moves from comments about an English language learner and his progress to a statement of personal responsibility as a fluent English speaker, and the communicative burden for learning, improving and transforming communicative practices shifts from the other to the self and from the English language learner to the fluent English speaker.

When asked to expand on what he is going to do to “branch on [his] communication in a way more broader way” (ll. 2-3), Owen begins and abandons an utterance with “recognize”. To “recognize” is to identify something from having encountered it before (dictionary.com). He then shifts into another version of his transformation narrative, setting up a before-and-after narrative—or more accurately a now-and-later narrative—of his social practices when he encounters someone not fluent in English: “like whenever I encounter someone who is like extremely ESL… I kind of like encounter it- like it’s nice- it’s almost- I don’t want to say like “avoid” but I do kind of avoid because to- or like hit that barrier” (ll. 7-10). Here we see how it is possible for Owen to live in one of the most multicultural cities in the world but still live in a “bubble” of English speakers. In both the content (“I don’t want to say like ‘avoid’”) and the form (the many false starts), Owen indexes a strong desire to avoid using the word “avoid” to characterize his practice when he encounters “someone who is like extremely ESL.” This can be understood as a stake inoculation (Potter, 2010) as he constructs his utterance at positioning level 2 in way that he can protect his inclusive identity (positioning level 3) and in a way that both the utterance and the speaker will not be rejected by the addressee, a researcher of linguistic inclusion. The “kind of” in “I do kind of avoid” softens the statement and the subsequent “because” indicates the space for an explanation of his behaviour. However, instead he avoids
the perceived need for an explanation of avoidance by shifting to the less agentive “like hit that barrier” (l. 10). The use of “that” indexes that this barrier is known to both the speaker and the listener; this calls upon the researcher to empathize and understand the discomfort of having hit a barrier that we both know well. This discomfort—the social awkwardness of hitting a so-called “language barrier” and not being able to understand or be understood—functions as the explanation for his character’s past avoidance of engaging with “people who are like extremely ESL.” I find this narrative telling because it is this avoidance on the part of fluent English speakers that keeps English language learners relegated to the social periphery of communities of practice and denies them the access to legitimate peripheral participation that they need in order to gain linguistic proficiency and community membership.

I indicate my acceptance of Owen’s painstaking utterance with “right” (l. 11) and he continues his transformative narrative with the transformation: “Um. But now being like on the other side of that barrier” (l. 12). “But now” sets up a distancing on the part of the narrating self (positioning level 2) from and contrast to the avoidance behaviour of the narrated self (positioning level 1) which is now to be understood as a social practice that happened “then” when he was always the one hitting the barrier. “Now” he metaphorically shifts his social positioning to “being like on the other side of that barrier” (l. 12). Consistent with his other tellings of his change narrative, Owen uses the Multilingual Community Building as the transformation point, in this case from one side of the language barrier to the other. In Owen’s depiction of the language barrier (similar to Julia’s depiction previously), there are two sides: the side of those who speak the contextually dominant language and the side of those who do not. Those who do not speak the contextually dominant language and perceived to be trapped behind a barrier of impossible communication; attempts by fluent speakers to communicate result in
hitting that barrier—a social discomfort that leads to avoidance. In Owen’s account of the Multilingual Community Building, he was placed on the other side of that communicative barrier for the first time and felt the frustration of being excluded and not being able to understand or be understood. This change of places is empathy-building in that it places the self in the social position usually occupied by the contextual other. It is important to note that this positioning is relative: this discourse reflects empathy-building because Owen discursively places himself in the position he usually places the “extremely ESL” other. Seemingly because of this brief experience, Owen continues his narrative to index a commitment to transformed practice: “I want to break the barrier. S(h)o I’m going to really try to break that wall of communication barrier and use my hands… And my big smi:le!” (ll. 14-17). He indexes a desire (“I want”) that causally links to an intention (“S(h)o I’m going to really try”) to “break that wall of communication barrier.” Specifically, he indicates multimodal communication or para-linguistic communication skills of using his “hands” and “big smile” as tools to break through the barrier separating himself from those who do not speak English.

