

Mediating identities:

Language, media, and Filipinos in Canada

Ron Darvin, University of British Columbia

Abstract: News about the nation-state and its citizens is an important component of the discourse of nationhood, and its representations of migrant groups can refract relations of power, constructing subject positions that may locate them in the periphery of this imagined community. These mediated identities construct public perception, and by internalizing them, migrant learners can invest in their learning and pursue life trajectories in ways that reflect this positioning. To demonstrate how language and images in the news can position minorities, this paper provides a critical discourse analysis of reports from several major Canadian newspapers that provide accounts of Filipino immigrants, Canada's fourth largest, but significantly under-researched, visible minority. Recognizing the power of media to promote specific ways of thinking, this paper recommends a critical pedagogy that develops a sharper awareness of how media operates and how migration serves the needs of the nation-state. It seeks to provide a framework through which migrant learners can examine and challenge the very discourses that position them.

Keywords: identity, media, positioning, migrant learners, Filipinos

Introduction

Language is never neutral, and language learning, as a social practice, is itself inextricably imbricated in relations of power. Larger social structures determine conditions in which learning takes place, and learners must navigate through these networks and negotiate a sense of self, to claim the right to speak. As the gateway through which one understands one's relation to the world, this sense of self, this identity, is at once diverse, contradictory, dynamic and multiple. Constituted by and constitutive of language, it is a perennial site of struggle as learners continually reorganize a sense of who they are to invest in their learning and to acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources (Norton, 2013).

For Block (2012), the identity formation of migrant language learners is particularly compelling as movement across borders is marked by complex modes of inequality. Inscribed by race, gender, ethnicity, and class, migrants insert themselves or are inserted into the segmented spaces of developed nations (Zhou, 1997), positioned in different ways by competing discourses in society. Indexical of larger social realities, the language classroom can itself be subject to the same discourses, and when educators remain uncritical of the social and institutional forces that surround them, they can unintentionally participate in what Harklau (2000) refers to as the 'hidden curriculum of schooling'. In this 'hidden curriculum' that tacitly accepts prevailing assumptions of

immigration and social segmentation, migrant learners can be made to feel ambivalent and insecure about their identity, and even socialized into accepting low-wage and unstable jobs in the local economy. Without the critical skills to question the status quo, migrant learners may accept this place in the economic and social order without resistance (Warriner, 2008), limiting the social futures they imagine for themselves and their families.

As migrants occupy a significant yet segmented space in highly industrialized nations like Canada, the location of one's country of origin in this world order can position migrants in their country of settlement in different ways. Those from so-called 'Third World' countries may adopt a discourse that views their positions as linked to the underdeveloped, sometimes exploited, plight of their country of origin. Experiences of being racialized or marginalized are thus seen as corollary to the inferior position constructed by mechanisms of colonialism and global capitalism (Kelly, 2012). In a study of immigrant ESL students, for instance, Gunderson (2007) observed how the assignation of socioeconomic status to certain ethnolinguistic groups was linked to the world economic order. Many Mandarin and Cantonese speakers were considered to be from affluent, entrepreneurial families while Vietnamese speakers were understood to be refugees with limited economic capital. How migrant learners successfully negotiate these subject-positions play a significant role in their educational and social trajectories.

Theoretical framework

Media and positioning

Perceptions of specific groups in society are largely shaped by discourses that circulate in different contexts. By representing people, discourses can construct and disseminate subject positions, which, without critical thought, people may attach themselves to and accept as identity (Hall, 2000). In contemporary society, mass media are the primary field in which these processes take place, influencing beliefs, practices, values, and attitudes. Because specific media are governed by different intentions and operate through specific semiotic codes, conventions, and formats, mediated experience is always shaped by these properties and purposes. When events and ideas are reported in the news, for instance, their form and meaning are determined by the genre conventions of news itself (Fairclough, 2006), and the agenda of its producers. The reporter investigates and interviews different people, but edits and juxtaposes specific images and sound bites to construct a cohesive news story that reflects a particular viewpoint.

Through the vox populi, the 'man on the street' interview where 'ordinary citizens' are approached in usually public spaces, citizens are asked to provide spontaneous opinions on a specific subject that impacts the nation. The reporter conjures the illusion

of a national conversation by collecting public opinion. This process however is inscribed by ideology (Briggs, 2002, 2007). It operates from a democratic impetus to provide a dialogue between people and the state, while simultaneously assumes the inarticulateness of 'the common man.' To articulate a cohesive argument, vox populi interviews are framed against the opinion of the expert, the 'legislator of truth', who is accorded the power to formulate generalizations about the social order. Because their legitimacy is derived from institutions of power, the reporter and the experts are compelled to invoke an authorial voice that reflects a dominant worldview, and what appears to be a shared participation in discourse becomes illusory. The interviews shape knowledge, but because of the authorial voice imposed on them, they can be used to legitimize the social inequality inherent in a globalizing world (Briggs 2002). They have the power to propel us "to internalize senses of self and other, social agency and power" (Briggs, 2007, p. 683). These power asymmetries, Talmy (2010) asserts, are present not only in differences of institutional status, but also in other categories such as social class. They are enacted not only during the interview itself, but also when these interviews are recontextualized in different forms, that is, when they are edited and aligned with the reporter's narration.

Through critical discourse analysis that involves a closer examination of semantic, grammatical and lexical relations within texts, a reader can detect how these power asymmetries are embedded in language. It can reveal the simultaneous operation of a logic of difference and a logic of equivalence (Fairclough, 2003) that exist within discourses of nationhood. Through representations in interviews, minority groups may be given a temporary space in which they appear to participate in this discussion, and this 'conversationalization of public discourse' provides a sense of unity and cohesion. However, it simultaneously blurs the lines of social hierarchies and reproduces inequalities (Fairclough, 2003). Through the operation of these logics, news that represent immigrant groups can become a way to both legitimate and limit the space they occupy in the nation-state.

