

“WE’RE SAYING THE SAME THING”: HOW ENGLISH TEACHERS
NEGOTIATED SOLIDARITY, IDENTITY, AND ETHICS THROUGH TALK AND
INTERACTION

by

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DEDICATION

Dedicated to my beloved mother, Susan Denise Caldwell,
to Brazilian educator Paulo Freire (1921-1997),
whom I met at the University of Michigan in 1992 as a fourteen-year-old urban teenager
not realizing then how that encounter would influence the teacher I would become,
and to all who choose to negotiate solidarity, identity, and ethics through their words
in order to build a more peaceful and just world.

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ABSTRACT

How do high school English teachers studying their own discourse talk about conflict across different contexts? This study explores discourse conflicts in schooling and society through an investigation of the ways that teachers and students negotiate literate identities, social solidarities, and social change within the complexity of early 21st century secondary English classroom interaction. The research site, the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group (PCDSG), was the center of a collaborative action research effort during the 2007-2008 school year. Teachers and administrators at a school invested in closing the racial achievement gap invited me to conduct a series of workshops on classroom discourse analysis. The rationale was that professional learning about how to closely examine classroom talk would improve teachers' interaction with diverse students. Three case studies tell the stories of seven English Language Arts teachers as they learned how to analyze conflicts in their own and their colleagues' discourse. Multiple perspectives are represented, including that of selected teacher-participants, myself as the researcher-facilitator, and the group as a collective. Discourse analytic methods taught in the PCDSG workshops and used for analyzing data included systemic functional linguistics (SFL) and interactional ethnography (IE). Relevant literature about conflict, ideological dilemmas, shared ethical positions, critical race theory, and whiteness in education further informed analysis and discussion. The results of the study revealed that the English teachers at Pinnacle High negotiated solidarity with their students and colleagues through tactical and strategic temporary alignments of actions and discourse. Teachers drew upon linguistic repertoires derived from their identities, social subjectivities, and lived and intellectual ideologies in order to negotiate

solidarities with their students and each other. They greatly valued “saying the same thing” in order to forestall conflict. Although the larger goal of learning how to conduct discourse analysis on their own teacher talk remained elusive due to constraints of time, technology, and personnel, five of the seven teachers reported becoming more aware of their language use in the classroom. As a growing number of researchers and teacher educators provide professional development materials for teachers interested in language and discourse studies, this research supplements and extends these and other resources by describing how one group of teachers began to take up this kind of learning, and detailing the affordances and constraints of discourse analysis as method for teacher research.

Chapter 1

Introduction

From Urban America to Pinnacle High School

During my seventh year as a secondary English teacher, I began to consider issues of race and class much more critically when I accepted an assignment in a new school district.¹ Initially, I was astounded by the heterogeneity of Pinnacle High School. It was very different from my previous experiences teaching at magnet schools in a large, impoverished urban district where my students had been fairly homogeneous. Most of my former students had been African American, Christian, and either from aspirational working class or professional middle class homes. In my new set of classes, I would be expected to teach students from many different faiths and from a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds. Socioeconomic backgrounds at Pinnacle ranged from upper middle class to poverty. Nearly one-quarter of students were identified as having special learning needs. A few were English language learners, and a significant number spoke dialect varieties of English. As an experienced teacher, I knew that my challenge would be to

¹ Elements of this narrative section are derived from the introduction to Sassi, K. & Thomas, E.E. (2008, July). Walking the talk: Examining privilege and race in a ninth-grade classroom. *English Journal*, 97(6): 27-31.

somehow turn this very diverse classroom into a cohesive learning community with a framework of shared purposes (Achinstein, 2002). I also recognized the need to differentiate instruction while encouraging my teens to find common ground on the themes in the literature we would read together.

Current events at the time did not help my efforts to create common ground in my multicultural classroom. In the fall of 2005, racial tensions were flaring on the local, national, and international levels. Depending upon their backgrounds, my students interpreted these events in varying ways. Internationally, Paris was exploding with race uprisings; nationally, there was the devastation of Hurricane Katrina and the death of civil rights movement pioneer Rosa Parks. Adolescents were acutely aware of conversations about these events, which extended into popular culture (e.g., hip-hop icon Kanye West's charge that "George Bush doesn't like Black people"). At the state level, there was a ballot initiative to end affirmative action. At the local level, the school district was scrambling to close the racial achievement gap between African American students and their White counterparts on standardized tests. Within the school, there were increasing interracial tensions between staff members and among students. References to all of the above peppered discourse and interaction in my classroom despite my best efforts to focus talk on the literature under study.

Soon, there was significant conflict within my classroom as well. An African American female student came to me in tears after a class when a White male classmate had read a section from the first person perspective of Crooks in *Of Mice and Men*, mimicking an African American Vernacular dialect. In turn, several White male students voiced their displeasure with having to read *To Kill a Mockingbird* because of the gender

of the protagonist and the nature of the Tom Robinson trial. Complicating matters was the fact that I had just begun my first year as a doctoral student in the Joint Program in English and Education at the University of Michigan. This meant that I had access to educational research and qualitative methods that I ultimately used to interpret what I observed happening in my Pinnacle High School classroom. Yet for the first time in my schooling, I felt extremely alienated.² Often, the codes necessary for success in elite academic environments must be acquired by students from nontraditional backgrounds through a patchwork of guessing, imitation, and intuition³. Even my most well-intentioned efforts to communicate across social and cultural divides bore mixed results during my first semester. I had considerable trouble negotiating solidarity with my new colleagues.

When you grow up as I did, the eldest daughter of a multigenerational African-American blue-collar kinship network, solidarity is woven into the very fabric of your identity. Growing up, solidarities were constructed around loyalty to African American history and culture, family genealogies and stories, the story of Black Detroit, and the legacy of the labor movement. This sense of solidarity was part and parcel of me, a post-Civil Rights Era daughter of a dying, legendary city filled with ghosts at every turn, the

² My experiences contrasted with what linguist and cultural critic John McWhorter described in *Winning the Race* (2005) as “therapeutic alienation”. I did not find my culture shock therapeutic in the slightest; I found it disconcerting. Two years later, a *Washington Post* article which notes First Lady Michelle Obama’s transition from a Black working-class Midwestern urban community much like mine to an elite university resonated with my own experiences, and helped me understand that what I was experiencing was commonplace (Kornblut, 2007).

³ Professor Jay Lemke, in feedback, provided a compelling response to my observation: “You may want, eventually, to try to ascertain just how explicit college faculty at a place like UM *can* be, and how explicit students *need* them to be.” Lemke also has written and spoken about how those who benefit from power tend to be uncomfortable when that power is made explicit (Lemke, 1993, 1995, 2002). Elsewhere, I have examined the discomfort that many of my White middle-class students experienced when their Black working-class teacher/instructor foregrounded issues of race and class in instruction (c.f., Sassi & Thomas, 2008).

great-great grandchild of freedmen, raised in a family where every adult was a member of a union. Narratives about the eventual redemption and triumph of a longsuffering race, the exploitation of laborers all over the world across barriers of place and time, and the ways that our city had been shaped by all of these factors molded me into the woman I became. By the time I was an adult, I stood in solidarity with my people, broadly defined -- if I was faithful to Black America, to the *proletariat*, and to the city of Detroit no matter what, I would be rewarded. I was to later learn that social solidarities like these could not be assumed or taken for granted, but negotiated and renegotiated in every social interaction, both in the moment and over time.

What I did not realize at the time was that the assumptions that led to the ideological dilemmas that I experienced at Pinnacle High School and the University of Michigan were based upon my previous experiences as a teacher, as a learner, and in life. As a native Detroiter, the cultural capital that I brought to the classroom helped me greatly during my transition from novice urban pedagogue to experienced city teacher. I had to earn a different kind of cultural capital in Detroit than I had to earn at Pinnacle, and yet another kind at the University of Michigan – but earn it I did. Over the past few years, I have studied the academic discourse required for success in my discipline of English education. I have also become fluent in effective teacher talk at Pinnacle High School. Of course, I speak these new languages with a thick Detroit-spiced accent. I am confident and optimistic that these discursive shifts will come with increasing ease as time passes. It is my desire to help other teachers make discursive shifts that will aid their communication with all students. With this work, I hope to show that rendering discourse genres and language registers of schooling visible to teachers and students, and

how solidarity is negotiated within these genres and registers, is an important intervention for achieving equity during a time when American schooling is becoming increasingly hyperdiverse.

It has been five years since I first encountered the teachers and students at Pinnacle High School. In order to set the stage for this study, and to explain *why* it is important for teachers to learn how to analyze discourse and interaction in school settings, I will travel back in time to the winter of 2006 – and the crisis that directly led to the series of events resulting in this research.

Pinnacle’s First Courageous Conversation

Towards the end of my first year as a doctoral student at the University of Michigan, I found myself in the midst of a lunchtime conversation with a number of teachers and counselors at Pinnacle High School.⁴ This was not one of the informal, impromptu chats that educators typically have in the lounge over coffee and redlined papers. Instead, two staff members from the counseling department had initiated the conversation. Critical race theorist Glenn Singleton had descended upon town at the behest of a central district administration vexed by the persistence of the racial achievement gap.⁵ While I had been sitting in afternoon classes at the university the

⁴ Elements of this section are derived from my Joint Program in English and Education Second Year Examination, “The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Academy: How I Became a Critical Discourse Analyst” (E. E. Thomas, 2008).

⁵ During the 2005-2006 school year when this conversation took place, the student body of Pinnacle High School was 63.8% Caucasian, 14.1% African American, 10.5% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 11.6% are placed into a category labeled as “Other” -- Native American, Hispanic, Middle Eastern, Other and Multi-Ethnic. In the statistical breakdown for the MEAP, all groups designated in the district demographic data as “Other” received their own categories, save for Native Americans. The achievement gap between White and Asian/Pacific Islander students and all others is stark. 92% of White and Asian students entering 9th grade had met or exceeded 8th grade MEAP reading standards, while only 59% of African American

week before, Singleton had provided a district-mandated professional development seminar in which the predominately White staff of the Pinnacle Township Public Schools were explicitly positioned as racist.⁶ This was the sociological equivalent of dropping the atomic bomb. How could teachers in a city so liberal that it was locally known as “The People’s Republic of Pinnacle Township” *possibly* be racist? The staff collectively plunged into the initial stages of grief -- denial (“This is a wonderful school!”), anger (“How dare he make assumptions about us!”), bargaining (“But we had such a wonderful MLK Day Assembly!”), and depression (“We all know there’s a problem, but there’s nothing we can do about it!”). The counselors were there to help us cross over to the Jordan River of acceptance – to finally admit that yes, Pinnacle Township, we had a problem.

The group in the small auditorium that day was self-selected. Administration was silent in the aftermath of Singleton’s visit, as political expediency demanded. There were no representatives from the front office in the auditorium. What was pleasantly surprising was the sight of the diverse crew of educators who had chosen to spend their lunch hour in dialogue about the school’s racial climate. Members of the new lunchtime group hailed from disparate philosophical camps. There was the militant African-American⁷ social studies teacher whom I respected but always treaded lightly around. There was the friendly and gregarious African-American health teacher, who was popular

students had done so. In Chapter 3, “Research Methods”, I provide the data for the 2007-2008 school year, which is the period of this dissertation research study.

⁶ Singleton uses critical race theory as the basis of his confrontational approach in professional development seminars. His stance is that the racial achievement gap in educational attainment will not be eliminated until we learn how to talk about race honestly in order to build “bridges of understanding that lead to effective action” (Singleton & Linton, 2005).

⁷ Here and throughout the dissertation, I use the terms “Black” and “African American” interchangeably to refer to the racial/ethnic group from which I hail. “Black” predominates in intracommunity usage, while “African American” is most often used in contemporary educational research literature.

across groups of staff members. There were several White math and English teachers whom I always exchanged brief pleasantries with in the predawn mornings as we waited our turn for the Xerox machine. And of course, there were also a few district veterans who were loath to admit that the problems of the minority students in Pinnacle Township had anything to do with what was happening in *their* classroom...

“What’s going through your mind?” asked one of the two counselors who was facilitating the discussion. “Right this minute, share anything you’d like.”

I sat towards the back of the auditorium on that first day, planning to listen to the responses of my teacher colleagues rather than contribute. Already, I felt somewhat battle-scarred after nine months in the brave new world of teaching part-time in a suburban school district while I navigated the Swiftian landscape of first-year doctoral studies. At the time, I felt the same detachment from these people and their problems that I felt from my colleagues and professors at the university. For me, it was a matter of priorities. What did I care about challenging the privilege of my White colleagues when I could have all the copies I wanted? When my classroom was clean and air-conditioned? When all of my students maintained the same residence from September 1 to June 1? When I didn’t have to fight with an incompetent central administration for time off in order to attend professional conferences, or even to get paid at all? When and where I grew up, communities like Pinnacle Township and universities like Michigan were viewed as Nirvana. I honestly thought that the people who lived, worked, and learned there led lives much like people did on television and in the movies. Residents of Pinnacle Township could walk to major retail outlets, bike down paths relatively free from debris, and didn’t have alarms on their front doors or bars on their first-floor

windows. Graduate students at the University of Michigan didn't have to compete tooth and nail for essential things like conference funding, comprehensive health care, or even necessary reference materials at the library. What on earth did people like that have to complain about – no matter what their race? I had a difficult time accepting their problems as real, let alone crucial.