In narratives 1 through 3, Owen’s narrated self (positioning level 1) undergoes a transformation to align his inclusive identity with newfound linguistically inclusive practices. Throughout the narration (positioning level 2), Owen performs this transformed identity as he draws on the terminology of linguistic inclusion (“linguistic privilege,” “rank roles,” “communication barrier,” “discrimination,” “inclusion”), through rhetorical distancing from his narrated former self’s exclusive actions (marking them as “unintentional” and indexing a desire to avoid admission of “avoiding” non-fluent English speakers), and through overtly praising and building capital for English language learners (for whom he has the “utmost respect”).
Throughout the narratives and narrating process, Owen positions himself within a larger narrative (positioning level 3) of transformation and increasing self-awareness.

8.5 Discussion and Conclusions

In this chapter, the discourse of a turning point in the communication of the community was analyzed through the corresponding more or less transformative narratives of various members of the community. It is important to note again that, in line with the theoretical frame of this study, I do not debate whether a one-hour session in languages other than the dominant language truly allows linguistically dominant participants to effectively understand the long-term struggles of linguistic exclusion; instead, I focused on how the participant-suggested community intervention features in participants’ narratives as a site of symbolic struggle (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991) and transformation. It is offered as an example of the many participant-suggested communicative interventions, which also included using more gestures, the creation and introduction of specific gestures for “slow down” and “speak up”, an ongoing list of slang words posted prominently in the cafeteria, skit-style announcements to encourage inclusive linguistic practices, Language Buddy breaks during sessions (time for Language Buddies to check for understanding), and both formal and informal language exchange. Taken together, these interventions on behalf of the Communication Crew represent a transformation in the design of the discursive structure of the community.

While one could conclude that Owen’s commitment is simply to use more gestures when speaking to English language learners, I feel that to do so would miss the wider significance of Owen’s narratives. Taken as a whole, Owen’s discourse constructs multimodal communication as effective communication across barriers then commits to multimodal communication; it
constructs a world in which there is an “us” who mindlessly speak the dominant language and a “them” who frustratingly struggle to be heard from behind a communication barrier, then commits a desire to transform this world by tearing down these barriers. In Owen’s repeated transformational small stories, he narrates a situated practice that temporarily shifts his social positioning, critically frames his power, reveals incongruencies between his imagined identity and his social practices, reinvests his desired identity into transformed social practices, and ultimately fuels an expressed desire to change the linguistic landscape of his world. The situated practice of engaging in interaction with the “other” and then being temporarily shifted into the discursive position of that contextualized “other” combines with the discursive opportunity to critically frame the communicative resources, social positions, and identities of both the self and other. Overt instruction and discursive space for transformed practice offers Owen the opportunity to re-align his globally inclusive imagined identity with what he understands to be globally inclusive social practices. This is a cultural shift: whereas before his cultural identity was in a “Canadian bubble,” his linguistic identity was “English speaker,” his social identity was someone “big on inclusion,” and his social practices included analogies, fast-paced speech, avoidance of non-native speakers, and moderated responses to international disasters; now through transformed social practices, overt instruction, and critical framing he has built from his inclusive social identity outwards to change his social practices, linguistic identity and cultural identity. His cultural identity is now constructed as global, presenting himself linked through friendship to people around the globe; his linguistic identity is now global, presenting himself as capable of and desiring of communicating across the communication barrier; his social identity remains inclusive; and his social practices include increased use of hand gestures, friendly facial expressions, clarifying, mourning and investing in the relief for victims of far-off national
disasters, and generally doing what he can to use his power to keep his ever-expanding community of practice open and inclusive.