Discourse of nationhood

Indeed, nationhood itself is a very powerful discourse through which consent is achieved. For Anderson (1983), national identity is constructed through print capitalism and mass media. Citizens of a nation participate in an 'imagined community' where despite the actual inequality and exploitation that exists, the nation is conceived "as a deep, horizontal comradeship" (p. 16). To imagine a nation is to preserve the idea of equal opportunity, and by promoting a deep sense of commonality and sharing different 'fictions', citizens of a nation are made to feel a degree of 'sameness', despite the existence of real material inequalities (Anderson, 1983). The news has always been a powerful vehicle for disseminating these narratives that allow this imagined community to exist. As technology transforms how these stories are told, Gee and Hayes (2011) posit that people's feelings of 'co-citizenship' have also shifted. As they

retreat into their own online nooks that have been customized to fit their specific identities, values and lifestyles, the concept of the public sphere has changed, deepening and rendering more invisible the segmented spaces of a society. Globalization, migratory movements, and the creation of new technologies have led to identifications, allegiances and relations that are simultaneously bounded and unbounded. Through the virtual landscape constructed by online media, nationhood has become even more embedded in the imaginings of people (Warriner, 2009).

Migration and the nation

Filling the specific labor needs of a nation-state, migrants occupy a significant yet unequal space in this imagined community. In developed nations such as Canada, globalized production relations and local market demands create labor and investment needs (Larner, 2000), which require the flow of people, technology, money, information and ideas across boundaries (Appadurai, 1990). Not only does immigration provide employers with workers who perform jobs native-born workers avoid, it depresses wages and enables the employment of educated and skilled immigrant workers, whose cost of training and developing has been shouldered by another country. Migrants, on the other hand, pay the material and psychological costs of such a transition to improve their status and remuneration. Because immigration usually begins with deskilling and deprofessionalization, migrants also invest further in their country of settlement by acquiring new credentials and certification (Satzewich & Liodakis, 2007). By consenting to this hegemonic relationship that obscures the operation of political and economic power, migrants are thus allocated to a fixed set of positions in society and often socialized into accepting these limited roles as legitimate (Apple, 2004).

The study

Background

To illustrate the ways by which media representations of migrants can position them in certain ways, this paper focuses on Filipino immigrants and conducts a critical discourse analysis of several online news stories from national and local Canadian newspapers in the past three years. With 430,000 spread out in different major cities, Filipinos are the fourth largest visible minority in multicultural Canada. In 2010, the Philippines was the largest source of immigrants (Friesen, 2011), and last year's census report showed a 64% increase in Tagalog speakers in Canadian households in the past 5 years (Canadian Press, 2012).

What makes Filipinos a particularly interesting case for an examination of migrant identity and representation is how these issues of positioning and social mobility are amplified by the Filipino condition. In a 2011 immigrant labor force analysis by

Statistics Canada, Philippine born immigrants have the highest employment rate in Canada at 86%, and post-secondary education attainment at 79%, even higher than those of Canadian born at 83% and 64%, respectively. That Filipinos are easily absorbed into the Canadian workforce has been attributed to the fact that English is the medium of instruction in the Philippines and also because of the cultural legacies and educational system inherited from the USA that colonized the archipelago for half a century (Yssaad, 2012). Across ethnicities, however, Filipinos in Canada are the most proletarianized, that is, they have the biggest percentage of working class at 70% and the smallest percentage of petty bourgeoisie and employers combined to a meager 4 % (Satzewich & Liodakis, 2007).

Being from the Philippines has been taken to imply an aptitude or suitability with a certain class, that is, being in service or healthcare, working as caregivers, restaurant or customer service workers (Kelly, 2012). Indeed, a large number of Filipinos migrate as temporary workers through the Live-In Caregiver Program (LCP), which has grown as the demand for caregivers has risen with the increased privatization of the health care industry. More than 90% of those in the LCP who accept this temporary migrant worker arrangement are Filipinos, mostly women. While 63% of them are equipped with university degrees (Friesen, 2011), they have become a cadre of low paid, vulnerable employees whose live-in arrangements make them susceptible to unregulated labor practices and exploitative work conditions (Pratt, 2012).

As these Filipino women enter the invisible spaces of private households and submit to a labor contract that requires uninterrupted service with a private employer for two years, they are rendered docile and disabled from attempting any kind of collective representation. Separated from their children for a mean of six years, they are eventually able to apply for permanent residence and bring their children to Canada. From the moment they consent to these migrant arrangements, however, they have already been thrust into a downward mobility that begins with deskilling and family separation and continues with the alienation and school failure of their children (Pratt, 2012). In some studies of immigrant learners in Canada, Filipino youth were singled out to have lower grade point averages than youth in other groups, and had a low likelihood of graduating from high school (Farrales, 2011; Toohey & Derwing, 2008; Gunderson, 2007). In Toronto, 37 per cent of first-generation Filipinos possess a university degree, while only 24 per cent of second generation do so. In a study of Filipino secondary school students in east Vancouver, they are described as “quietly drift[ing] off”, as a third of them appear to be dropping out of high school (Farrales & Pratt, 2012).

Research questions

Recognizing how media can position people in certain ways, this study asks: i) How is language use in the news indexical of the power relations, the biases and assumptions

of wider society? ii) In what ways are Filipinos represented as ideal immigrants but positioned to occupy specific spaces in the imagined community of the nation? To what extent can news about them operate with both a logic of inclusion and a logic of exclusion? iii) Given the power of media, how can the language classroom address the positioning of migrant groups in the news and equip migrant learners with a greater sense of agency to resist such subject-positions?