My detachment was further complicated by the fact that I was a young African-American working-class woman learning how to navigate a predominantly White middle class world for the first time. I was bewildered by my new colleagues' tales of woe. Why did the people here view themselves and their concerns as normative, when statistics showed that the majority of the nation and the world were much less privileged and would gladly trade places with them? During that first year, I had fun regaling Detroiters from varied race and class backgrounds with tales of wars over matters seen back home as Lilliputian. In turn, my Detroit friends and former colleagues characterized the racial conflict at Pinnacle High and throughout the district as the inevitable result of privileged people of color chasing after White folks.

“Well, what do you expect? Those people don't want your Black you-know-whats out there,” was the opinion of one sister-mentor of mine. “And the navel-gazing that you're doing at the University of Michigan isn't going to help you solve any of the real problems our kids face in schools. Your professors aren't training you to do social change... they're all about getting tenured and building their professional reputation. They don't care about you *or* those kids.” At the time, although her critique of my new world stung, I couldn't yet refute her statements with authority. My graduate studies at the time had yet to provide the prescriptive solutions that I sought. If the most liberal

school district in the state could not educate poor and minority children adequately, then who could?

The next thing I knew, the conversation had turned in my direction. Many pairs of eyes were on me, expecting an answer. Since it was well known that I was the part-time teacher from Detroit who was the doctoral student, I assume they were expecting this answer to be intelligent.

Okay, Ebony, what's going through your mind as you sit here? I asked myself.

I looked around the room.

“Why are there no Black or Latino kids in the Pinnacle concert orchestra?” I asked. “I feel like a stranger in a strange land.”

Yet, I didn't feel as if I was the strange one. Nothing in my previous experience had led me to feel as if I was the one whose worldview was strange or abnormal, or if I was the Other.

In my eyes, the Other was *them*.

Conflict and Social Change

These matters have significance beyond the specific setting of Pinnacle High School, or my personal experiences teaching secondary English in a new context. I chose to begin this dissertation by recounting my lived experiences in new social worlds in order to demonstrate that our current ways of thinking about social difference could be enhanced by taking up issues of solidarity and negotiation in discourse. For instance, the people I worked with and the students I taught at Pinnacle were suspicious of the university and slightly fearful of my hometown. My folks and friends in Detroit

dismissed both Pinnacle Township and the university as Shangri-La, unrealistic strongholds of the American fairy tale. University faculty and graduate student colleagues regarded Pinnacle Schools and Detroit as profoundly interesting and useful sites for research, but there often seemed to be an asymmetry in the way we position ourselves in our relationships with the city of Detroit, with Pinnacle Township and other suburban communities, and with the schools. Moreover, within each of these social worlds, there were many complicating factors involving individual subjectivity as well as subgroup identification (e.g., Palestinian American students at Pinnacle High; White Marxist Detroit Public Schools teachers leading the fight for affirmative action; action researchers at the university who live in Detroit). In all of these contexts, negotiation is difficult and solidarity across groups seems implausible. I contend that my corner of the world is analogous to many others at the conclusion of the first decade of the twenty-first century. Most people today exist in multiple social worlds as a matter of course.

We exist at a time of profound social change. Global economics, new technologies, rapid information flow, and transnational workforces are rapidly changing the societies that we live in.⁸ To thrive, people of all ages must constantly shift from one context to the next, within the same day, and during moment-to-moment interaction. The notion of what it means to be literate is also shifting phenomenally, as readers and writers may now choose between a myriad of information modes (snail mail, e-mail, text messaging, IM, Facebook, or Twitter?), orient themselves in text according to the interpersonal relationships involved (using netspeak for close friends and loved ones, using a more formal register for supervisors, and adopting an anonymous online persona

⁸ Elements of this paragraph were taken from early drafts of my contribution to the NCTE 2009 Brief on 21st Century Literacies (Gere, Aull, Dickinson, McBee-Orzulak, & Thomas, 2007).

as a news blogger), and shatter age-old barriers of space and time (instant access to anyone with an Internet connection, in any time zone, anywhere in the world). Yet even in the midst of technological innovation and globalization, people still find value in affirming the premodern and modern social identities of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexuality, socioeconomic class, and religion. The information age has not only helped individuals affirm these disparate identities, in some cases, it has exacerbated them.

Differing identities and social subjectivities generate different lived and learned ideologies. Our ideologies are informed by our personal experiences, and our experiences as members of a group. For example, my multiple identities and social subjectivities -- African-American, woman, daughter of a working class Detroit extended family, alumna of a historically Black university, urban teacher whose induction into the profession was in Detroit magnet schools – shaped my lived and learned ideologies. As a new teacher at Pinnacle High School, these lived and learned ideologies clashed with those of my colleagues, because I found the notion that Black students could not compete with other groups absolutely ridiculous. Due to my historically Black college/university (HBCU) professors' focus on their students knowing the truth about Black people in America, I knew that 80% of African American adults nationwide had a high school diploma or GED, and nearly one out of five had bachelor's degrees as of the last census (JBHE, 2006). I had seen evidence of African American academic achievement all my life even in my beleaguered city. Everyone in my extended family had a high school diploma or equivalent, and the post Civil Rights Era generations were becoming increasingly college educated. So when I asked, "Why are there no Black kids in the

Pinnacle High School orchestra?” and received puzzled and even angry stares in response, it took me a long time to recognize the ideological clash inherent in my words.

I do not mean to represent my lived and learned ideologies, or indeed, any ideology at all as unitary or uncontested. At times, our lived and learned ideologies can be multiple, competing, and even contradictory. One can believe that there are structural inequities in the educational system, and at the same time, believe that some African American, Latino, and Native American students “just don’t try hard enough”. One can lament the historical underfunding of majority-minority schools, and also believe that if the teachers would just return to a golden age of skill-and-drill and pseudo-militaristic discipline, test scores in the nation’s inner city districts would skyrocket. One can believe that students from historically oppressed groups need curricula that represents an African-centered, Latino-centered, or Native-centered viewpoint, while at the same time subconsciously affirming the inherent value of the Western literary canon in their own classrooms. The possibilities for internal ideological clashes are almost endless.

Ideological clashes are not only internal; they are external as well. Contradictory ideological positions cause conflict. I will continue with my example from the meeting at Pinnacle. My question about the limited number of non-Asian visible minority students in the Pinnacle High School concert orchestra was natural for a young teacher who was herself a non-Asian visible minority student who began playing the flute at age ten, the bassoon at age fourteen, and self-identified as a band and orchestra geek throughout secondary schooling. My question was unnatural, problematic, and perhaps even threatening for teachers who had lived for years and even decades in a town and school where the occasional African American or Latino student in the advanced music

programs were seen as an anomaly or were required to subsume their ethnic Otherness in order to be accepted into a group showcased by the school. Just as I had no lenses available at the time to read the ensuing tension after my question as an ideological clash, my colleagues had no lenses available to understand a world where there were award-winning, Black and Brown orchestras within an hour's drive of Pinnacle Township. This created a conflict that needed to be either glossed over or resolved in order for our social group -- Pinnacle High School teachers gathered to talk about racial tension -- to remain in solidarity with one another. However, without a means for my colleagues to experience my world as a possibility, or a willingness on my part to accept their world as my current lived reality, conflict resolution and subsequent realignment would not have been possible.

We assume that in a postmodern world, conflicts require resolution. However, history, society, and the very enterprise of schooling bear the weight of unresolved conflicts that are not talked about. In our schools, the curriculum, the way that we manage our classrooms, and student codes of conduct emphasize conflict resolution. In history and English classes, we trumpet our victories over slavery in the Civil War, fascism during the Second World War, and segregation during the Civil Rights Movement. Yet we are mute about the Vietnam War, the nadir period of African American history, and the advocacy of euthanasia in the 1930s. In the southeastern Michigan region where Pinnacle High School, the university, and Detroit are located, the racial, ethnic, and religious conflicts that continue to both enrich and suffocate our region are paid bland lip service in schools while they are featured daily on our evening news. We teach our students that conflicts must be resolved when we live in a twenty-first

century world with many conflicts and few solutions. We do not teach our students that conflict resolution sometimes results in the positions of subgroups being ignored, subjugated, or suppressed, that not all conflicts are resolvable, and that multiple, even contradictory points of view are possible. Our implicit assumption that our students do not recognize this ideological dilemma, or that their recognition of it is unimportant, is problematic for the continued integrity of postmodern schooling.

How we live with conflict is as important as conflict resolution. Thus, it is just as important to teach students *how* conflicts are resolved (or not) as to teach them that there are some conflicts for which there is no resolution. I further contend that along with teaching students about conflict on national and global scales, students need to know about how conflicts are resolved (or not) in everyday life. Since conflicts in human interaction are often visibly resolved through talk and action, then providing students access to theories of discourse and interaction can be a powerful way to teach them about the nature of conflicts in the twenty-first world. However, before we are able to make the hidden workings of conflict, ideology, and social change visible to our students, the keys to the kingdom must be handed to their teachers and other adults who work closely with young people. The story of the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group is the story of several teachers' journey to learn discourse analysis in order to resolve conflict, and my own journey alongside them as a beginning educational researcher, former colleague, and a once and future stranger in a strange land.

The Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group: Conflict and Negotiating Solidarity

This study is about discourse conflicts, and how English teachers at a multicultural high school talked about them⁹. The impetus for the project was a discourse analysis of my own teacher talk during the semester of Glenn Singleton's visit, conducted for a graduate seminar. My desire was to conduct a research study to find out if other teachers' ability to identify conflicts during their classroom discussions would be enhanced by similarly studying discourse analysis, albeit in an egalitarian group setting instead of a graduate class. During the summer of 2007, I shared with former Pinnacle colleagues the discourse analysis that I had conducted of my own teacher talk. At the behest of the English department head, I presented my self-analysis of teacher talk to a regularly scheduled English teachers' meeting in December 2007. After offering an invitation to convene a study group of teachers interested in learning discourse analysis methods during the second semester of the school year, seven teachers expressed their interest. Upon receiving IRB approval, the PCDSG was born.

The PCDSG teachers were a diverse group. The seven participants include an early-career African American female teacher [Natalie], a mid-career African American male teacher [Anthony], a mid-career White male teacher [James], three late career White female teachers [Ella, Jane, and Erin], and the late career White female department head [Marilyn]. Beyond their racial, gender, and generational differences, each teacher also had different ideological dilemmas and different challenges that they struggled with in their classrooms during that particular school year. Each of the participants was frank

⁹ This study's definition of conflict will be further elucidated later in this chapter, and in Chapter 2, "Theoretical Frameworks".

with me and their peers about their individual dilemmas and struggles as we slowly worked through the discourse analysis concepts, recorded their classroom teaching, and conducted preliminary analyses of their teacher talk. Yet my participant observations revealed each of the PCDSG participants had many strengths. Their strengths were even more remarkable when taking the conditions at Pinnacle during that semester into consideration. Along with the persistence of the achievement gap and the continued racial and ethnic tension among staff and students, the anticipated opening of a new high school would soon change the district and Pinnacle's status within it. Nevertheless, the group remained focused on the objective -- learning how to identify and analyze discourse conflicts.

When I was teaching at Pinnacle two and a half years before, the school culture had been one of colormuteness and colorblindness (Pollock, 2004; Sassi & Thomas, 2008). Although some facets of this culture persisted, there had been some changes since I left to pursue full-time graduate studies. First, the "courageous conversation" that I had participated in after Singleton's visit had morphed into a district-wide equity team. Two of the PCDSG teachers, Ella and Jane, were equity team members. Another factor that may have changed school culture was the impending opening of a new high school that was to be helmed by a reformer principal from a notoriously challenging, predominately African American urban district. A significant number of Pinnacle High School teachers were slated to transfer to other schools around Pinnacle Township, including Natalie, one of the PCDSG participants.

Perhaps most importantly, the previous principal whom I had worked under had retired at the end of the 2006-2007 school year. In his place was a no-nonsense,

charismatic leader, Martin Lunsford. Retired from the military, Mr. Lunsford, like his predecessor, was African American. However, unlike his predecessor, Mr. Lunsford was determined to change the culture of Pinnacle High School, especially for its African American male students. He immediately implemented a zero-tolerance policy for student misbehavior, enforced the student code of conduct, and walked the halls incessantly to ensure compliance. Once when I was observing James' tenth grade English class, Mr. Lunsford walked in, and called out a tight-knit alpha social clique that consisted of two African American girls and one Latina. They were chronically tardy, and often socialized during lessons. James had expressed to me his concerns about his inability to reach them. He was aware of a cultural mismatch between himself as a White, middle-class male English teacher and his students, and was very concerned with their lack of interest in his class, but was not sure how to be more effective with them.¹⁰

Mr. Lunsford was not concerned with any niceties. Instead, he read the girls the riot act. ("You are failing Mr. Douglas' class. You will not be late, you will not be absent ever again. I'm dead serious. When you are in his class, you will pay attention and get your work done. If you do not, you will not graduate from this high school!") After he was done, he apologized to me for "messing up your video", but there was no apology for his administrative style. As he told James in a matter-of-fact aside, "If they don't change, they don't need to be here." During informal conversations with me, the PCDSG teachers and other staff members expressed that they felt much more supported by the administration, contrasting those impressions with the way things were under the former

¹⁰ Another segment of James' classroom teaching where he is successful at diffusing conflict will be discussed by the group in Chapter 6, "Dilemmas of Negotiation and Solidarity: The Case of the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group."

principal's tenure. Whatever else that might be said about Mr. Lunsford's leadership style, race was specifically being named by the new principal as a source of conflict at Pinnacle High School, and the rest of the school followed his lead. During the same school year, people at Pinnacle High School and around the world were following the rise of the junior United States Senator from Illinois, Barack Obama, in the Democratic primaries. This historical context, both local and societal, would ultimately prove to be significant for the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group.