Owen’s narrated self is deeply interested, engaged and invested in participating in a dialogue about his fellow students’ linguistic marginalization because the social practice of this dialogue allows him to invest his identity as an inclusive community member and enter his imagined community of global friendship. The short immersive experience of imagining himself on the other side of the communication barrier transcends the superficial us-them divisions between dominant and subordinated communities. He is able to promote programs such as PSYL (and the Communication Crew) for their diversity, citing that it is the differences between people that make the program beneficial to all. The collaborative construction of self that he experiences transcending his imagined self-other divide leads narratively to the collaborative construction of power as he transforms his practices and expands his imagined future to include sharing knowledge, power, and connection with a more diverse and global community of practice. In Owen’s narrative, empathy (relational identities) and empowerment (collaborative co-construction of power) are constructed as a result of situated practice of diversity (the Multilingual Community Building), overt instruction (the use of the words “linguistic privilege” and “rank roles”), and critical framing (understanding that linguistic privilege is “complete discrimination”). The result of this combined empathy and empowerment is social change—the transformation of social practices both now and in the future.

The participants use various words to describe the transformative practice of redesigning the linguistic landscape of their community: the tables are turned, the sides are switched, the roles are changed, and the selves are put in the others’ shoes. These movements all discursively place the self in the position of the other and the other in the position of the self. While the
reality is more complex—there are far more than two subject positions in the field, and the complexity of each individual’s access to various linguistic resources means that some participants who lack situated symbolic capital may still lack situated symbolic capital and some participants who hold a lot of situated symbolic capital may still hold a lot of symbolic capital—the mere act of temporarily transforming the field of practice reveals that discursive norms are hierarchical and mutable. Within these mutable discursive norms, there is room for identity transformation and re-investment into new social practices associated with new imagined communities. Miki invests in multilingual practices beyond English and Japanese to perform her imagined and desired cosmopolitan identity; Julia invests in increasingly engaged participation in the community; and Owen commits to inclusive multimodal practices to perform his imagined and desired inclusive and cosmopolitan self. In alignment with a dialogic view of social change linked with language change, these transformations in narratives, practices, and identities are possible when pedagogical practices like transformative multiliteracies (Cummins, 2009) create opportunities for critical engagement and re-design.
Chapter 9: Conclusion

In this chapter I will summarize the findings from chapters 5-8 with respect to the research questions, consider contributions and limitations of the study, and offer implications for future research. The reports of the findings in chapters 5-8 were by necessity separated in several ways: first, through the lens of a critical literacy theme (diversity, access, power, and design respectively) in order to explore the various ways that these interrelated but distinct critical literacy approaches affect identities and practices; second, chronologically, roughly covering the flow of the emergent Communication Crew “curriculum” co-constructed with the participants (Five Principles and Language Buddies, linguistic privilege discussion, Multilingual Community Building); and finally, the reports of the findings were separated by a focus on certain key participants in each chapter (Graham, Tomo, Kaylee, Miei, Lucy, and Julie in chapter 5 because of their participation in the Five Principles Spokes Council; Yusuke, Louis, Tracy, and Natsumi in chapter 6 because of their particularly close Language Buddy bonds; and Andrew and Owen in chapters 7 and 8 because of their particularly well-developed narratives offered in multiple iterations on the topics of power and transformation). While these separations were helpful in the analysis and in the telling of the community’s story, they can falsely separate findings. In fact, recurrent themes were demonstrated throughout the analysis. Here, those themes are re-explored across all chapters in answer to the research questions: How can transformative multiliteracies pedagogies affect the meaning-making practices and identity positioning of linguistically diverse youth? and What multiliteracies practices and pedagogies can be creative of and created by a linguistically inclusive and critically multilingual community? In dialogue with these questions, in this chapter the findings are organized by transformative identities and their associated transformative practices and pedagogies, each
discussed within the sub-headings related to the critical (transformative) literacy themes of: Diversity: Cosmopolitan Cool; Access: Globally Inclusive; Power: Critically-Aware Communicator; and Design: Linguistic Leader. Following these summative sections, contributions, limitations, implications, and future directions are explained.