Methodology

The news articles for this critical discourse analysis are taken from newspaper issues that are available online: *CBC News*, *Globe and Mail*, *National Post*, *Georgia Straight*, and *Vancouver Sun*. A search was conducted in each newspaper website for “Philippines” and articles were chosen for those that reported trends and issues regarding Filipino immigrants as a whole. Focus is given to the video “Filipino Canada” while findings from the other articles are embedded in the discussion of the video to support or contrast ideas. The video analysis was conducted after a transcription of the video clip, where screen captures were placed alongside the utterances (See Appendix A). Because this analysis focuses on the grammatical and semantic relations of the text, while examining, to a certain extent, the images that accompanied it, the transcription is represented for readability and does not include silences, false starts, intonational contours, or similar interactional features and does not make subtle distinctions between sounds. Coding was done to establish the patterns in grammatical structures in the different articles, and these were examined to identify patterns in language use and images chosen.

The video “Filipino Canada”

When Statistics Canada released the 2011 census results in October 2012, the CBC published an article online that reported how bilingualism was growing in multicultural Canada, where a fifth of the population speak at least two languages at home. Towards the end of the article, Soroka, an assistant professor at McGill University declares that “We celebrate [multiculturalism]. We see it as a challenge rather than a problem”, and that “Acceptance of diversity is part of the concept of Canadian national identity”. As an academic equipped with cultural capital necessary to make such pronouncements, Soroka is granted the authority to speak *for* Canadian people by using the collective “We” and *about* Canadian national identity. This assertion reflects the very objective of the census itself: to provide a “linguistic portrait of the country” (Canadian Press, 2012), a rendering of Canada through the brushstrokes of multiple languages.

One distinct finding from the census that is highlighted in the article is that the number of Tagalog speakers in Canada in the past five years has grown by 64%, and a news segment video entitled “Filipino Canada” is posted on the left sidebar. This three minute clip begins with the anchorman reporting that based on the census results

issued that day, there are 191 languages now spoken in Canadian homes, and that there has been a 30% jump from five years ago in the number of people who speak a second language. Three men interviewed separately outdoors speak in Arabic, Hindi, and Chinese. The anchorman then announces that the language whose speakers have increased the most is Tagalog, the language of the Philippines. The field reporter, Chris Brown, who serves as narrator for the entire clip but does not appear on the screen, segues to how, because of this particular survey statistic, it is a “big day” for Filipinos. An unidentified, unseen interviewer holds the microphone up to Filipino nanny, Zenaida Jamilo, on a street in Vancouver, who appears ecstatic about this news and says that Canadian people “love Filipinos” because they are very kind, honest and hardworking. A Filipino UBC professor who immigrated to Canada 40 years ago, Aprodicio Laquian talks about how since the 1990s many Filipinos have come over to Canada as domestic workers and caregivers. This is intercut with the interview of Ising Santiago, a middle-aged Filipino woman who works in a small-scale Filipino restaurant-store. She says she likes helping her family in the Philippines by bringing them to Canada. Laquian then states that Canada is an “escape hatch” for the poor, undereducated and underemployed of the Philippines, and Brown concludes by saying that for many in Canada, this is a “win-win” arrangement. (See Appendix A for the transcript.)

Findings

Through the analysis of the data from the video and the various news articles, three identity categories of the Filipino migrant began to emerge: 1) the Filipino as ‘invisible’ visible minority, 2) the ideal yet docile worker, and 3) the co-opted migrant. These are discussed here in sections 1 to 3. In one particular instance, the identity of dissenting subject—one who resists exclusion—surfaces in a very subtle way, and this is discussed in section 4 of these findings. The patterns in lexical, grammatical, semantic and visual choices reflect how Filipinos are recursively positioned as hardworking migrants who serve the needs of the caring industry. Despite the processes of deskilling and deprofessionalization, they view Canada as the place that holds the promise of upward social mobility. There is no representation of Filipino entrepreneurs or investors. The Filipino professor who provides a brief historical and economic account of Filipino migration corroborates the positioning of Filipinos as ‘servants of globalization’. In the video, through the intercutting of sound bites and images, the interviewees are made to echo the authorial voice of the reporter. How these subject-positions are constructed through language and recur in the different texts are discussed in greater detail below.

1. "After years of living under the radar": the invisible visible minority

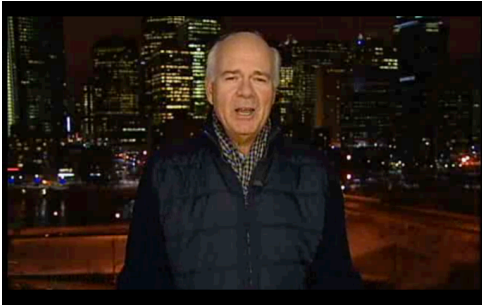


Figure 1. The news anchor introduces the reporter Chris Brown who does not appear on screen but provides the authorial voice of the video.

In the beginning of the video clip, "Filipino Canada" (Canadian Press, 2012), the reporter, Brown, employs two phrases to describe Filipinos as an immigrant group: "under the radar" and "overshadowed by other larger immigrant groups," lexical choices which render Filipinos as a passive, 'invisible' visible minority. They are not just "under the radar"—beyond the detection and concern of those in power who control the radar, but also "under" the shadow of "larger" minorities. Similarly, in a *Globe and Mail* article (Friesen, 2011) that reports how the Philippines had become Canada's top source of immigrants, Filipinos are described to "have settled in Canada in a way that tends to *minimize their profile*" (emphasis added). This low exposure is linked to "how they've integrated so quietly." In this article, Filipinos play a more active role—they "settle" and "integrate"—but at the same time, the adverbial phrase "so quietly" attached to the verb "integrate" suggests that the inconspicuousness of their arrival and integration was a choice of their own.