The local and societal historical context of the PCDSG encouraged the negotiation of solidarity.¹¹ Treatments of negotiation and solidarity are not new in studies of language and discourse. Functional linguistics shows how speakers and writers strategically use language resources of engagement and involvement (e.g., frequent use of names, slang and taboo lexis, specialized registers, technical terms, and nonstandard features) to negotiate solidarity, orchestrate group membership, and encourage alignment (Martin, 1997; Martin & Rose, 2007). As solidarity is negotiated within the group, speakers and writers, as well as listeners and readers, are positioned and repositioned as a text or a speech event unfolds (Martin, 2004). In interlanguage pragmatics, speakers negotiate solidarity through routines of agreement, shifting topics in casual conversation in order to find things to agree on, joint laughter, and even repetition of prior sequences in the discussion (Aston, 1993). In sociolinguistics, speakers include or exclude others inside or outside of their group through the strategic use of macrosocial categories (D. W. Brown, 2006) or through language crossing, where people of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds use each others' linguistic repertoires as a form of political solidarity and

¹¹ This study's usage of the concept of negotiating solidarity will be described later in this chapter, and in Chapter 2, "Theoretical Frameworks".

antiracism (Rampton, 1995). Of course, there is a long tradition in psychology and sociology of research into solidarity and prosocial behavior (Fetchenhauer, Flache, Buunk, & Lindenberg, 2006; D. W. Johnson & Johnson, 1985, 2009). Even the popular discourse of the local town and region, located in one of the most unionized regions of the United States, featured frequent talk about solidarity at the time of the study-- “Don’t cross the picket lines!” “Scabs are scum!” “Stop snitchin’!” “*Solidarity Forever!*” Additionally, it was a time of tense negotiations between school districts and teachers’ unions, and between multinational automotive corporations and the federal government.

Over the course of the study, I found that the teachers aligned their discourse with their students and each other during moments of conflict in myriad ways. Some teachers’ negotiation of solidarity was consistent across school contexts. The African-American female teacher in the study, Natalie, negotiated solidarity with her socioeconomically similar yet racially different sophomore English students through the use of othermothering language and African American Vernacular English (AAVE). Similarly, she frequently negotiated solidarity with me through the use of “sistertalk” – an AAVE term to describe congenial conversations in which life lessons and insider information might be shared between African-American women (Few, Stephens, & Rouse-Arnett, 2003). In these ways, Natalie foregrounded her lived ideologies about mothering and sisterhood through her interactions with her students and with me.¹² In contrast, Marilyn, the White late-career head of the Pinnacle English department negotiated solidarity with me, the other members of the PCDSG, the teachers she supervised, and her honors

¹² Here, it may be relevant to note that Natalie is a young married woman who was pregnant with her second child during the semester of the PCDSG. This influenced her participation in two ways – she was unable to attend one of the workshops due to a doctor’s appointment, and she was hyperaware of her role as a mother at home and an “othermother” at the school.

students by her frequent use of humor. With impeccable timing, Marilyn usually knew the right thing to say -- or the right wisecrack -- to diffuse conflicts in her classroom and in the department. She mitigated the face threat of her powerful position as administrator with her easygoing, fun demeanor.

Other teachers' discourse moves across contexts were more varied. In the classroom, Anthony aligned his discourse with that of his students by appeals to authority and to real-world relevance outside of his classroom. Very frequently, these authoritative appeals consisted of providing the perspectives of other students or teenagers, and making references to events they found important. With his struggling student teacher, Anthony slipped comfortably into AAVE, strategically deploying some language features to depersonalize his critique of her teaching. It was also notable that during the PCDSG workshop meetings, his usual stance was to remain silent, as he hailed from a different culture and ideological position than his colleagues in the English department.¹³ This was not the case for Ella, who attended each of the workshops and was an eager, frequent contributor. She admitted that she disliked conflict, and worked hard to avoid it with her English teacher colleagues in the PCDSG workshops, never pressing her position if someone disagreed with her. Yet in her own classroom, she struggled with how to negotiate solidarity with her students, many of whom had special learning and behavioral needs. She wanted to provide her students with safe space, but was not comfortable with even talking about topics that might lead to disagreement and discontent.¹⁴ The stories of Anthony and Ella's ideological dilemmas, and how they negotiated solidarity with

¹³ Anthony's negotiation of solidarity across school contexts is explored further in Chapter 4, "Dilemmas of Ideology, Context, and Silenced Dialogues: The Case of Anthony Bell."

¹⁴ Ella is a teacher for whom even the very notion of conflict is ideologically dilemmatic. Her discourse conflicts are explored further in Chapter 5, "Dilemmas of Ideology, Context, and Invisible Knapsacks: The Case of Ella Daniel."

students and colleagues in light of them, were so compelling that each warranted their own case study.

Effective English teachers seek to negotiate solidarity within their classroom discourse as a matter of course, since secondary English is a minefield with much inherent potential for conflict (Dakin, 2008). The role that secondary English plays in the transmission and reproduction of societal values and metanarratives is often invisible even to those within the discipline. Studies of discourse from secondary English classrooms all over the English speaking world show that while beginning a new novel or literary unit, teachers and students “progress from shared comprehension of events, to shared interpretation of behaviors of characters, to shared judgment on the significance of events, and finally to shared judgment on the moral significance of the book” (Christie, 1999). As a teacher attempts to engage in this process, conflict can occur when the teacher tries to enforce a consensus about the literature and themes to be studied before proceeding deeply into the text itself. I further propose that when a secondary English teacher is uncertain about the moral and ethical significance of the topic being studied, conflict may result. Conflict may also occur when students themselves are unconvinced by the moral and ethical significance of the topic, or propose alternate beliefs that are unacceptable to the teacher and/or their peers. Furthermore, conflict often occurs when teachers attempt to regulate students through discourses and actions, and students speak or act in ways that are inconsistent with teachers’ expectations. All of these undesired outcomes can be avoided – or attempts at avoidance can be made – through negotiating solidarity around the curriculum under study, as well as the classroom community.

Students are agentive in the process of negotiating solidarity. Just as the teachers at Pinnacle High School had a particular stake in avoiding conflicts and negotiating solidarity, their adolescent and young adult students had stakes of their own that did not always align with those of their teachers. High school students exist and participate in home, school, and community contexts and cultures of their own, each with a set of socially appropriate actions and discourses that may not be valued at school (Schleppegrell, 2004). We know from other studies about talk and interaction in schools that the linguistic resources through which teachers regulate classroom discourse are also available for students' appropriation (Candela, 1999). Students can and often do interrupt the traditional Initiation-Response-Evaluation/Feedback classroom discourse structure (Cazden, 2001), tipping the balance of power in their favor. Thus, students can cause conflict through their negative evaluations of teachers (Park, 2008), as well as negative responses to peers' perceived social identities (Leander, 2004). Yet these interruptions and appropriations by students are not always problematic. For example, in a study of what teachers and students considered "cool" and "appropriate", a group of African-American students helped a White classmate save face during a "fishbowl" discussion of Richard Wright's classic novel *Native Son* (Rex, 2006a). In order to diffuse a potential, conflict-laden disruption of the comfortable social structure of this honors class, the African American students inside the Socratic discussion made use of humor, aligned themselves with their White classmate's reading of the novel, and then asked him to put himself in the protagonist's shoes. Thus, even though the teens in Rex's study had different racial and social identities, alignment occurred, solidarity was negotiated, and a shared ethical position was reached.

The negotiation of solidarity across racial differences characterized many daily interactions at Pinnacle High School. During the course of the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group, I found that the most frequent occasions for negotiating solidarity in the PCDSG teachers' classrooms, in personal conversations and one-on-one interviews with the teachers, and in the PCDSG workshops involved race as a factor. This was certainly the case for both of the teachers whose discourse I explore in more detail in the case studies. Anthony Bell grew up in integrated Pinnacle Township and attended one of the "Public Ivies", but many of his conflicts could be traced to his feelings of racial and social isolation within the English department. In contrast, Ella had strong social relationships with the other English teachers, but was more tentative when trying to serve her students of color or talking about racially incendiary topics. The other teachers also engaged with race in various ways, but almost always made an attempt to align their positions and negotiate solidarity with one another in the workshop, and with the liberal/progressive societal norms of Pinnacle Township in the classroom.

On the surface, the fact that the teachers chose to respond to conflicts by negotiating solidarity may seem problematic for those taking a critical perspective. A critical perspective welcomes conflict and disjunctures as productive sites and spaces for teaching and for learning. The PCDSG teachers supported this critical perspective in theory, but in practice, their discourse showed that conflict was viewed as counterproductive in a school context where instructional time was at a premium. For instance, in Chapter 5, during a discussion of the use of the word *nigger* by an author, Ella chose not to explore the social implications of the "n-word." In Chapter 6, James' colleagues did not critique his traditional vocabulary lesson from a critical perspective or

ask what he had done to foster equity and inclusion in his classroom; instead, they supported their colleague by observing his strengths.

Were any of the teachers negotiating solidarity whenever the conversation turned to race in order to hide or excuse continuing racial injustice and educational inequities at Pinnacle High School? Critical discourse analysis of the PCDSG might reveal this to be the case (N. Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). However, CDA would not tell the full story, but only one part of it. Both of the African-American teachers, Anthony Bell and Natalie Osborne also engaged in these discourse moves of negotiated solidarity. Anthony and Natalie were strongly rooted in the African American community in Pinnacle Township, and were passionately committed to the academic achievement and resilience of their Black students. Two other teachers, Ella Daniel and Jane Bradshaw, were members of the equity team. Both Ella's and Jane's career trajectories showed a longstanding commitment to issues of equity and social justice. Erin's strong Jewish identity and status as a teacher situated in both the English and Foreign Language departments were reflected in her concerns for students at the margins. Marilyn, the department head, was perhaps the most "colormute" of the group, but students and teachers of color respected and liked her. "Marilyn's all right. She's good people," I was told by Black staff members on more than one occasion. Of the teachers, James probably struggled the most with negotiating solidarity in a particular class, but it is notable that he was hyperaware of this fact. At the start of the study, he emailed me to say, "I really only want to participate in the project for my ninth grade classes. They are the most challenging classes I have ever taught in terms of behavior and academics... I feel I am at my weakest and could therefore learn the most from analyzing myself in those classes." During our interview,

James specifically identified the problematic students in these classes as African-American and Latina girls, a group he said that he never had trouble with before. Thus, across race, gender, and career stage, negotiated solidarity in classroom interactions was an implicit value with these seven teachers.

Up For Negotiation: Why Me? Why This Work? How Did I Do It?

This study analyzes teacher discourse about conflict by presenting three case studies, which are themselves embedded within an autoethnographic account of an American high school where I was first a teacher and a research subject, and later a researcher and professional development facilitator. Throughout my affiliation with Pinnacle High School, I was a participant-observer whose experiences were also being shaped by my doctoral coursework and qualifying examinations at the university. Specifically, my lifeworlds and my interests have shaped me into a teacher educator and researcher of English education who uses theories of language and discourse as analytic tools. Among these theories, a functional perspective of language and an interactional ethnographic perspective of classroom interaction most characterize my work. To these, I add my funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992) as someone who lived and taught in this community, valuing the lives and the perspectives of my former students and colleagues.

The data corpus that informs this research study was collected during the 2005-2006 and 2007-2008 school years. During the year in between (2006-2007), I conducted discourse analysis of my own teacher talk of a moment that occurred two weeks into the process of being researched. The researcher generously provided one day's worth of

transcripts for my use. When I first read my teacher talk, I was extremely embarrassed at many features of the language I used. This is one of the pitfalls of critiquing your own linguistic practices. From my own experience, I have learned that it is easier to examine the discourse of an anonymous speaker, or at least one that is not an acquaintance. It is extremely difficult to revisit yourself when you are not at your best, and it was a struggle to enter the field of discourse analysis by being disabused of the notion that I was successfully masking moments of confusion, uncertainty, resistance, and accommodation in my teaching.

My conclusions at the time blended my practical knowledge as a teacher with the theory that I was learning in my doctoral coursework at the university. While I gained a new appreciation for my ability to distill complex ideas from scholarly texts for my high school students, I learned that one area where my pedagogy needed to improve was in giving clear and concise oral information and directions. After conducting these analyses of my classroom discourse at Pinnacle in December 2006, I concluded:

“...These are not easy issues to grapple with, especially when you are analyzing your own teacher talk. Yet as difficult as confronting myself as a practitioner was, I find the implications for my own work made the experience valuable. Some of the questions that I have as I continue to work with this transcript for future projects include: 1) How can we negotiate the gap between lesson planning and implementation? (The researcher) and I worked closely together on this project, but I needed considerable scaffolding in order to deliver content effectively. I began to wonder what happens when administrators, the district, and government officials ask teachers to include unfamiliar content into

curricula at the last minute without providing adequate training. This has considerable implications for my own emerging interest in teacher professional development. How do teacher dilemmas such as the ones I faced while implementing the research unit on (Native American) literature affect student achievement of unit aims and acquisition of knowledge?...