9.1 Transformative Identities, Practices, and Pedagogies Beyond NES/ESL

We invest into discursive practices to the extent that they align with our valued identities, imagined communities, and imagined futures (Norton, 2000, 2013). Previous studies (Norton, 2000; Talmy, 2010b) have shown that the “ESL” identity lacks the symbolic capital needed to offer its speakers the right to speak and the power to impose reception (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991). Likewise, “Native English speakers” are the unmarked norm and enjoy unearned speaking privileges in the classroom community (Duff, 2002; Morita, 2004); as a result, they lack the impetus to connect with English language learners. The communicative burden is on the English language learners to become socialized to the English monolingual norm, and the community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) remains unchanged. In order to explore alternatives to this “native speaker” – “non-native speaker” divide, this study examined the “Language Buddy” identity as a situational identity linking discursive identities and practices to social and linguistic identities and practices beyond “native English speaker” and “English language learner”/ “ESL.”

9.1.1 Diversity: Cosmopolitan cool

One common identity within the community was what can be called “cosmopolitan cool.” This identity is a member of a global community of practice marked by diverse national, cultural,
and linguistic identities. It connects the common youth desire to be “cool” be with notion of cosmopolitanism. International friendships and intercultural communication are practices highly valued by the cosmopolitan cool individual. This is the identity performed when participants describe how “cool” the diversity of their community is (see, for example, Owen’s description of his international friends in chapter 8 and Graham’s description of getting to enter into the “Japanese group of friends” in chapter 5), how “cool” their multilingual principles are (see, for example, Graham, Lucy, Tracy, Loui and Natsumi’s description of “yuuki” in chapter 5), how “cool” communicating across languages was (see, for example, Graham’s description of discovering the deficiencies of the English language for the first time in chapter 5 and Yusuke’s description of successfully participating in the five principles discussion in chapter 6), how “cool” transforming the linguistic landscape of the community was (see Julia, Lucy, and Graham’s description of the Multilingual Community Building in chapter 8), and how highly valued multilingualism is (see Miki’s description of the high multilingual capital of her non-Japanese peers in chapter 8, Owen’s description of the diversity of the community in chapter 8, Lucy’s description of her ability to participate in Multilingual Community Building in chapter 8, and the narrated desire for more linguistic resources in the introductions in chapter 7).

Practices associated with a cosmopolitan cool identity include multilingual (Blackledge & Creese, 2010), plurilingual (Lin, 2013; Taylor & Snoddon, 2013), and metrolingual (Otsuji & Pennycook, 2010) practices, as well as the performance of friendships across language barriers. As the New London Group (2000) emphasize, globalization and the technological revolution have made diversity—and super-diversity (Blommaert & Rampton, 2011; Vertovec, 2007)—an increasing reality in global communications. The ability to communicate effectively in a context
of such super-diversity is an increasing necessity, so it makes sense that the opportunities and abilities to do so are valued highly by our students and are labeled as “cool.”

Multiliteracies practices and pedagogies that support this “coolness” include highlighting the diversity of the community as a defining characteristic (such as the introductory activities outlined in chapter 5: having students draw their linguistic competencies (Linguaspheres), introductions that highlight linguistic competencies, and overtly creating linguistically diverse groupings of students), creating real opportunities where the diversity of the community becomes a useful resources to complete as task (such as the processes in the development and articulation of the Five Principles session reported in chapter 5 and the Multilingual Community Building, reported in chapter 8), and explicitly connecting the linguistic diversity of the community with the linguistic diversity of the globe through discussions about linguistic diversity such as those in the Communication Crew.