While the Filipino Canada video highlights the phenomenal increase of Tagalog speakers in Canada, the reality that is underplayed is that it is only really the 4th largest non-official language with 278,640 speakers, compared to Spanish with 325,260, Chinese (Cantonese, Mandarin and other Chinese tongues) with 1,113,000, and Punjabi and Urdu with 1,180,000 (Canadian Press, 2012). This disproportion is allegorized even further on the webpage in which the Filipino Canada video appears. The article's primary video, "The Languages We Speak" is hyperlinked to an image of a busy Chinese store, which occupies a more prominent space under the headline, and is at least ten times bigger than the thumbnail of "Filipino Canada" (See Appendix B). That the latter is relegated to a sidebar becomes a reminder of how in the hierarchy of Canada's visible minorities, as Filipinos insert themselves in a predominantly working class space, a large number of them remain in the margins of Canadian society.

In the video, reporter Brown quotes Laquian as saying that there are half a million Filipinos in Canada, a number bloated by around 60,000. In reality, Filipinos only occupy 8% of the total visible minority population, compared to the Chinese (24%),

South Asians (25%) and Blacks (16%). Filipinos only account for 1% of the total population of multicultural Canada (Coloma et al., 2012). However, what makes Filipinos invisible—a descriptor that Filipino scholars themselves have adopted by publishing a book about Filipinos in Canada entitled *Disturbing invisibility* (Coloma et al., 2012)—is not because they are a relatively smaller population, but because they are an ethnic group that has, as suggested in the *Globe and Mail* (2011) article, dominated the caring industries. These nannies and care-workers for children and the elderly are described later in this *Globe and Mail* article as “servants of globalization” who were “import[ed]” during the second wave of Filipino migration in the early 1980s. In contrast to the first wave in the late 1960s where “mainly well-educated professionals” “came ” or “arrive[d]”, the use of “imported” indicates the commodification of domestic workers and caregivers. While professionals have the agency to “come” or “arrive” on their own, those in the care industry are transported like goods to serve a particular need.

In the video, Brown intensifies this invisibility of Filipinos by providing temporal modifiers “after years of” and “so often”. The attachment of the prepositional phrase “After years of living under the radar,” to the independent clause, “today was a big one for Filipinos in Canada,” establishes a causal relation. It suggests that simply because Filipinos have grown in number, as reflected in the census, they are able to occupy more prominent spaces in Canadian society. This fallacious idea is repeated when Brown attaches the participial phrase “So often overshadowed by other larger immigrant groups” to the independent clause, “Stats Canada confirmed that Tagalog, the language of the Philippines, is now the fastest growing language in Canada.” In both statements, while the participial phrases are meant to modify Filipinos, they are dangling modifiers. The intended modified “Filipino” is absent in the sentence or acts only as object of the preposition “for”, reiterating the invisible or marginal state of this immigrant group.

These declarative statements also suggest that Filipinos have been rescued from their marginal state because of the results of a census. The news anchor who introduces the report describes how Filipinos are “making a remarkable transition across the country”, even though the nature of this ‘transition’ is not linked to social mobility. It remains vague and renders the statement vacuous. When Jamilo appears on the screen walking down a street in Vancouver, Brown proclaims that “today was a big one for Filipinos in Canada.” The noun phrase “A BIG DAY” appears in bold letters on the screen (See Appendix A2) collocated with “The National”, suggesting that the census results are worthy of a national celebration for all Filipino immigrants. Jamilo’s exclamation, “Long live the Philippines” follows Brown’s statement and thus appears to validate his claim. Through editing, the Filipino interviewee is seen to consent to the authorial voice of the reporter.

2. "Very kind, very honest, very hardworking. That's why people love us": the ideal immigrant



Figure 2. Filipino nanny Zenaida Jumilo is interviewed on the street about why "Canadian people love Filipinos."

After Brown announces that Tagalog is "now the fastest growing language in Canada," Jamilo is shown on the screen saying, "Very kind, very honest, very hardworking. That's why people love us, Canadian people love Filipino". The adjectives Jamilo uses to identify herself and fellow Filipinos—kind, honest, hardworking—are markers of docility, attributed to migrant workers who submit to the power of the employers and the state. In this recontextualization, after Jamilo provides a string of adjectives, with the modified participant "Filipino" once again absent, she is allowed to utter a non-modalized assertion that indicates a causal relation: "That's why people love us, Canadian people love Filipino", reiterates how Filipinos are considered ideal immigrants, worthy of "love" because of this deferential nature, a representation that is reiterated syntactically in the sentence where Filipinos are not agents, but receivers of the action. The modifier for the vague "transition" that Filipinos are making is "remarkable," a notably value-ambiguous word that can be understood as being either just "worthy of attention" or as "conspicuously unusual" or "extraordinary." The words that suggest strength—modifiers like "fastest" and "mighty" or active verbs such as "jumped"—are used for objects, e.g. "a mighty 64%" (the percentage increase of Tagalog speakers), "the number of speakers has jumped" or "fastest growing language".

Interestingly, the markers of docility attributed to Filipino immigrants in the video seem to be echoed by other Canadians as the qualities of an 'ideal immigrant.' In the comments section of *The National Post* article (Ditchburn, 2012) reporting Prime Minister Stephen Harper's visit to the Philippines, online subscribers describe Filipinos positively, the top adjective being "hardworking". Other recurring descriptors include: "modest", "undemanding", "uncomplaining", "adaptive", and "friendly". In a *Vancouver Sun* article (Crawford, 2012) that reported how Tagalog was the fastest growing language, the same professor Laquian explains that the reason employers like Filipinos is that "they can speak English well and they are easy to get along with—they laugh, they smile."