...Discourse analysis can be a valuable tool for understanding classroom talk. If some of the challenges of literate language include its decontextualization, lack of explicitness, complexity, and cognitive demand (Schleppegrell, 2006), then examining language from a functional perspective can help us determine what it is about the language that makes it decontextualized, implicit, complex, and cognitively demanding. This applies certainly to texts that students find challenging. We as their teachers may find that it applies even to the very words we speak.” (Thomas, 2006)

Over the next two years, I continued to think deeply about the ideological dilemmas that English teachers face, and how they surface in language. I shared this self-analysis of my teacher talk at several national education conferences, and two teacher professional development meetings in the district. It generated a considerable amount of interest, especially from teachers and teacher educators in multicultural classrooms. Teacher research and reflection on teaching (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Zeichner, 1996; Kincheloe, 2003) is not unknown to these audiences. Many of the teachers that I have shared my self-analysis with have advanced degrees from research institutions. Some have participated in professional development initiatives like the National Writing Project. But many were considerably electrified by the idea of going beyond viewing and

listening to records of their practice to analyzing their teacher discourse for the meanings that their language might be making. While analytic methods that focus attention on situation and context may also be useful for these purposes, I found discourse analysis to be critical for unlocking the meanings that my language might have been making for students – *even when I did not intend those meanings*. This in turn helped me to understand my students’ reactions and responses in a new way, and improved my teaching.

Typically, discourse analysis is not conducted by classroom teachers. In most education research studies, qualitative research methods are generally used only by the researchers. Some researchers challenge on methodological grounds the notion that practicing teachers have the skill, the distance, the time, or the sustained interest to conduct rigorous inquiries on their own educational contexts (Huberman, 1996; Cochran-Smith & Donnell, 2006). Discourse analysis is a methodology that is particularly technical, requiring considerable time and investment for a novice to learn. Yet if discourse analysis methods can help the researcher better understand “the word and the world” (Freire & Macedo, 1987), and if meanings are constructed in the classroom in large part (though not exclusively) through language, then facilitating teachers’ study and analysis of their own classroom language will aid teachers in better understanding themselves and their students, thus building more productive contexts for teaching and learning (Rex & Schiller, 2009).

The orienting research question for the study was *How do high school English teachers in a discourse study group talk about conflict?* I am defining conflict as *an ideological dilemma evident in teachers’ and students’ actions and discourses that*

impedes the negotiation of shared ethical positions in the classroom. To define my terms further, an ideological dilemma occurs when a teacher experiences conflict between his or her lived and intellectual ideologies (Billig, et al., 1988). I further contend that these lived ideologies can be social, emotional, or even spiritual in nature. Shared ethical positions refer to the ways that students and teachers in English classrooms achieve consensus about curricular and extracurricular “themes” as a basis for proceeding further into the unit under study (Christie, 1999). Emphasis is placed upon correct readings and interpretations, and communicating for specific purposes, and interpretations and purposes that are outside of the group consensus are often seen by teachers as problematic.

Teachers in the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group talked about and dealt with conflict by negotiating solidarity with their students, as well as with each other. I am defining this process of **negotiating solidarity** as *conflict-mitigating moves constructed through temporary alignment of actions and discourses that facilitate the achievement of shared ethical positions.* As subsequent chapters will illustrate, this process of social alignment in order to attain solidarity (Martin, 2004; Park, 2008) is quite complex and should not be taken for granted.¹⁵

My methodological process was informed by my experiences with the teachers, and my stances as a qualitative researcher and discourse analyst.¹⁶ After the school year had ended, I conducted a content analysis of all data, reviewing and writing memos for each video and audiofile. Next, I constructed a theoretical comparison matrix, examining

¹⁵ For more about the ways that I theorize this process of alignment for the purposes of this study, please refer to Chapter 2, “Theoretical Frameworks”.

¹⁶ This process will be explored in more detail in Chapter 3, “Research Methods.”

each participating teacher's talk. The goal was to identify each teacher's primary self-identified ideological dilemma. After that, I engaged in theoretical sampling. I chose to select those teachers whose specific cases were least often represented in English education research. Once I selected theoretically significant cases, I coded classroom and workshop transcripts, identifying key concepts and categorizing them. After that, I conducted two kinds of discourse analysis on the data – systemic functional, concentrating on Appraisal resources, and interactional ethnographic, identifying the social positioning and the stakes for each of the participants. Finally, I compared the findings from the discourse analyses to my ethnographic data, to triangulate my results.

My purpose for following this approach and methodological logic was to show how the convergence between identity, schooling, and society leads to conflicts that are evident in classroom discourse and interaction. Secondary English education is a unique site for this conflict-laden convergence because the emphasis on attaining shared ethical positions leads to ideological dilemmas. As a beginning researcher and former classroom teacher from an urban background, I wrestled with ways to negotiate solidarity with students and colleagues whose lived experiences, identities, and social subjectivities were very different from my own. I found that analysis of my own teacher talk helped me identify moments of disconnect and disarticulation in my interactions with students. My hypothesis was that providing similar frames for understanding discourse to classroom teachers, and helping them to identify, describe, and analyze discourse conflicts would improve their interaction with students and ultimately their practice.

This study provides new knowledge about how social solidarities are formed in schooling. Often, educators assume *a priori* knowledge about questions of solidarity and

identity, as if answers for these complex formulations are predetermined. Careful examination of teacher discourse at Pinnacle High School shows that the process of negotiating solidarity was socially situated and unfolded over time. Teachers and students aligned their discourses and actions with one another in ways that avoided conflict, or mitigated it when it occurred. Since these actions and discourses occurred in moment to moment, affording the Pinnacle English teachers with opportunities to view and reflect on their practice provided fresh insight towards more effective communication.

Self-analysis of teacher talk may lead to an increased awareness of the role that language plays in classroom teaching, and the development of a shared language between stakeholders in schooling and society to talk about classroom interaction and research in education (Grossman & McDonald, 2008). If we can engage practicing teachers in analytical thinking about classroom discourse and their own perceptions of conflict within that discourse, in turn, these teachers will be able to provide similar frames for their students (Martin, 1999; Gebhard, Harman & Seger, 2007). As teachers learn to become more thoughtful and critical about “the word and the world”, students and ultimately society will benefit.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Frameworks

In the previous chapter, I described some of my experiences in the teaching and learning context of Pinnacle High School in order to illustrate how our current ways of thinking about social difference could be enhanced by taking up issues of solidarity and negotiation in classroom discourse. Differing identities and social subjectivities in schooling and society generate lived and learned ideologies that can be multiple, competing, and even contradictory. These contradictory ideological positions can cause conflict. We assume that in a postmodern world, conflicts require resolution. Yet how we live with conflict is just as important as that conflicts are resolved. In school settings, these conflicts are resolved through the negotiation of social solidarities.

This research study is about discourse conflicts, and how a diverse set of English teachers at Pinnacle High School participating in a discourse study group during the 2007-2008 school year talked about them. The local and societal historical context of the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group encouraged *the negotiation of solidarity*, which I define for the purposes of this study as **conflict-mitigating moves constructed through temporary alignment of actions and discourses that facilitate achievement of shared ethical positions**. I found that the most frequent occasions for negotiating

solidarity in the PCDSG teachers' classrooms, in personal conversations and one-on-one interviews with the teachers, and in the PCDSG workshops involved race as a factor. These ethnographically derived understandings about the group I was observing made possible the purpose for this study: to understand how conflicts in classroom discourse and interaction can be productively described in terms of the convergence between identity, schooling and society.

In order to achieve this purpose, I needed to assemble a series of constructs that helped me understand the theoretical basis for this work. Thus, I return to the question orienting this study: *how do high school English teachers in a discourse study group talk about conflict?* Since conflict is central to my orienting research question, in this chapter, I will further elucidate my definition of conflict in English education as **an ideological dilemma evident in teachers' and students' actions and discourses that impedes the negotiation of ethical positions in the secondary English classroom**. First, I will provide a review of the relevant literature describing *conflict*, *ideological dilemma*, and *shared ethical position*, as well as introduce another term to describe the moment that an ideological dilemma occurs in the classroom – *décalage*. I will then situate this problem within the current historical moment in the field, positing secondary English as a unique site for exploring issues of conflict in discourse. Afterward, I will define terms that I am using to describe how the English teachers of the PCDSG talked about conflict -- by *negotiating solidarity* through *alignment of discourses and actions*. I will conclude with a discussion of how these concepts led to subquestions that guided case studies about two Pinnacle English teachers and the PCDSG as a whole.

Review of Relevant Literature

Conflict

Central to my theoretical approach to this study is a conceptualization of *conflict*. Conflict impedes and threatens the negotiation of solidarity in schools. Many school studies have examined conflict in the classroom context on the basis of race, gender, religion, linguistic difference, special needs, and current events (Bolgatz, 2005; Delpit, 1995; D. W. Johnson & Johnson, 1985, 2009; Morse & Long, 1996). Lisa Delpit's influential work gives a rich account of the conflict between educators who adhere to liberal-progressive literacy pedagogy and the need to make the codes of power explicit for students from underprivileged backgrounds. The work of Nicholas Long and William Morse centers on the teaching of emotionally and behaviorally challenged children, and focuses on the conflict between the special needs of these students and the culture of the academic mainstream. Jane Bolgatz's case study centered in combined English Language Arts and social studies classrooms is representative of the literature on cultural clashes between white teachers and students of color, a growing configuration found in twenty-first century schools (Harding, 2005; Howard, 1999; Sleeter, 2001). In these and other studies, conflict is neither defined as such, nor theorized as an independent construct; its definition must be inferred. While these and other studies that provide a compass for navigating Otherness have helped further critical lenses in education, most only deal with one or two facets of difference, and present those as unitary and uncontested. The shifting, temporal dynamic nature of social subjectivities is rarely

addressed, let alone examined or problematized.¹⁷

David and Roger Johnson define conflict as controversy – “when one person’s ideas, information, conclusions, theories, or opinions are incompatible with those of another person, and they seek to reach an agreement” (1985: 238). According to Johnson and Johnson, in order for controversies to be constructive, certain conditions are necessary: a cooperative goal structure, relative homogeneity of participants, participants with interpersonal skills, group members with the ability to engage in rational arguments, and the active involvement of all participants (2009: 42-43). While Johnson and Johnson have generated useful categories to qualify the nature of successful conflict resolution in schools, much classroom interaction is asymmetrical in nature. Teachers and students have different statuses and stakes in exchanges (Park, 2008), and in multicultural classrooms, the “relative homogeneity of participants” is neither guaranteed nor desirable. Students themselves have differing statuses and stakes when interacting with one another, as do teachers within a professional learning community.

A growing number of studies that examine conflict between teachers and students, and between and among students, show that students position themselves within classroom contexts with a fair degree of agency (Candela, 1999; D. B. Jackson, 2003; Miron & Lauria, 1998; Park, 2008). Because of this, I began to search for literature about the ways that teachers might think about the relationship between agency and conflict. I found a recent study conducted by the Center for Research on the Context of Teaching at the Stanford University School that provides a useful framework for thinking about

¹⁷ Although I call for complication of social subjectivities, I also acknowledge the danger of emphasizing the socially constructed nature of difference/Otherness at this postmodern moment when there are real material consequences of difference/Otherness (Andalzua, 1998; Banks, 2006; C. Clark & O'Donnell, 1999; Delpit & Dowdy, 2002; Dixson & Rousseau, 2005; MacLeod, 1995; Willis, 1977).

conflict within the context of teacher professional learning communities (Achinstein, 2002). Achinstein's research delineates approaches taken to conflict by teachers at two different middle schools. She defines conflict as "both a situation and an ongoing process in which views and behaviors diverge... or are perceived to be in some degree incompatible. That is, conflict can be an event in which individuals or groups clash, exposing divergent beliefs and actions" (13). Another definition of conflict provided by Achinstein positions it as a "social-interaction process, whereby individuals or groups come to perceive of themselves at odds" (13). The conflicts that arose during this social interactive process were examined within the auspices of the two professional learning communities (PLCs). Although the teachers in Achinstein's study were not invited to explicitly analyze their own practice, or to reflect on their own philosophies and ideologies of education, the value of Achinstein's work is that it troubles traditional visions of PLCs as unitary and uncontested groups focused on problem-solving efforts that directly impact teaching and learning. Achinstein also acknowledges the difficulty of reconciling disparate ideological perspectives. She calls for further work in this area, stating that "examining, rather than overlooking, the role of conflict within community is critical to this endeavor". Achinstein further proposes that

“...(w)e need to explore a multiplicity of ties beyond those that blind or those that totally fragment a community. This means examining the strength of weak ties... or less intimate and developed relationships... **‘The play of conflicting interests in a framework of shared purposes’ is the image needed for our schools and society...** The challenge then is how to conceptualize a community that maintains the ties and connectedness of a caring and stable community while sustaining the

diversity, critical perspectives and inclusiveness of an ongoing learning community.” (153)

I find that Achinstein’s “framework of shared purposes” is a useful starting point for my consideration of the negotiation of solidarity in order to resolve conflicts in schooling. In Chapter 1, I explored the inherently conflict-laden landscape of twenty-first century schooling and society. At a time of profound social change, this “framework of shared purposes” is ever more essential, yet grows ever more elusive. As previously stated, differing individual and social subjectivities generate different lived and learned ideologies that are at times multiple, competing, and even contradictory. What we learned as truth from our families and communities may very well be quite different from the truths we live and learn in other lifeworlds that we encounter throughout the course of a lifetime. Thus, these multiple, competing, and contradictory ideologies cause internal conflict inside of us and external conflict as we interact with diverse others. The default position for many seems to be that it is always important for conflicts to be resolved¹⁸ (Girard & Koch, 1996; Perlstein & Thrall, 2001; Polland & Deroy, 2004; Teolis, 2002). Often in social interaction, interactants decide that it is more important to remain in alignment with the other members of a community by avoiding conflict than to honor the positions of minority subgroups or even a single dissenting voice. Yet it is precisely because the postmodern condition requires that we “exist in a fabric of relations that is now more complex and mobile than ever before” (Lyotard, 1984), a fabric that consists of a multiplicity of narratives and truths, that conflict is inevitable.