9.1.2 Access: Globally inclusive

Just as the “cosmopolitan cool” extends the youth desire to be “cool,” the “globally inclusive” identity extends the desire to be (and to be seen as) a good citizen—an inclusive and socially just member of the community—to include linguistic inclusion. It is also an expansion of the “cosmopolitan cool” identity in that it becomes “cool” to be inclusive. It is simply “not cool” to exclude community members from conversations. We see this identity as participants negotiate inclusive narratives, such as Kaylee and Graham’s inclusion of Miei and Tomo in the yuuki narrative in chapter 5, Louis’s inclusion of Yusuke in his five principles narrative in chapter 6, and Arielle’s inclusion of Miki as the narrator of a story in chapter 8. This identity is also constructed when participants index negative emotions in narratives about unintentionally
excluding non-English dominant speakers from their discussions, such as Lucy regarding the Spokes Council in chapter 5, Owen regarding facilitating Yuriko’s comprehension in chapter 8, and Andrew’s “tears” over people being left out in chapter 7.

A globally inclusive identity is associated with globally inclusive practices and is supported by particular pedagogies. Practices associated with a globally inclusive identity include multimodal communication (increased use of gestures, writing, and drawing), the performance of friendships across language lines (inside jokes, shared laughter, co-constructed narratives, and close and frequent physical connections), and slower/clearer speech. When the universal longing to belong is recognized and a learning community devotes itself to inclusion, pedagogical approaches can demonstrate the connection between inclusion and language. Access to community discourse becomes the responsibility of all when we tap into a globally inclusive group and individual identity. Group challenges built on the premise of having every voice heard (such as the consensus process in chapter 5), open discussions about how we can make our communities more inclusive (such as the discussions about linguistic challenges and solutions in the Communication Crew, chapter 6), and brainstorming inclusive interventions such as increased use of gestures or increased multilingual practices (chapter 8) are all multiliteracies pedagogies and practices that tap into the globally inclusive identity and encourage access for all members of the community.

9.1.3 **Power: Critically-aware communicator**

With significant overlap with the globally-inclusive identity, the critically-aware communicator identity is marked by the overt acknowledgement of power relations associated with linguistic capital. We see this identity as participants intertextually reference the language
of power and privilege, such as Owen’s explicit naming of “the most privileged language” and Andrew’s extensive contextualization of the social conditions that led to his and others’ linguistic exclusion. In addition to the overt naming of words like rank, privilege, power, and unfairness in discussion about language, practices associated with a critically-aware identity include the performance of transformative narratives of increasing critical awareness.

The development of this critical consciousness is supported by pedagogical opportunities to engage in what Luke (2004) describes as “an analytic move to self-position oneself as Other even in a market of field that might not necessarily construe or structurally position on as Other” and “this doubling and positioning of the self from dominant text and discourse can be cognate, analytic, expository, and hypothetical, and it can, indeed, be already lived, narrated, embodied, and experienced” (p. 26). Pedagogical practices that support the “cognate, analytic, expository, and hypothetical” development and performance of a critically-aware communicator identity include overt discussions that critically frame and name linguistic privilege (such as the linguistic privilege discussion in chapter 7 and the stories shared in chapter 8). Pedagogical practices that support the “already lived, narrated, embodied, and experienced” development of such a consciousness include creating space for the narration of such experiences (such as when the Communication Crew introduces themselves and shares why they have chosen to join the group or when the participants are offered the space to reflect on past experiences) and the creation of small lived experiences that shift power, such as the Multilingual Community Building.
9.1.4 Design: Linguistic leader

The linguistic leader identity connects the power of being a leader with the idea of transformative communication. Inherent in this identity is the belief in the power to change the discursive norms of a community. We see this especially as the participants offer narratives of imagined futures transforming the communicative norms of their home communities (Tracy’s plan to join the “ESL” clubs in chapter 6; Louis’s plan to continue multimodal support for English language learners in chapter 6; Natsumi’s plan to share her language and culture with foreigners back in Japan in chapter 6; Owen’s plan to overcome the language barrier in chapter 8; and Andrew’s plan to implement a Language Buddy system at his school in chapter 7).