As Brown describes the rise of the number of Tagalog speakers in the Filipino Canada video through a voice over, the B-roll that is shown is that of women in veils and shirtless men in a parade and performing a tribal dance in a public square (See Appendix A4-A6). In what may be interpreted as an attempt to highlight their cultural distinctiveness, Filipinos are exoticized and treated as Other in this imagined community. By inserting footage of a huge gathering of Filipinos in a public square dancing (See Appendix A7), they are made to appear frivolously celebrating the results of a census. Hence, while Filipinos are praised for making a “remarkable transition”, they are simultaneously excluded and presented as different. Even Jamilo positions herself as Other by saying “Canadian people love Filipino”, treating “Canadian” and “Filipino” as separate identities even though Filipino immigrants are themselves Canadian.

3. *“Canada, says Aprodicio Laquian, offers many Filipinos a lifeline”: co-opted voices*



Figure 3. UBC historian from the Philippines Laquian describes Canada as “an escape hatch” for “poor, underemployed, undereducated Filipinos.”

While the nanny, Jamilo, is interviewed on the street, Filipino historian Laquian appears in what seems to be his well-furnished home. He is introduced as the “UBC prof who came to Canada 40 years ago”, bestowing him with the seniority of a long-term immigrant and a member of an academic elite. As the ‘expert interviewee’ in this news clip, he is made to appear and speak the most, compared to the working class interviewees. A number of visual and verbal clues are provided to reiterate his authority: his title appears under his name: “Historian” (See Appendix A11), which accords him the power and legitimacy to make universalizing statements about Filipino immigrants. In contrast, nothing appears under the names of Jamilo and Santiago. While these women are interviewed while standing either in a public space or at work, where Santiago is shown serving a white customer at a counter, Laquian is shown to be seated when he speaks, a position of privilege. Signifiers of intellectual capital surround him: a chess set, a close up of a book which he authored. In the B-roll that is shown when Brown does a voice over (See Appendix A9-A10), Laquian is seen standing while conversing with an unidentified white man in a suit (presumably the reporter, Brown) to

whom he shows his book, *Seeking a better life abroad: A study of Filipinos in Canada* (Rio-Laquian & Laquian, 2008). The medium shot of the two allows them to appear as equals and lends Laquian even greater credibility and social capital by presenting him to be in dialogue with an apparently distinguished white man (See Appendix A15). This symmetrical representation however is altered at one point in a low-angle shot (See A16), which usually accords power, but in this case, foregrounds the white man and diminishes Laquian, a possible metaphor of how, in this social order, even the highly educated Filipino immigrant may be subordinated by virtue of his minority status.

It is when Laquian refers to Canada as “an escape hatch” for “poor, underemployed, undereducated Filipinos” that he positions himself as co-opted immigrant. The assertion he makes is riddled with contradictions. While it is true that many Filipinos have come to Canada as domestic workers and caregivers, 63% of them actually come with a university degree, and may have been teachers or nurses in the Philippines, making them an even better educated group than the skilled-working class (Friesen, 2011). When Laquian says that without Canada, these Filipinos “would have very little chance of going abroad”, he seems to suggest that migration is already a triumphant end in itself. Brown then articulates how Canada is an “especially popular” destination because “caregivers get to stay permanently and then bring their families over, which is a rarity in the world.” This idealized view of migration however overlooks the processes of deskilling, deprofessionalization and family separation that accompany these temporary worker arrangements. How the reporter legitimates Laquian’s claim is by juxtaposing it with the restaurant worker Santiago saying “Coz I like it, you know, I like to... help my brothers and to come here in Canada.” The migrant worker is shown to articulate consent; saying that she “likes it” makes it an agentive choice. In the *Globe and Mail* article (Friesen, 2011) reporting the increasing number of Filipino immigrants, Fungo, an IT specialist from the Philippines who becomes a caregiver in Canada, even describes coming to Canada as “the ‘in’ thing in the Philippines”, reducing a life-changing decision where he is deskilled to a ‘trend’ that one willingly takes part in.

In an assertion that he attributes to Laquian, Brown also says that Canada “offers many Filipinos a lifeline so he expects the number of Tagalog speakers to keep growing.” Canada is imagined to be a nation that operates from purely altruistic motives, a benevolent country that welcomes the oppressed of the world. Although the country has indeed performed some level of humanitarian immigration by welcoming refugee groups, immigration is a primarily economic transaction that stands to benefit Canada. In the *National Post* article about Harper’s visit to the Philippines, the host President, Benigno Aquino is even quoted saying, “Overseas Filipinos are Canada’s largest source of migrant workers. It is only right that our countries work together in order to better guarantee the protection and welfare of our Filipino migrant workers and to ensure that the labour requirements of Canada are met” (Ditchburn, 2012).

This declaration is probably also the reason that when Brown in the video closes with the statement “for many here in Canada, that’s a win-win.” Who “many” refers to and how exactly immigration is a “win-win” is left ambiguous and unsubstantiated. It is matched not with the face of the migrant worker but her hands, preparing food in a kitchen, carrying out her role in the service industry: a reminder of the real purpose migration serves, and the marginal spaces which “invisible” migrant Filipino workers are made to fill. Indeed, immigration has its benefits and its costs, and in this video clip that celebrates the position of Filipino immigrants in the imagined community of Canada, there are moments of inclusion and exclusion, where immigrants are treated as an integral part of Canada and as Other.

4. “Magpakatatag tayo!”: resistance through language



Figure 4. Jamilo demonstrates resistance through language by not translating one of her utterances.