¹⁸ Many workbooks on conflict resolution in education seek to catalog and identify all social situations that have conflict potential. This orientation is reductive -- social interaction is complex and in-the-moment, not paint by numbers.

My definition of conflict draws heavily upon Achinstein's concept of a "framework of shared purposes", along with the literature on ideological dilemmas in education and other social institutions (Troyna & Carrington, 1989; Stanley & Billig, 2004). I propose that a teacher's lifework in postmodern schools is inherently ideologically dilemmatic, which is why helping preservice and inservice educators navigate these ideological dilemmas may be one way to build more integrity into our "framework of shared purposes" for teaching and learning. Before I review the literature on ideological dilemmas, I will characterize what many English educators are striving for in their classrooms due to the very nature of their subject matter – a shared ethical position that grows ever more elusive the more unstable and heterogeneous our classrooms become. To do so, I begin with the work of sociologist Basil Bernstein and linguist Frances Christie as they examine the sociopolitical underpinnings of, respectively, schooling in general and secondary English education in particular.¹⁹

¹⁹ Notable critics of Bernstein's coding orientation and pedagogic device have included Ronald King, Rex Gibson, William Labov, and Norbert Dittmar, who objected to what they saw as a linguistic theory of verbal deficits. Paul Atkinson did much to reinterpret Bernstein's work for American audiences. In the past, Allan Luke, Courtney Cazden, Aviva Freeman, and Peter Medway have critiqued SFL genre-based pedagogy.

Shared Ethical Position

Another central concept for my theoretical framework, *shared ethical position*, is derived from the work of Basil Bernstein. According to Basil Bernstein, English language arts education has its roots in ancient times via the medieval university (Bernstein, 1996). In his view, English education is derived from the first order of classical knowledge, the *trivium* -- logic, grammar, and rhetoric.²⁰ The *trivium* consisted of rules that regulated what was considered the *learned* use of language. Once the *trivium* was mastered, students moved on to the *quadrivium* – astronomy, music, geometry and arithmetic. Study of the *quadrivium* was based upon socialization into the *trivium*, the fixed word that made exploring the uncharted world safe. If the *quadrivium* was primarily about learning new fields of knowledge, the *trivium* provided a presupposed social regulation for how one should operate while acquiring knowledge. Bernstein suggests that this is the “first moment of pedagogic classification”, and that “this dislocation between (the) inner and outer becomes a fundamental problematic of all European philosophy and social science” (1996: 8). He also contends that this was the moment in Western education that academic language instruction became both content to be mastered *and* foundational for all other content areas.²¹ The *trivium* is thus concerned with both regulation *and* instruction, both curriculum *and* ethics.

²⁰ Here, although Bernstein does not do so, I wish to explicitly acknowledge that the *trivium* was influenced by the three Aristotelian rhetorical proofs: *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*. Although a history of the rhetorical tradition in education is beyond the scope of this project, the ethical component of the *trivium* has implications for postmodern secondary English education that are taken up below.

²¹ I contend that the move after the Enlightenment through the early Industrial Revolution from instruction in Greek and/or Latin to the vernacular (in our case, English) further makes this pedagogy invisible – generations of struggling students in our classrooms have heard the mantra “Why can’t you do well in English? It’s your first language!”

Recent studies by leading English educators (Gere & Berebitsky, 2009; Sperling & DiPardo, 2009) attest to the fact that the role of the *trivium* in medieval universities has been inherited by English education. Because schooling is critical in the formation of myths of national consciousness, and “national consciousness is constructed out of myths of origins, achievements, and destiny” (Bernstein, 1996), many of today’s English educators and educational researchers presuppose that language, literature, and even logic should not only be studied for their own sake, or for the development of the individual student. It is my view that the external transmission and eventual internalization of mythological discourses of national origin, achievements and destiny are critical to societal and cultural reproduction (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990). In addition to school practices, rituals, celebrations, and emblems, Bernstein positions the curricular discourses of language, literature and history as paramount. Through the shared national metanarrative learned through instruction in language, literature, and history, schools develop *horizontal solidarity through the transmission of mythological discourses*. In Bernstein’s theory of pedagogic codes and symbolic control, this mythological discourse found in the modern and postmodern inheritors of the *trivium* serves two functions:

- 1) to celebrate and produce a united, integrated, apparently common national consciousness; and
- 2) to obscure or render less visible the relationship between social hierarchies within the school and extrascholastic social hierarchies.

Basil Bernstein uses this construct to develop his theory of the pedagogic device, which he positions as a “symbolic regulator of consciousness” (1996: 52). The role of the pedagogic device is to recontextualize received knowledge from an authoritative source (in the case of public schools, the state), and to transmit this knowledge to students, who demonstrate their capacity for reproducing this knowledge through satisfactory performance through teacher-designed evaluations. The pedagogic device “provides the intrinsic grammar of pedagogic discourse” (28).²² Pedagogic discourse consists of two inextricably intertwined discourses: instructional discourse (which transmits skills and relationships), and regulative discourse (which appropriates discourses from beyond the school to create order, relations, and identity). Just as the *trivium* is the foundation for the *quadrivium*, the regulative discourse in classrooms is the foundation for instructional discourse. In both cases, the former *projects* the latter. Thus, the regulative discourse of the pedagogic subject position is the “framework of shared purposes” upon which instructional discourse depends.

I propose that establishing a framework of shared purposes through discourse can be especially problematic in secondary English education. Systemic functional linguist Frances Christie has spent more than two decades investigating secondary English classroom discourse, and from there, to question the very philosophical and ideological underpinnings of English teaching in historically English-speaking countries (Christie,

²² The intrinsic grammar of pedagogic discourse consists of three interrelated rules: distributive rules, recontextualizing rules, and evaluative rules. Distributive rules “regulate the relationships between power, social groups, forms of consciousness and practice”. Recontextualizing rules “regulate the formation of specific pedagogic discourse” – what field knowledge *becomes* K-12 pedagogy. Evaluative rules regulate the criteria by which the acquisition of pedagogic knowledge is measured/assessed (Bernstein, 1996).

1999, 2002; Christie, et al., 1991; Christie & Macken-Horarik, 2007).²³ Christie contends that the discipline of English is *the* most highly contested site in the school curriculum, precisely because it is “intimately bound up with discussion of matters to do with the national psyche and identity, as well as with notions of the economic and social good of English-speaking countries” (2007: 156). According to Christie, the reason why English can be so very contested is because the main goal for the learner in the discipline of English is the acquisition of an acceptable shared ethical position. This shared ethical position is not only acquired through knowing truths about language and literature (instructional discourse), or knowing how to function as an appropriate pedagogic subject within the English classroom (regulative discourse), but by demonstrating that one has achieved horizontal solidarity through the internalization of prevailing social and cultural metanarratives (mythological discourse).

Based upon the literature about the history of reading, writing, and language instruction in the English-speaking world (Christie, 1999; Christie & Macken-Horarik, 2007; Dornan, Rosen, & Wilson, 2003; Elliot, 2005), I propose that some of the following ethical approaches can be found in English classrooms:

²³ In Christie’s work, *subject English* and *first language English instruction* corresponds to American secondary English education.

Table 2.1 Selected Examples of Ethical Approaches to Secondary English Education²⁴

Position	Some Notable Theorists and Proponents	Description of Position
Basic Skills	Joshua Girling Fitch (UK/British Empire) Benjamin Harris & William Holmes McGuffey (American Colonies/USA)	Students are well-regulated, literate in religious and community traditions, inculcated with the basic literacy necessary for agrarian and early industrial life.
Cultural Heritage/Current Traditionalism	Committee of Ten T.S. Eliot E.D. Hirsch F.R. Leavis	Students are inculcated with “sense and sensibility” in the knowledge, appreciation, and reproduction of elite works in the Western literary canon.
Progressivist	Dartmouth Group John Dixon Louise Rosenblatt Mina Shaughnessy	Students engage in reading and writing as process and journey of self-discovery, formation of identity, and increasing competence.
Language Studies	Frances Christie James Martin Geneva Smitherman Walt Wolfram	Students are explicitly taught about the differences between home and school language and literacies.
Cultural Studies	James Berlin Patricia Bizzell Paulo Freire Toni Morrison	Students critically analyze texts and discourses for issues of power, inequality, and dominance, engage in multiple readings of different texts, and produce countering narratives.
New Literacy Studies	James Paul Gee Shirley Brice Heath Brian Street	Students investigate the varied social contexts in which literacies are used, and the shifting meanings and ideologies behind the very concept of what it means to be literate.
Multiliteracies	Bill Cope Mary Kalantzis Gunther Kress Theo van Leeuwen Len Unsworth	Students consume and produce texts in a variety of modes (spoken, written, digital), and shift readily between textual forms.

²⁴ As with any diagrammatic representation of social phenomena, the categories represented by this chart are contested, and there is considerable overlap. Shared ethical positions can be multiple, are usually contested, and even contradictory.

This chart of ethical approaches to English education is not meant to be exhaustive, nor is it meant to be linear or historical. It is my hypothesis that one might find at least one of these approaches represented in most secondary English classrooms in the United States and in other English speaking countries. Moreover, one might find these approaches as assumptions that guide interaction within the same class, and one teacher might incorporate several of these approaches in her or his approach to classroom interaction. My intent here is not to provide judgments about the inherent value or efficacy of these approaches, but to provide a brief overview of assumptions that underpin secondary English education and influence classroom discourse. I use Christie's term, **shared ethical position**, to characterize these approaches for two reasons. First, these are positions that teachers and students might **share** within an assumed "framework of shared purposes" in English classrooms. Second, the *trivium* was the site of **ethics** in the classical curriculum. From this, it is my belief that the ethical role of the *trivium* has been inherited by English education.

The fact that there are shared ethical positions in the discipline of English is not inherently problematic. Each discipline of secondary schooling has its own language (Schleppegrell, 2004, 2006), its own cultural norms (Lemke, 1993, 1995), and by extension, its own subject positions. However, in addition to the pedagogic device symbolically regulating curricular content and disciplinary norms, the discipline of English (along with history) carries the additional burden of being the site that transmits the ever-changing social and cultural norms of society. Unlike secondary history, this regulative function of English is largely invisible, transmitted through instructional

content and in the ways that teachers regulate talk about historical and contemporary fictional texts.

The shared ethical position seems to matter more during some phases of a secondary English unit than others. To illustrate the centrality of the shared ethical position in secondary English teaching, Christie draws upon research conducted during the initial phases of literature units (known in functional language theory as a *curriculum macrogenre*). The Curriculum Initiation phase is where secondary English teachers typically establish a shared ethical position with students. While beginning a new novel or literary unit, as a teacher builds these shared positions, “there is a progress from shared comprehension of events, to shared interpretation of behaviors of characters, to shared judgment on the significance of events, and finally to shared judgment on the moral significance of the book” (166). The objective is to enforce consensus about the literature and themes to be studied before proceeding deeply into the text itself. Therefore, as a secondary English class begins studying texts of societal significance, social solidarities around the ethical significance of the text are formed through classroom discourse.

Christie theorizes that discourse during the initiation phase of secondary English units differs notably from similar opening unit activities in other disciplines of secondary schooling. At the beginning of secondary math and science units, students often learn key formulas, terms, and concepts in order to acquire a shared metalanguage about the content that is to be learned. Success in the STEM disciplines is usually measured by the acquisition of technical language, and the application of this language with an increasing degree of independence. However, in secondary English, the goal is not only that

students learn to read and write, but that they develop specific ethical positions over the course of a literature unit. To take an extreme example from my own classroom experience at Pinnacle High School, students who wrote technically superior papers that defended the Jim Crow South or Hitler's Third Reich were not likely to receive grades that only evaluated their literary analysis or composition skills. Students are not only expected to read and write in secondary English classrooms, but to read and write in ways that are deemed acceptable by their teachers.