Practices associated with the linguistic leader identity include sharing transformative communication stories with the community (such as Andrew in chapter 8), narrating plans for future actions that support inclusion and diversity, and speaking up for those who are being linguistically excluded. By shifting their identities, they invest into transformed communicative practices which in turn have the potential to alter the situations and ultimately the culture of their communities. Andrew and Tracy’s plans in particular to start a Communication Crew or get their friends to join ESL Clubs potentially alter the structure of the discursive community.

Multiliteracies pedagogies and practices that encourage investment in the linguistic leader identity include regular brainstorm sessions on how to alter communicative practices in the community, such the practices and discussions of the Communication Crew as they design community interventions in chapter 6; opportunities to lead community transformations, such as the Multilingual Community Building that the participants designed to raise awareness about linguistic privilege in chapter 8; and explicit discussion of building an intentional community,
such being asked to reach a consensus on the Five Principles of their community as outlined in chapter 5.

9.2 Limitations and Contributions

There are limitations to the study that suggest possibilities for further analysis or future research. This study examines two instances of one program limited in its time length and breadth. The particularities of the site limit its generalizability to all learning communities. Particularly, given that the site was an international youth leadership program, the cosmopolitan cool, globally inclusive, and linguistic leader identities connect well to the self-selected group of participants. However, “actuality implies possibility. If a particular intervention has happened, and if particular effects have been observed, then this intervention and its impact can happen” (Cummins & Early, 2011, p. 19). This study can be understood as one example of something that is proved to be possible through its instantiation. Further, the activities offered here are not to be understood as a generalizable “curriculum”: many of the activities highlighted gained their pedagogical power because they were created with participants in response to community needs. As mentioned in the methodology chapter, this study was also limited in terms of technology in that not all interviews or classroom sessions were video recorded, thus meaning that rich multimodal information was lost that could have added to the discussion of inclusive discursive practices. Finally, due to my preference for in depth analysis, some breadth has been lost as not all interviews have been analyzed here as fully as would be desired. Every participant has multiple stories to tell, so it is a deep regret that I cannot include them all fully here while still maintaining the depth and coherency of analysis.
This study contributes to theory in that it provides grounded empirical examples of what identities and practices are possible in what has been conceptualized as super-diversity (Blommaert & Rampton, 2011; Vertovec, 2007), plurilingualism (Lin, 2013; Taylor & Snoddon, 2013), or metrolinguism (Otsuji & Pennycook, 2010). Here practice writes back to theory as these concepts prove to be productive in framing the situated practices of culturally and linguistically diverse youth. The findings also contribute to the ongoing expansion of Norton’s theories of language, identity and investment (Norton & Toohey, 2004, 2011; Norton, 2000) to include plurilingual, cosmopolitan, and meta-lingual identities and practices.

These findings support current shifts in pedagogy and practice in line with various interrelated orientations to critical literacy education (Janks, 2009). In terms of diversity, findings support the ongoing shift, including within policy documents, towards further acceptance of the first language in the English learning classroom (for example, British Columbia’s ESL policy which states that “respect for and valuing an individual’s first language(s) and culture is important in order for English language learners to succeed” and “student learning is enhanced by having proficiency in more than one language” (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2011)) by providing an example of how this policy can be implemented for the benefit of all. In terms of access, the findings provide a local solution to the access paradox (Janks, 2009) and support policies and practices that “mainstream” English language learners, both symbolically and pedagogically, again for the benefit of all learners as both so-called “native speakers” of English and so-called “non-native speakers” of English were able to engage in meaningful practices and construct transformative identities and communicative practices congruent with local and global citizenship in an inclusive super-diverse society. In terms of power and design, the findings support both the critical (Morgan and
Ramanathan, 2005) and the multimodal (Stein, 2008) turn in language and literacy education, offering grounded examples of the complex identity construction and multimodal meaning making that can happen when critical framing is made explicit and opportunities for transformative practice are made real in the language learning environment. In places where encouraging plurilingualism, mainstreaming multilingualism, and questioning communicative norms are policy, this study provides a grounded example of how it is possible to make such policies work for all learners, regardless of dominant language fluency. In places where such policies are not in place or where assessment practices have not caught up with new policy norms, this study provides a grounded example of what is possible between the lines of policy and may be implemented in pedagogical spaces beyond the classroom.