While much of what has been discussed here points out how Filipino immigrants are subordinated in the news and positioned in certain roles, there is one instance in the video that the Filipino interviewee is able to assert her own voice, without being controlled by the reporter’s authorial power. Interestingly, it is precisely because this news clip is about bilingualism that this is made possible. When Jamilo is made to speak in Tagalog at the start of her sound bite, she says: “*Magpakatatag tayo! Mabuhay ang Pilipinas!*” and when asked for a translation, she says “Long live the Philippines!”, which unbeknown to the reporter, refers only to the second sentence, a trite, empty celebratory statement. By refusing to translate “*Magpakatatag tayo!*” she activates her bilingual privilege and conceals meaning.

The untranslated statement itself is a powerful imperative, a rallying cry often used in political demonstrations in the Philippines. It is a call for solidarity that can be understood as “Let us band together and solidify our presence”, a translation that does not possess the impact of the Tagalog statement that delivers this meaning in two potent words. Through this omission, Jamilo, who initially positions Filipinos as docile immigrants when she speaks in English, is able to address fellow Filipinos directly in Tagalog and rouse them into action: evidence that despite the power of the interviewer

to pose questions, edit and select sound bites, there is a way for interviewees to circumvent this authorial control and protect their own meanings.

Discussion and implications

In a *Georgia Straight* interview (Pablo, 2011) of Sammie Jo Rumbaua, a second generation Filipino Canadian, she talks about growing up asking her immigrant parents different questions: "Who are Filipinos?" "What are they doing in Canada?" "Why are things the way they are in the Philippines?" "Why are Filipinos stereotyped as overseas workers, nurses, and nannies?" She wanted to discover her heritage, but her parents did not like talking about the Philippines and their reasons for migrating. She also lamented the fact that in her elementary, high-school, and postsecondary studies, there was no Philippine content in class instruction. Her knowledge of the stereotypes of Filipinos though shows that she has been exposed to discourses that construct ideas of Filipino-ness. How do such existing ideas shape the identity of Filipino Canadians like Rumbaua, especially as there has been no space to discuss or raise questions about these representations? In the same article, UBC professor Leonora Angeles says, "Filipino Canadians... who have lost their identities, and lost sense of their heritage, are going to be disturbed, unhappy, and, in a way, misplaced." To address this, she hopes that local school boards can introduce social-studies instructional modules that discuss Filipino migration to Canada. She has also designed a community-based Philippine Studies program that explains "the origins, processes and outcomes of poverty, industrialization, urbanization, migration and development patterns in the Philippines, and how they connect to Philippine-Canadian relations." Through a more critical understanding of the political economy of Filipino migration, Filipino learners can claim identities that are more firmly rooted in the historical and material realities that shape their lived experiences.

Indeed, as migrant learners consume media and are consequently positioned by them, the need for critical skills becomes even more exigent. They need a space where the material realities that they contend with can be acknowledged and understood, and where they can examine and expose the biases and assumptions embedded in texts. For the New London Group (1996), the multiplicity of communication channels in multilingual, multicultural societies requires a broader view of literacy: one that emphasizes how negotiating linguistic and cultural differences is necessary for creating access to the language of work, power and community. To address this plurality, they prescribe a pedagogy of multiliteracies built on four pillars: 1) *situated practice*, which

considers the socio-cultural needs and identities and lifeworlds of all learners; 2) *overt instruction*, which aims to develop a student's systematic, analytic and conscious understanding of what is learned; 3) *critical framing*, which allows students to interpret and critique the social and cultural context of what they have learned; 4) *transformed*

practice, which allows students to apply and revise what they have learned in other contexts. Through critical framing, migrant learners are able to examine the discourses that surround and position them, engage with issues close to home, and bring their identities and interests to the learning process (Kalantzis and Cope, 2012). Through web 2.0 and social media, they are also provided with more opportunities to 'talk back', to express their multilayered identifications, and to contest language and cultural ideologies promoted by society (Lam and Warriner, 2012).

If migrant learners are to be provided educational, social and economic opportunities that are not limited by the presumption that they belong to the bottom rung of social class, the structural forces that inform teaching and learning practices must be examined more closely to reformulate the literacies of schooling (Warriner, 2008). The conditions in which the linguistic capital of a second language is traded may reflect the status quo; however, there is still great potential for the language classroom to be a site of resistance and transformation. By providing migrant learners the tools through which they can examine and critique how language in media can position them, they are given an opportunity to challenge the biases and assumptions of their social contexts. Although they may be excluded or marginalized by discourses of nationhood, they have the agency to reject whatever subject position is imposed on them and to reframe relations and claim power (Norton, 2013).

Critical pedagogy encourages teachers and students to engage in dialogue about how power, circumscribed by race, ethnicity and class, operates in society. By examining how these relations of power can dominate and subordinate in both local and global society (Kubota & Lin, 2009), the language classroom can become a venue for social change. Second language acquisition itself needs to draw attention to the "socially constituted and socially constituting nature of discourse and language" (Fairclough, 1989, p. 238). Through critical language awareness, migrant learners who are marginalized by these discourses are able to examine, question, and challenge how specific ways of thinking are legitimized and delegitimized through language. By equipping them with the relevant conceptual tools, they can participate in emancipatory discourse (Fairclough, 1989).