My experiences at Pinnacle High School and in other school settings, along with my readings about the shared ethical position, led me to hypothesize that the potential for many discourse conflicts may arise during the beginning, or Curriculum Initiation phase, of a literature unit. This is because when a new novel, anthology, project, or genre of writing is introduced, the teacher has not yet established consensus about the themes under study among the students. Thus, it is necessary at the beginning of a literature unit to align the discourses and actions of the teacher and students in order to form solidarity. I further posit that discourse conflicts may arise during other phases of secondary English instruction when the teacher is a novice, the material is unfamiliar, or the teacher is questioning the received knowledge and positions to be transmitted to students. The uncertainty that arises when a teacher and his or her students cannot arrive at a shared ethical position is ideologically dilemmatic.

Ideological Dilemmas

For the purposes of this study, my definition of conflict is ***an ideological dilemma that impedes the negotiation of shared ethical positions***. These ideological dilemmas

occur when an individual experiences a disconnect between his or her lived and intellectual ideologies (Althusser, 1971; Billig, et al., 1988).²⁵ According to social psychologist Michael Billig, while lived ideologies are formed from experience, both individual and collective, intellectual ideologies include personal philosophies, political orientations, and even religious and cultural beliefs. Furthermore, Billig presupposes that ideological dilemmas may arise under the following conditions:

- when an individual's interests and/or stakes clash with the interests and/or stakes of the group or society (14)
- when one aspect of commonsense lore about a topic clashes with another²⁶ (15)
- when two valued themes of an ideology conflict, and these dilemmatic elements spill over into a full-scale dilemma when a choice has to be made (66)

When teachers are attempting to establish a framework of shared purposes so that students can achieve a desired ethical position, ideological dilemmas are often a source of conflict. Billig provides several categories of ideological dilemmas that I have found in my own professional life, and the lives of my colleagues at Pinnacle: 1) dilemmas of teaching and learning; 2) dilemmas of equality and expertise; 3) dilemmas of prejudice and tolerance; and 4) dilemmas of gender and individuality. Secondary English teaching and learning is inherently dilemmatic because, as I have articulated above, subject

²⁵ Although Billig emphasizes the elusive nature of the concept of ideology, for the purposes of this study, I draw upon the Althusserian notion that ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to the real conditions of their existence (Althusser, 1971).

²⁶ Also refer to Chapter 8, "Dilemmas of common-sense" in Billig (1996), *Arguing and thinking: A rhetorical approach to social psychology*.

English is not only a chief site of schooling where societal ideologies are transmitted, but schooling and the English language are paradigms that society and individuals have ideologies *about*. As teachers wrestle with dilemmas of teaching and learning, they find that this wrestling is interminable, an inescapable part of their professional role. From Billig, et. al:

“Teachers’ ideological conceptions tend not to be so neatly packaged and consistent as those posited by theorists of educational ideology; similarly, the practice of classroom teaching tends not to be a straightforward realization of some such coherent position... teachers may well hold views of teaching, of children, of the goals of educational practice and the explanations of educational failure which theorists of ideology would locate in opposed camps... Further, it is not unknown for teachers to be aware of such contradictions, to feel themselves involved in difficult choices and as having to make compromises” (1988: 46).

Earlier in this chapter, I positioned the very nature of teaching as inherently ideologically dilemmatic. The quote above is illustrative of the fraught perplexity of teachers’ work. Teachers must constantly dance between reflection and practice, between planning and implementation, and between thinking and doing in a way that is quite unique among the professions. Master teachers suggest that novices learn to be “forgiving of their own inevitable shortcomings, but always in the context of being critical and demanding of themselves as well” (Ayers, 2001), that teachers do not have enough time to do everything that they ought but must work miracles anyway (Draper,

2000), and that teachers must find ways to find solidarity and empathy with all students even if their students' actions and/or discourses trigger personal trauma (Cowhey, 2005; Nieto, 2005; Schwartz & Alberts, 1998). Of course, much of this is also true of the other "helping" professions, such as medicine, social work, and the clergy. However, one factor that I find heightens the ideologically dilemmatic nature of teaching is the amount of time that teachers spend with students, which is different than the ways other professionals interact with their clients. Often, during the academic year, students spend more time with their teachers than their families. This means that over the course of a school year, teachers and students inevitably develop relationships that can be generally productive or unproductive, contentious or relatively smooth -- but always fraught with ideological dilemmas.

Expanding upon Billig, I assume that dilemmas of lived and intellectual ideologies in the classroom can be social, emotional, or even spiritual in nature. *Social* dilemmas of equality and expertise are inherent in postmodern teaching philosophies that value democratic, critical and/or progressivist teaching styles. "The very enactment of equalization – the democratic tones of 'shall we share' – belongs to the rational authority, and inequality, of expertise" (Billig, et al., 1988). Even skilled teachers who make students feel as if they have discovered new knowledge at the end of a remarkable shared journey strategically structure classroom discourse, activities, and space to lead to these "discoveries." Authority and expertise, no matter how implicit, are imbued in the expert – the teacher. Yet the mythological discourse of postmodern schooling in the West, and our cultural metanarratives, emphasize equality and democracy for all. The dilemma between individual agency and the public good is just as fraught in our societies as it is in

our schools (Condor & Gibson, 2007). To push this point further, the ideological dilemma of equality and authority is not only textual and discursive, but spatial as well (Dixon, Levine, & McAuley, 2006; Staples, 1989). Students hear discourses of equality and freedom, yet in most schools, even their freedom of movement is restricted.

Transgressors defy this dictate at their own peril.²⁷

Dilemmas of identity and difference (race, gender, sexual orientation, language, religion, disability, national origin, etc.) are lived and intellectual, as well as social and spiritual. Within schools and often in society, I posit that the *emotional* nature of these dilemmas is now paramount (Benschop, Halsema, & Schreurs, 2001; Billig, et al., 1988; Edley, 2001). This is because in postmodern, post-movement society, it is no longer intellectually acceptable (in theory) to discriminate against individuals or groups on the basis of difference.²⁸ This profound shift in intellectual orientation has changed the lived experiences of millions of people in the West, even though prejudice and intolerance has not been completely eradicated. Therefore, when prejudice and/or intolerance is experienced or even *perceived* in schools and society, some of our most dramatic social conflagrations yet occur. Teachers and students experience these ideological dilemmas of difference and identity to such a degree until research about students who are marginalized, underserved, and Othered in our schools is currently foregrounded in much

²⁷ The demographic in the West who has the most power to alter public space in fundamental ways is also the demographic that is most subjected to having their freedom of movement restricted within public spaces in the school (Ferguson, 2000) and in society (Staples, 1989): males of African descent.

²⁸ A case in point is that two months after the inauguration of the first president of nonwhite and non-Christian descent, the 2009 issue of *Review of Research in Education*, entitled "Risk, Schooling, and Equity", focused entirely upon many of the factors of identity and difference that cause students to be labeled at-risk, and the theoretical, methodological, and practical implications of such labeling (Baugh, 2009; Gadsden, Davis, & Artiles, 2009; Hull, Zacher, & Hibbert, 2009; Joe, Joe, & Rowley, 2009; C. D. Lee, 2009; J. S. Lee & Anderson, 2009; McDermott, Raley, & Seyer-Ochi, 2009; O'Connor, Hill, & Robinson, 2009; D. E. Thomas & Stevenson, 2009; Vasudevan & Campano, 2009).

of our professional literature.²⁹

Just as teachers and their students are members of social groups, they are also individuals with rich inner lives. Ideological dilemmas that are spiritual and humanistic in nature are also the enterprise of educators and those being educated. Analogous to the other helping professions, teachers experience frustration and fatigue, as well as pride and accomplishment (Palmer, 1999). If “identity lies in the intersection of the diverse forces that make up a life”, and “integrity lies in relating to those forces in ways that bring us wholeness and life” (1999: 27), then spiritual dilemmas are the personal equivalent of the “shared framework of purposes” that teachers are striving for in the classroom. Teachers often feel as if they must choose between separating their official roles from their convictions, beliefs, and even personhood, and integrating their personal, political, and professional selves in a holistic way (Palmer, 2004). In order to reconcile an official role that is responsible for transmitting content, rules and regulation, and societal myths with their own spiritual and/or humanistic beliefs about teaching and learning, many teachers assume a critical and/or subversive stance (Cowhey, 2006; Freire, 1970, 1998). Some become deeply reflective about their practice (Draper, 2000; Schon, 1983), seeing their classrooms with new eyes (Frank, 1999), ask questions (Hubbard & Power, 1999), and reframe their interaction with students to see new possibilities (Rex & Schiller, 2009). This sometimes leads into teachers researching their own practice in informal and formal ways (Freeman, 1998), gaining new knowledge about their students and their schools *in situ* (Cochran-Smith & Donnell, 2006; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009; Fecho & Allen,

²⁹ Ideological dilemmas of this sort are often caused when individuals index metadiscourses/Discourses that are entrenched in society (Gee, 1999).

2005; Goswami & Stillman, 1987; Hamilton, 1998; Lytle & Cochran-Smith, 1993; Samaras & Freese, 2006). Thus, successful teachers find a myriad number of ways to resolve these dilemmas of self and personhood, avoid burnout, and maintain self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997; G. H. Lee, 2002). The ideologically dilemmatic nature of teaching does not change, but teachers' self-perception and knowledge about their role, contexts, and students often will shift after renewing experiences.

How might we locate ideological dilemmas in teacher talk? Here, I would like to borrow a concept from African Americanist Brent Hayes Edwards' work on Diaspora – the concept of *décalage*. *Décalage* is “an irreconcilable disconnect between intracultural groups that is the result of a gap, discrepancy, time lag or interval” (B. Edwards, 2003). Edwards asserts that it is only through examining forms of *disarticulation* – that is, “points of misunderstanding, bad faith, (and) unhappy translation” – that we can properly understand a paradigm (in Edwards' work, the African Diaspora; in this study, secondary English classroom interaction) that has long been viewed as undifferentiated (B. Edwards, 2009). If *décalage* (or disarticulation, or disconnect) is always present at the horns of an ideological dilemma, then seeking moments of *décalage* within classroom and school interactions may very well be productive for a study of discourse conflicts.

One such moment of *décalage* can currently be found in the field of English education itself. Achieving a framework of shared purposes within the field, let alone a shared ethical position, has proven to be quite ideologically dilemmatic for many reasons. Below we will examine further why conflict is especially problematic yet inherent within the discipline of secondary English education.

The Ideological Dilemma of Contemporary English Education

Secondary English teachers' work operates within the larger contexts of the local school, the district where the school is located, and in society. Furthermore, the ideological dilemmas of their professional lives are echoed by the concerns of the discipline. The phenomenon of ideological conflict is particularly interesting at the current moment in the field. Recent volumes of *English Education* have revealed concerns from leaders in the field since the passage of the Elementary/Secondary Education Act of 2001 (colloquially known as No Child Left Behind, hereafter referred to as NCLB).³⁰ Nowhere is this more evident than in the July 2006 issue, *Reconstructing English Education for the 21st Century: A Report on the CEE Summit*. The seismic nature of the NCLB legislation at the beginning of the last decade created an existential crisis for the field, one that is succinctly articulated in the leading piece, "The State of English Education and a Vision for Its Future: A Call to Arms."

Years of argument between proponents and opponents have succeeded only in helping produce an educational system no one is happy with. Unfortunately, the Standardistas... are so consumed with their central strategy of consolidating economic and political power that they do not seem ready anytime soon to abandon a demonstrably misguided and inadequate educational policy. Likewise, those who are opposed to federally imposed standards reform seem incapable of abandoning their central strategies of attacking capitalism and engaging in

³⁰ During the process of preparing this manuscript for defense and submission, the Obama Administration under the supervision of Secretary Arne Duncan was engaged in reauthorizing the ESEA. Although official commentary on the new legislation by NCTE and CEE leaders is not yet available, the Race to the Top version of the ESEA potentially seems even more hostile towards research trends in English education than No Child Left Behind.

cultural warfare. No one seems capable of seeing the problem for what it is: an argument between bitter opponents who have pursued their contentious agendas and have accomplished little more than digging the trenches deeper, hardening their categories, and engaging in tail-chasing public debates—all the while positioning teachers as unwitting pawns in the struggle” (Alsup & Emig, et. al, 2006: 286).

The images evoked in this article provide an exemplar of the language in other essays found in other post-NCLB issues of *English Education*. Members have been offered advice on everything from “Surviving Shock and Awe: NCLB vs. Colleges of Education” to living “On the Front Line: Preparing Teachers with Struggling Schools in Mind.” It seems as if the field of English is embroiled in an ideological conflict that is not only inherent in the subject matter, but in criticism from outsiders who do not understand the nature of the discipline.

Central to the concerns of the Conference on English Education (CEE) is the increasing encroachment of government mandates and corporate interests into the business of defining the purpose and scope of secondary English language arts and literacy education (Alsup, et al., 2006). NCLB is seen as the latest gauntlet cast down from outsiders who charge that English teachers and schools of education are not preparing students for the literate demands of twenty-first century global citizenship. Findings about best practices in English teaching and learning have been ignored in the formation of educational policy due to new criteria for the validity of research (Altwerger, et al., 2004). Although English educators have ascribed considerable value to qualitative investigation methods that reflect the dynamic nature of the secondary

English classroom (Sperling & DiPardo, 2009), current trends in federal funding for literacy research privilege large-scale quantitative studies. These studies have been used to justify reforms on the district, state, and national levels, even though there have been questions raised about the efficacy of “one size fits all” prescriptive reforms in education. Many are concerned that the expertise of those who know English education best is slowly being rendered irrelevant (Alsup, et al., 2006).