9.3 Implications and Future Directions

The findings of this study argue for increased intentionally mixed instruction for linguistically diverse groups. It highlights the value of the identities and practices of linguistically privileged peers in negotiating access and shaping the experiences of language learners. In addition, it calls for increased pedagogical attention to be paid to the role of critical framing and transformative practice (New London Group, 2000) in second language pedagogy. The conclusions of this study have broad implications for the identity positionings of monolingual English speakers. Transformative multiliteracies offer marked alternatives to the unmarked “Native English Speaker” identity. These new identities bring with them new discursive practices that have the potential to disrupt the ESL/mainstream divide in ways that honour diversity and empower all members of our diverse communities. In terms of research design, this study demonstrates ways that research design can mirror pedagogical design by
drawing on concepts such as diversity, access, power, and design at all levels of the project. Future research directions can include exploring similar issues in more traditional pedagogical contexts.

In order for target-language fluent peers to transform their discursive practices in ways that include their language-learning peers, they must create a valued social identity that is congruent with investment in these practices. The data here suggest that this identification can come from an identification with the “other”. This co-identification then leads to a meta-linguistic identity as a linguistically-inclusive speaker, as a critically-aware communicator, as a leader of linguistic inclusion, or as cosmopolitan cool. These identities then in turn can be invested into transformed and transformative linguistic practices that index this newly valued cosmopolitan self and move towards an imagined cosmopolitan future in an imagined cosmopolitan community.

One could imagine that the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks could create a partner guide of “Can Do Statements” for linguistically inclusive speakers. It would be inversely related to the Can Do Statements” for English language learners: a level 1 linguistically-inclusive speaker would only be able to communicate with English language learners at a level 9 or higher (when interlocutor support is no longer a factor), a level 2 linguistically-inclusive speaker would be able to successfully negotiate meaning with a level 8 English language learner and so on to a level 8 linguistically-inclusive speaker who would have the skills and identity investment needed to successfully negotiate meaning is discourse with a level 1 English language learner. This is basic overt instruction and situated practice in diversity education. It is the bare minimum requirement for our diverse communities to be healthy and inclusive. Add to this critical framing and at a minimum there will be a greater critical investment of identity into the transformed
practices of linguistic inclusion. If linguistic inclusion can happen alongside a valuation of multilingual resources, multilingualism on a personal level will be valued and will naturally increase.

Identity is implicated in every part of the multiliteracies and critical literacies frameworks. Providing Situated Practice and Overt Instruction in diverse meaning making is ineffective if students do not invest their identities into these pedagogic opportunities. It is through Critical Framing and Transformed Practice that critical and transformative identities are formed that in turn can be invested into further Situated Practice and Overt Instruction. The narratives that arise out of a discussion of linguistic power and/or linguistic exclusion are personal. Identities such as Native English Speaker/Non-Native English Speaker/multilingual speaker as well as included/excluded and inclusive/exclusive community member echo in these discussions. All members of our diverse communities need to understand that the exclusion of non-native English speakers and the monolingual norm implicates us all and is a product of the inequitable distribution of power and situated discursive practices that can be changed. By focusing on diversity, access, power and design, transformative multiliteracies pedagogies can help create critical citizens who will create linguistically inclusive societies. In the words of the participants themselves emblazoned on their t-shirts, these are citizens who “speak the language of changemakers.”
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