Conclusion

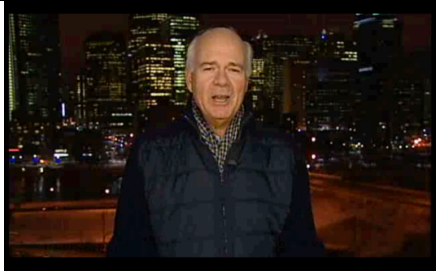




As migrant learners find their place in their country of settlement, discourses of nationhood mediated through the news, TV, the web, and social media, construct representations of their roles and their ways of participating in the narrative of the nation. Language in the media constructs these subject positions, locating them in relation to the center or the periphery of this unfolding narrative. Language learning, if it intends to indeed enable and empower, must therefore allow a space for learners to investigate, question and challenge these representations. It must rise above a

romanticized multiculturalism that obscures migrant inequalities, and recognize their transnational identity, as inscribed by race, ethnicity, and class. It must examine the material conditions of these learners, and the modes of inclusion and exclusion that determine their participation. Only by recognizing how language both signifies and positions, can learners exercise agency by consciously consenting to or dissenting from these assignments.

Transnational identity, as one that straddles between the here and there, is a constant site of struggle, of competing desires to assert one's self, one's historicity, and to assimilate and create new histories. To continue the construction of their life narratives, migrant learners must not only navigate through new structures of power, but also wrestle with this ambivalence of desires to find a voice that expresses both who they are and who they want to become. The language classroom helps them find this voice, and a critical pedagogy that continually questions the status quo helps amplify it. Indeed, it is only when migrant learners are able to claim their right to speak that they can assert their rightful place in the imagination of their adopted nation.

APPENDIX A

Transcript of the video “Filipino Canada”

<p>A1: 00:57 – 01:11</p> <p>News anchor: But the language that’s increased more than any other? Tagalog. The language of the Philippines. And of an immigrant group making a remarkable transition across the country. The CBC’s Chris Brown has the details.</p>	
<p>A2: 01:12 – 01:19</p> <p>Brown (VO): After years of living under the radar, today was a big one for Filipinos in Canada, such as nanny, Zenaida Jamilo</p>	
<p>A3: 01:20 – 01:25</p> <p>Jamilo: <i>Magpakatatag tayo. Mabuhay ang Pilipinas!</i></p> <p>IR: What did that—what does that say?</p> <p>Jamilo: Ah Long live the Philippines!</p>	
<p>A4: 01:26 – 01:39</p> <p>Brown (VO) So often overshadowed</p>	
<p>A5:</p> <p>by other larger immigrant groups, Stats Canada confirmed</p>	

<p>A6:</p> <p>that Tagalog language of the Philippines, is now the fastest growing language in Canada. In the last five years,</p>	
<p>A7:</p> <p>the number of speakers has jumped a mighty 64%.</p>	
<p>A8: 01:40 - 01:48</p> <p>Jamilo: Very kind, very honest, very hardworking. That's why people love us, Canadian people love Filipino.</p>	
<p>A9: 01:49 – 2.00</p> <p>Brown (VO): She might be right says a UBC prof who came to Canada 40 years ago. Back then, Aprodicio Laquian</p>	
<p>A10:</p> <p>was just one of one thousand Filipinos in Canada, now he says there are half a million.</p>	

<p>A11: 02:01 – 02:12</p> <p>Laquian: On the 1992, Canada approved the Live-in Caregivers Program and so a lot of Filipinos ah came over as as domestic workers and caregivers.</p>	
<p>A12: 02:13 - 2017</p> <p>Brown (VO) What makes this country especially popular is that many of those caregivers</p>	
<p>A13: 02:18 – 02:22</p> <p>get to stay permanently and then bring their families over, which is a rarity in the world. That's what Ising Santiago did.</p>	
<p>A14: 02:23 – 02:30</p> <p>Santiago: Coz I like it, you know, I like to ah help my family in the Philipp—and help my brothers and to come here in Canada.</p>	
<p>A15: 02:31 – 02:39</p> <p>Brown (VO): Canada, says Aprodicio Laquian, offers many Filipinos a lifeline</p>	

<p>A16</p> <p>so he expects the numbers of Tagalog speakers to keep growing.</p>	
<p>A17 02:40 – 02:50</p> <p>Laquian: It's an escape hatch in many ways, because otherwise, the poor ah underemployed, undereducated Filipinos would have very little chance of going abroad.</p>	
<p>A18: 02:51 – 02:544</p> <p>Brown (VO): And for many here in Canada, that's a win-win.</p>	
<p>A19: 02:55 – 02:58</p> <p>Chris Brown, CBC News, Vancouver.</p>	

APPENDIX B


CBC Website

www.cbc.ca/news/canada/story/2012/10/24/census-language.html — Bilingualism growing, but not in French and English - Canada - CBC News

Reader

Bilingualism growing, but not in French and English

The Canadian Press Posted: Oct 24, 2012 8:50 AM ET | Last Updated: Oct 24, 2012 10:02 PM ET 559



REGIONS

British Columbia
Kamloops
Calgary
Edmonton
Saskatchewan
Manitoba
Thunder Bay
Sudbury
Windsor
Kitchener-Waterloo

Hamilton
Toronto
Ottawa
Montreal
New Brunswick
Prince Edward Island
Nova Scotia
Newfoundland & Labrador
North

Stay Connected with CBC News

Mobile

Facebook

Podcasts

Twitter

Alerts

Newsletter

Languages we speak 2:32


Facebook 576

Twitter 83

Share 15

659

Email



Filipino Canada 2:58


Bilingualism is surging in Canada, but not necessarily in the country's two official languages.

Statistics Canada released the last batch of data from the 2011 census on Wednesday, this time focusing on about 200 languages that make up the linguistic portrait of the country.

The data suggest that multiculturalism is not simply an abstract concept to describe a motley collection of diverse communities.

Rather, it is a reality for a growing number of families, even within the confines of their own homes.