After the initial reactions to No Child Left Behind and Race to the Top, the Conference on English Education (affiliated with the National Council of Teachers of English, NCTE) is currently in the process of redefining its mission to include an active role in public policy. With this in mind, many are asking, “What *is* English education?” This is not only a question being considered by leaders in the field, but by preservice and inservice teachers like those at Pinnacle High who sometimes have been dissatisfied with the answers that have been provided during their initial training and continuing professional development. An editorial from a retired English teacher with three decades of classroom experience echoes the frustrations of many practitioners: “...At no time during my 30 years in the classroom had I ever been informed on what I was actually supposed to teach. Poetry? Transitive verbs? Letter writing? ‘Do what you want,’ I was, in effect, told... there is now great pressure to lift scores in writing and reading, but still little interest in determining how” (Wagner, 2006). The difficulty of articulating the primary purpose of English education is found in an aforementioned piece, “The State of English Education”: “Understanding the scope of our field is important for those of us who work in it, but precise and comprehensive definitions will continue to elude us. The very richness of content, context, and process in the discipline of English Education

certainly poses a challenge for us to stay abreast of the knowledge proliferating in all quarters, but this in turn often leaves us split among competing identities” (Alsup, et al., 2006). This “split among competing identities" means that determining a definition of English language arts and literacy education that is shared by a plurality of teachers and researchers in the field seems problematic at the very least. It also illustrates the fact that leaders in the field are aware of the ideologically dilemmatic nature of English itself.

As noted above, ideological conflict is nothing new in English education. Before the attacks from the outside commenced, vigorous debates about best instructional practices in reading (phonics vs. whole language) and writing (current-traditional vs. process) had been waged throughout the course of the twentieth century (for an overview of the literature, see Stone, 2004 for literacy development and Elliot, 2005 for composition). It is useful to observe that although the production of knowledge and sustaining discourse about the theoretical underpinnings of the field are valued enterprises of the academy, non-academic stakeholders may (and often do) draw their own conclusions about what English education is and should be. Unfortunately, their uninformed conclusions are currently being used for purposes that insiders find antithetical to their own personal convictions about language teaching and learning – with NCLB as a case in point.

Another relevant issue for considering secondary English education’s place and relevance among school subjects is the field’s position within the larger discipline of language and literacy, and perhaps even the cultural politics that accompany the enterprise of teaching adolescents. Like adolescence itself, secondary English is a site of uncertainty and potential. Sandwiched between elementary reading instruction and

college composition, English education integrates and contributes to theory and research in the stages that precede and follow it. While the upper limit of secondary English education is generally fixed at grade twelve, the point where elementary language arts instruction ends and secondary English begins varies according to state and school district. For instance, in Michigan, the boundaries of secondary English licensure were expanded in July 2006 to include the sixth grade. Teachers were not required to take any additional coursework to earn this expansion—it was signed into law by the stroke of the governor’s pen. If the “what” of secondary English education is by necessity concerned with “who” is being taught, the fact that this “who” can be redefined from the outside by non-specialists may have some implications in our search for disciplinary parameters.

When asking “what is English education?”, one must consider its interdisciplinary nature, and the ways that this nature makes it analytically distinct from other school subjects (Christie, 1999). At the secondary level, first language academic literacy acquisition is a cross-disciplinary enterprise. High school students read history textbooks and write science lab reports. In many middle schools, preteens conjugate verbs in foreign language classes and critique systems of government in civics. In the academy, English education is in conversation with fields as disparate as history, philosophy, psychology, sociology, political science, public policy, law, anthropology, linguistics, semiotics, cultural studies, and discourse analysis. Like English, English education is omnipresent, yet invisible.

Considering all of the above issues – internal ideological conflict, the positioning of English education within schools, and the interdisciplinary nature of the subject— and helping English teachers critically consider these factors may lead to productive

conversations about the current state of English Education and the future of literacy and language arts teaching in American schools. For in many schools, English is a crossroads for the humanities with the tacit ideological goal of creating a citizen that is not only literate, but also *ethical* and *cosmopolitan* (Alsup, 2006, emphasis mine). The decentralization of American education (as compared to other industrialized counterparts) means that this goal is being strived towards in many different ways. The result has been that English teachers are the free agents of the secondary education “team”, performing various functions from school to school and district to district.³¹

The concerns raised by leaders in the field of English Education are quite valid. Encroaching mandates threaten teacher autonomy, the qualitative research conducted by many researchers in English education is not seen as useful for policymakers, and expertise in the subject is seen by many of those in power as irrelevant. However, I would posit that there is still freedom and agency under the conditions of standards-based reforms. Veteran teachers would say that there has *always* been a “No Child Left Behind” and a “Race to the Top”, an authoritative discourse imposed from above and outside of the English classroom. Yet in the end, each teacher takes her or his materials, walks into the classroom, and shuts the door. Foucault’s panopticon is not yet reality in

³¹ During my seven years as a secondary English teacher, I was responsible for students in every grade from five to twelve at four different schools. I taught elementary and middle school language arts, ninth and tenth grade English, Advanced Placement language and composition, creative writing, writing remediation, drama and performance, literary magazine, and newsmagazine. I directed two plays, sponsored five poetry slams, took a group of teens to Italy, and helped with curriculum development and test prep. In addition, I also was responsible for teaching outside of my subject for three semesters—middle school history and mathematics. Even though I was not certified in either subject, the administration at my first school were confounded by the new language and literacy based math and social studies programs that were filtering out of central administration. Because I was a recent graduate in secondary English education, I was perceived as someone with expertise in literacy across the curriculum, not just in my area of specialization. I would wager that my story is not unique among secondary teachers of English.

American schools, for apart from the occasional administrative observation, when the classroom door is closed, the teacher is truly the *agent*. This is a reality that frustrated university researchers, teacher educators, and education reformers long before the federal government overtly intruded into the enterprise of teaching reading and writing. The teacher is an agent of the government, of the local community, and of the larger society, responsible for transmission and control. The English teacher is *also* an agent in the sense of an individual who possesses agency. Studying the discourse conflicts encountered by English teachers across contexts may provide insight into the professional practices and the literate lives of those charged with inculcating our youngest citizens with our societal values.

Negotiating Solidarity and Alignment Through Discourse

Up to this point, I have articulated my understandings of *conflict*, *shared ethical position*, and *ideological dilemma*, situating them in the current moment of policy conflict in English education. The concepts of solidarity and negotiation also contributed to my understandings of conflict, shared ethical positions, and ideological dilemmas. The ethnographic data from this study revealed that concepts of solidarity and negotiation arose in the actions and discourses of the seven high school English teachers in the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group. In social theory, solidarity refers to the union, integration and/or consolidation of interests within a group.³² Social scientists and

³² Social theorists have observed solidarity among youth (Rampton, 1995; Widdicombe & Wooffitt, 1995), the working class (Fantasia, 1988; MacLeod, 1995; Willis, 1977), affinity groups (Crow, 2002; Edyvane, 2007; Fetchenhauer, et al., 2006), women (Hurd & McIntyre, 1996), African Americans (Few, et al., 2003; Irvine, 2002), and many other groups with shared subjectivities. Among more diverse groups in workplace settings, solidarity can be built through **mutual interdependence** (van der Vegt & Flache, 2006), **relationships that are institutionally embedded** (Sanders, Flache, van der Vegt, & van de Vliert, 2006),

analysts of the professions have theorized and described the process of negotiation in human interaction. Therefore, my assumption is that the process of negotiating solidarity may characterize not only the ways that teachers talked in the specific English learning contexts of Pinnacle High School, but other contexts in schooling and society.

My use of negotiation in this study is influenced by interactional ethnography (Castanheira, Crawford, Dixon, & Green, 2001; Rex, 2006b). According to Castanheira, et. al, 2001: “The interactional ethnographer... must look at what is constructed in and through the moment-by-moment interactions among members of a social group; how members negotiate events through interactions; and the ways in which knowledge and texts generated in one event become linked to, and thus, a resource for members’ actions in subsequent events.” As people interact with one another, they “negotiate their respective statuses, roles, identities and so on” (Billig, et al., 1988). Individual and social subjectivities are negotiated and renegotiated *in situ*, on a constant basis.³³ For instance, in one school study, administrators had to negotiate between adhering to an *ethic of care* or an *ethic of justice* in the discourses of an inner-city, multicultural high school struggling with absent and tardy students (Enomoto, 1997). Of course, many scholars in urban education would say that the two ethics are not mutually exclusive, and

fair-share behavior (Fetchenhauer & Wittek, 2006), or even **opposition against a common threat or perceived enemy** (Crow, 2002; Ogbu, 1987). This last characteristic of solidarity is important. Solidarity is inclusive of “us” and “we”, and by extension, exclusive of “them” (Rorty, 1989).

³³ Negotiation is a salient feature of all human interaction, whether international (Hideo, 2003; LeBaron & Pillay, 2006; Lund, 2001; Starkey, Boyer, & Wilkenfield, 2005), intercultural (Aston, 1993; Clyne, 1994; Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993; LeBaron & Pillay, 2006), interracial (Baldwin, 1985 #128; King, 1963 2003 #297), or within schools and other institutions (Christie & Martin, 1997; Lighthall, 1989). Some features of negotiation include **cultural fluency** (Arai, 2006), **preventative diplomacy** (Hideo, 2003), **quiescence** (Lund, 2001), coalition formation (Lighthall, 1989), and the **recognition of mutual and/or overlapping interests** (Starkey, et al., 2005). Negotiation can be **asymmetrical** or **symmetrical** (Clyne, 1994), **collaborative** or **competitive**, or even a **high-stakes game** (Starkey, et al., 2005). Negotiation also is inherent in the establishment of a **framework of shared purposes** and/or a **shared ethical position**, which means that it is fraught with ideological dilemmas.

educators ought to do both at the same time. In theory, this is true, but in practice, things are much more complicated. One example from Enomoto is illustrative: “If administrators, teachers, and staff are caregivers, then it would follow that students are to be viewed as care recipients. The view connotes that students are in need of care, which in an impoverished, largely minority school district can be true but often considered patronizing” (1997: 361). At this school, “members imperfectly negotiated their roles and responsibilities, thus attempting to cope with their difference and resolve their tensions” (364). This imperfect negotiation of roles in order to cope with differences and tensions was certainly characteristic of the teachers in the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group.

As the teachers negotiated their roles across contexts, the Pinnacle English teachers formed solidarity with each other and their students. Solidarity is the formation of a framework of shared purposes for productive interaction. The process of negotiating solidarity is socially situated and unfolded over time. Social solidarities can be formed through the tactical and strategic use of language (Aston, 1993; R. Brown & Gilman, 2003; Erickson, 2004). If language constructs and mediates our social relations, then language can also deconstruct and problematize them. When interactants are from the same social group, there is a vested interest in keeping wayward group members from using language that undermines their collective social identity (Hechter, 1987).³⁴ This kind of strategic language use distinguished Willis’ countercultural lads from the more compliant “ear’oles” in *Learning to Labor* (Willis, 1977), and distinguished MacLeod’s stigmatized Hallway Hangers from the aspirational Brothers (MacLeod, 1995). From

³⁴ From Hechter’s *Principles of Group Solidarity*: “Sanctions exist in even the most solidary of groups. Why? Because there is often a conflict between the individual and the group” (1987: 40-41).

these and other studies, we know that there are occasions where it is necessary for interactant(s) from a social group to help an outlier “save face” and maintain both dignity and uncontested group membership (Goffman, 1997). In order for this face saving to occur, the interactants doing the face-saving must share a particular type of habitus or *an intuitive sense of the game* (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Since habitus is a set of dispositions that generates unconscious perceptions, attitudes, and orientations towards the social world (Bourdieu, 1991), face-saving discourses that attempt to resolve ideological dilemmas by negotiating shared ethical positions in classrooms and schools are performed evidence of these group insider dispositions towards transgressive talk.

During what kinds of discursive performances might we find this kind of solidarity-building facework occurring? What are the risks (as perceived by the interactants) if the facework fails? Interactions between teachers and students with shared group identity, such as fictive kinship and other-mothering, have been studied and theorized before (Gay, 2000; Irvine, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1994). However, I predict that this kind of performed facework is also present in interactions between adults from the same social groups within the school environment. The social ecology of intragroup interactions is often quite complex. For example, two teachers might share the same group membership in a particular department, but other factors such as gender, race, ethnicity, religious belief, career stage, marital status, and/or parenthood mediate this identity. These multiple identities sometimes overlap and are contested. Performing certain identities through discourse and action may mean betraying others. This is yet another ideological dilemma that teachers and students must wrestle with, and the very reason why solidarity must be constantly negotiated.