The census shows that 17.5 per cent of the population — or 5.8 million individuals — speaks at least two languages at home. That's up from the 14.2 per cent of multilingual households counted in the 2006 census,



ADVERTISEMENT

MEDIATING IDENTITIES

21

References

- Anderson, B. (1983) *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. London: Verso.
- Appadurai, A. (1990). Disjuncture and difference in the global cultural economy. *Theory, culture and society*, 7(2-3), 295-310.
- Apple, M. (2004). *Ideology and Curriculum* (3rd ed). New York: Routledge Falmer.
- Block, D. (2012). Class and SLA: Making connections. *Language Teaching Research*, 16(2), 188-205.
- Briggs, C. (2007). The Gallup poll, democracy, and the vox populi: Ideologies of interviewing and the communicability of modern life. *Text and Talk* 27 (5/6), 681 – 704.
- Briggs, C. (2002). Interviewing, power/knowledge, and social inequality. In J. F. Gubrium & J.A. Holstein (Eds.), *Handbook of interview research: Context and method* (pp. 911-922). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Canadian Press. (2012, October 24). Bilingualism growing, but not in French and English. *CBC News*. Retrieved from <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/bilingualism-growing-but-not-in-french-and-english-1.1176469>
- Crawford, T. (2012, October 25). Philippines-based Tagalog language on the rise in Metro Vancouver. *Vancouver Sun*. Retrieved from <http://www.vancouversun.com/technology/Philippines+based+Tagalog+language+rise+Metro+Vancouver+with+video/7439164/story.html>
- Coloma, R. S., McElhinny, B., Tungohan, E., Catungal, J.P. & Davidson, L. (Eds.) (2012). *Filipinos in Canada: Disturbing invisibility*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Ditchburn, J. (2012, October 11). Philippine immigration issues on table as Stephen Harper makes rare visit. *The National Post*. Retrieved from <http://news.nationalpost.com/2012/11/10/philippine-immigration-issues-on-table-as-stephen-harper-makes-rare-visit/>
- Fairclough, N. (1989). *Language and Power*. Essex: Longman.
- Fairclough, N. (2003). *Analysing discourse: Textual analysis for social research*. London: Routledge.

- Fairclough, N. (2007). *Language and globalization*. London: Routledge.
- Farrales, M. (2011). Holding spaces: Geographies of Filipino-Canadian students' educational experiences (Master's thesis). Retrieved from <https://circle.ubc.ca/>
- Farrales, M., & Pratt, G. (2012). Stalled Development of Immigrant Filipino Youths. *Metropolis British Columbia Working Paper Series*, 10, 1-62.
- Friesen, J. (2011, March 18). "The Philippines now Canada's top source of immigrants. *The Globe and Mail*. Retrieved from <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/the-philippines-now-canadas-top-source-of-immigrants/article573133/>
- Gee, J. P., & Hayes, E. R. (2011). *Language and learning in the digital age*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Gunderson, L. (2007). *English-only instruction and immigrant students in secondary schools: A critical examination*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Hall, S. (1996). Who needs identity? In S. Hall and P. Du Gay (Eds.), *Questions of Cultural Identity* (pp. 1-17). London: Sage.
- Harklau, L. (2000). From the "good kids" to the "worst": Representations of English language learners across educational settings. *TESOL quarterly*, 34(1), 35-67.
- Kalantzis, M., & Cope, B. (2012). *Literacies*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kelly, P. (2012). Migration, transnationalism and the spaces of class identity. *Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints*, 60(2), 153- 86.
- Kubota, R. & Lin, A. (2009). Race, culture, and identities in second language education: Introduction to research and practice. In R. Kubot & A. Lin (Eds.), *Race, culture, and identities in second language education: Exploring critically engaged practice* (pp. 1-23). New York: Routledge.
- Lam, W. S. E., & Warriner, D. S. (2012). Transnationalism and Literacy: Investigating the Mobility of People, Languages, Texts, and Practices in Contexts of Migration. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 47(2), 191-215.
- Larner, W. (2000). Neo-liberalism: Policy, ideology, governmentality. *Studies in Political Economy*, 63: 5-25.

- New London Group. (1996). A pedagogy of multiliteracies: Designing social futures. *Harvard Educational Review*, 66(1), 60-92.
- Norton, B. (2013). *Identity and language learning: Extending the conversation change* (2nd ed.). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Pablo, C. (2011, January 19). Community-based Philippine studies program aims to answer questions of identity. *Georgia Straight*. Retrieved from <http://www.straight.com/news/community-based-philippine-studies-program-aims-answer-questions-identity>
- Pratt, G. (2012). *Families apart: Migrant mothers and the conflicts of labor and love*. Minneapolis : University of Minnesota Press.
- Rio-Laquian, E. & Laquian, A. (2008). *Seeking a Better Life Abroad: A Study of Filipinos in Canada, 1957-2007*. Manila: Anvil.
- Satzewich, V. & Liodakis, N. (2007). *'Race' and ethnicity in Canada*. Ontario: Oxford University Press.
- Talmy, S. (2010). Qualitative interviews in applied linguistics: From research instrument to social practice . *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 30, 128-148.
- Toohey, K., & Derwing, T. M. (2008). Hidden losses: How demographics can encourage incorrect assumptions about ESL high school students' success. *Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, 54(2).
- Warriner, D. S. (2009). Transnational literacies: Examining global flows through the lens of social practice. In M. Baynham & M. Prinsloo (Eds.). *The future of literacy studies* (pp. 160-180). Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Warriner, D. S. (2008). "It's just the nature of the beast": Re-imagining the literacies of schooling in adult ESL education. *Linguistics and Education*, 18(3), 305-324.
- Yssaad, L. (2012). *The Canadian Immigrant Labour Market*. Statistics Canada.
- Zhou, M. (1997). Segmented assimilation: Issues, controversies, and recent research on the new second generation. *International migration review*, 975-1008.