From this literature and my analyses, it is my supposition that the local and societal historical contexts of schools like Pinnacle may encourage the negotiation of solidarity. As stated in the introduction, treatments of negotiated solidarity are not new in studies of language and discourse. To review, in interlanguage pragmatics, speakers negotiate solidarity through routines of agreement, shifting topics in casual conversation in order to find things to agree on, joint laughter, and even repetition of prior sequences in the discussion (Aston, 1993). In sociolinguistic theory, speakers include or exclude others inside or outside of their group through the strategic use of macrosocial categories (D. W. Brown, 2006) or through language crossing, where people of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds use each others' linguistic repertoires as a form of political solidarity and antiracism (Rampton, 1995). In functional linguistic theory,³⁵ speakers and writers strategically use language resources of engagement and involvement to negotiate solidarity, orchestrate group membership, and encourage alignment (Martin, 1997; Martin & Rose, 2007). As solidarity is negotiated within the group, speakers and writers, as well as listeners and readers, are positioned and repositioned as a text or a speech event unfolds (Martin, 2004).

Two studies in functional linguistics provide insight into how skilled language users draw upon both text and context to align themselves with their audiences and negotiate solidarity through the strategic use of Appraisal discursive resources.³⁶ In his 1999 article, "Grace: The Logogenesis of Freedom", functional linguist James Martin demonstrates how South African leader Nelson Mandela uses the trope of freedom in

³⁵ The systemic functional linguistic theory used in this study will be further explained in Chapter 3, "Research Methods".

³⁶ In functional linguistic theory, Appraisal is the stratum of discourse semantics that describes attitudes, feelings and emotions, and evaluative judgments.

several different ways: through abstractions (grammatical and lexical metaphors) and nominalizations, through the strategic use of the passive voice, through strategic recontextualization as he narrates his life story, and through the liberal use of Appraisal/Engagement³⁷ resources that introduce other voices into discourse via projection, modalization, or concession (Martin, 1999a; Martin & Rose, 2007). In doing so, Mandela draws upon written resources from both his Western education and the sophisticated orality of his Thembu home language, thus transforming the traditional genre of autobiographical recount and naturalizing “radical values that disarm rather than confront” (Martin, 1999a). Even a cursory analysis of Mandela’s autobiography might reveal that he is doing this; functional analysis reveals how he skillfully draws upon a variety of language resources to extend *grace* to all humankind, even his oppressors.³⁸

A speaker or writer does not need to be a humanitarian leader in order to achieve alignment with audiences. In “Mourning: How We Get Aligned” (Martin, 2004), the editorial board of a Hong Kong expatriate periodical uses Appraisal language resources in order to negotiate solidarity. In addition to focusing on Engagement resources in the *HK Magazine* article, Martin looks at the ways that the text intensifies feelings (graduation), attributes feelings (modality and projection), and repositions the reader as

³⁷ In functional linguistic theory, Engagement language resources are used by speakers and writers to adopt and negotiate interpersonal positioning.

³⁸ From Freire (1970), *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*: “Yet it is — paradoxical though it may seem — precisely in the response of the oppressed to the violence of their oppressors that a gesture of love may be found... as the oppressors dehumanize others and violate their rights, they themselves also become dehumanized. As the oppressed, fighting to be human, take away the oppressors’ power to dominate and suppress, they restore to the oppressors the humanity they had lost in the exercise of oppression. **It is only the oppressed who, by freeing themselves, can free their oppressors...** It is therefore essential that the oppressed wage the struggle to resolve the contradiction in which they are caught; and the contradiction will be resolved by the appearance of the new man: neither oppressor nor oppressed, but man in the process of liberation.”

the text unfolds through both logic (“castigation of overreaction”) and rhetoric (“sorrow for another’s loss”). Within these attitudinal resources, “Affect negotiates empathy, Judgment negotiates character, and Appreciation negotiates taste” (2004: 329). Appraisal resources contribute to the tone or mood of discourses as a text unfolds, establishing a prosodic pattern. Therefore, within interpersonal discourse, “Appraisal positions us to feel – and through shared feelings to belong. In this respect appraisal is a resource for negotiating solidarity” (2004: 326). Using Appraisal resources to align discourse is typical of negotiating solidarity across groups with competing ideologies.

Competing ideologies are often found in institutions, such as schools. Two other functional discourse studies situated in institutions and schools show how alignment and negotiated solidarity are attained in more formal ways. Again, in functional theory (Martin, 1997), resources for negotiating solidarity are grouped under the discourse semantics stratum of Involvement. Involvement resources for negotiating solidarity include naming, technicality, antilanguage, and swearing. Lexicogrammatical resources include technical, specialized and/or taboo lexis, and slang, and phonological resources include accent, intonation, volume, acronyms, “pig latins”, and/or secret scripts. The solidarity that is negotiated through the use of these language resources can be both interpersonal and ideational in nature. This is certainly the case in secondary English classrooms like the ones at Pinnacle High School.

Negotiating solidarity through actions and discourses as a method of mitigating conflict and resolving ideological dilemmas is itself dilemmatic (Billig, et al., 1988; Christie, 1999). Here, I return to Clyne’s assertion that negotiation can either be asymmetrical or symmetrical. The preceding sections of this theoretical framework have

demonstrated that the way power is distributed within the context of secondary English education is not equal. It is asymmetrical, with some individuals and groups having more power than others. Thus, when interactants are caught upon the horns of an ideological dilemma in the secondary English education classroom, and the moment of *décalage* arrives, solidarity can be negotiated even though all positions of individuals and subgroups are not accounted for or acknowledged. At Pinnacle High School, the positions, individuals, and subgroups in question were silenced (in the case of positions) or made the choice to be silent (in the case of individuals and subgroups). The function of silence in negotiating solidarity will be taken up in the concluding chapter of this study.

Research Questions

In the previous sections, I have explored the concepts of **conflict**, **shared ethical position**, **ideological dilemma**, and **negotiating solidarity** in order to clarify my characterization of conflict as *an ideological dilemma evident in teachers' and students' actions and discourses that impedes the negotiation of ethical positions*. My intent in doing so was to further clarify the main concept of the central research question for this study. That question, **“How do high school English teachers in a discourse study group talk about conflict?”** was generated from self-study of my own teaching practices (Samaras & Freese, 2006). As a classroom teacher for seven years, the aspect of effective practice that most intrigued, eluded, and troubled me was how to facilitate difficult conversations effectively in my English classes. I found the process of facilitating these conversations increasingly dilemmatic the more diverse my students became. Yet even after becoming an experienced teacher, I retained the (perhaps naïve)

faith that learning how to facilitate the most difficult conversations possible in the secondary English classroom would be healing and transformative for my students, and for me, their teacher. I was fascinated by discourses of care, justice, and reconciliation (Enomoto, 1997; Martin, 1999a, 2004; Martin & Rose, 2003, 2007) and hoped that a small bit of the work of liberation could begin in my classroom. As I wrote with my colleague Kelly Sassi two years ago, it is my fervent belief that “when students learn to talk in a desegregated classroom, there is potential for them to desegregate their schools, their communities and, we hope, eventually our country” (Sassi & Thomas, 2008).³⁹

My advisors and committee members helped me to rethink and reshape my initial idea about studying effective teacher talk around difficult conversations into a study that identified, characterized, and theorized discourse conflicts in English education. Before I could investigate how teachers resolved conflict, I needed to know what kinds of conflicts they were experiencing. In order to know what kinds of conflicts teachers were experiencing, I needed to theorize conflict in secondary English classrooms. Thus, my

³⁹ When Kelly and I wrote those words during the fall of 2007 after our experience at Pinnacle High School, we had no idea that the country was about to undergo one of the most radical transformations of our lifetime a few short months later. In January, six months before our article was published, the now-President of the United States issued a similar, yet much more powerful, call to action:

Yes, we can heal this nation. Yes, we can repair this world... And so, tomorrow, as we take the campaign south and west, as we learn that the struggles of the textile workers in Spartanburg are not so different than the plight of the dishwasher in Las Vegas, that the hopes of the little girl who goes to the crumbling school in Dillon are the same as the dreams of the boy who learns on the streets of L.A., we will remember that there is something happening in America, that we are not as divided as our politics suggest, that we are one people, we are one nation. And, together, we will begin the next great chapter in the American story, with three words that will ring from coast to coast, from sea to shining sea: Yes, we can (Obama, 2008).

Critical scholars might note that then-Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama was advocating for the kind of horizontal solidarity through mythological discourse that subsumes issues of difference, identity, individualism, and social subjugation in favor of negotiating a new sense of national solidarity. On the other hand, in this and other speeches, the leading international figure during the year I was to embark upon my dissertation research was advocating for the work of reconciliation that I cared so passionately about.

central question and theoretical framework were born.

After I began to analyze my study data, my central question on teacher talk about conflict led to several other questions that are directly related to this theoretical framework:

- **Since conflict involves dilemmatic thinking (Billig, et al., 1988), what are each teacher's self-described dilemmas?**
- **How are these dilemmas enacted in their teaching?**
- **How are these dilemmas represented in the curricular material they have chosen?**
- **How are these dilemmas enacted in their engagement with the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group?**
- **How does each teacher attempt to resolve these dilemmas?**
- **What can these case studies teach us about the way high school English teachers talk about conflict?**

The generation of these research subquestions will be taken up in much more detail in the next chapter, which describes the research methods, data, and analytic process undertaken for this study.

Discussion

In this chapter, I have expounded upon my definition of *conflict* in secondary English education as *an ideological dilemma evident in teachers' and students' actions and discourses that impedes the negotiation of ethical positions in the secondary English classroom*. The concepts of a framework of shared purposes (Achinstein, 2002), the pedagogic device (Bernstein, 1996) and its particular role in secondary English education (Christie, 1999), and the complexity of postmodern ideological dilemmas (Billig, et al., 1988) are implicated within this construct for the purposes of the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group work. Moving from theory to practice, the current moment in secondary English education provides both uncertainty and opportunity for teachers like those in the PCDSG. Behind the closed doors of their classrooms and in the study group, the Pinnacle teachers *negotiated solidarity* through *conflict-mitigating moves constructed through temporary alignment of actions and discourses that facilitate achievement of shared ethical positions*.

To conclude, I wish to emphasize the *temporary* nature of negotiated solidarity. An important understanding to emerge as nuanced reality from this research is that solidarity must be constantly negotiated and renegotiated from moment to moment, from interactant to interactant, and from encounter to encounter. Billig aptly observes, "Because the ideological dilemma persists at a deeper level, interpersonal dilemmas... are never fully resolved, but continue to reconstitute themselves in varying forms" (1988: 71). The reconstitution of these dilemmas across contexts, and across diverse identities, social subjectivities, and ideologies will be the focus of the remainder of this dissertation.

Chapter 3

Research Methods

In Chapter 1, I provided a brief autoethnographic account describing how I came to this research through professional and personal ideological dilemmas, and my rationales for studying the discourse conflicts that arise in secondary English teaching. I then introduced the context for this opportunistic study, the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group. In Chapter 2, I further elucidated terms that I used to characterize discourse conflicts in secondary English learning contexts and how they were talked about and resolved at Pinnacle. These terms included *conflict*, *shared ethical position*, *ideological dilemma*, *décalage*, and *negotiated solidarity*. Furthermore, I positioned secondary English education as a unique site for this conflict-laden convergence, and articulated how the research questions that orient this work emerged from the context of the study.

In this chapter, I describe the design, implementation, data collection, and data analysis processes for the formal research study centered on the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group. This chapter is divided into halves that describe two relevant methodological processes: 1) methods used in the curriculum of the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group, and 2) methods used to analyze the data gathered from the

PCDSG. In the first section, I provide more information about the context of the study and the study group participants, provide details about the curriculum design, and propose some of the affordances and constraints of the study. In the second section, I provide information about the data collection and analytic processes, and set the stage for the case study chapters that follow.

Context of the Study: Pinnacle High School

Pinnacle is a large comprehensive high school (grades 9-12) in a medium sized Midwestern city, Pinnacle Township. Founded in the nineteenth century, it is one of the most historic, storied, and decorated high schools in its state. Many of the staff members have been teaching at the school for their entire careers, and generally live in Pinnacle Township and surrounding cities. It is more difficult to make generalizations about Pinnacle High School students. My three ninth grade English classes during 2005-2006 were representative of the diversity found within the school. Within those classes sat Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, atheists and Christians, students from each racial and ethnic classification, and several mixed-race students. Although Pinnacle Township is generally middle-to-upper middle class, my students' socioeconomic backgrounds ranged from upper middle class to the working poor, and their reading and writing ability varied. Some of my students should have been placed in honors English, and others struggled with reading and producing elementary texts. Nearly one-quarter of my students were covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act, and a few had extreme challenges, including dyslexia and autism. In spite of, or perhaps because of the diversity at Pinnacle High School and within Pinnacle Township, most of the students developed an esprit de corps and genuine pride about their school. Sports events, pep rallies, and assemblies

were very well attended, and students wore their letter jackets and Pinnacle t-shirts around town with considerable pride.

As of the 2007-2008 school year, the student body was 63.2% Caucasian, 13.4% African American, 10.8% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 12.6% are placed into a supercategory labeled as “Other” -- Native American, Hispanic, Middle Eastern, Other and Multi-Ethnic. In the statistical breakdown for the state mandated standardized test, all groups designated in the district demographic data as “Other” received their own categories, save for Native Americans. Boys were 52.2 percent of the student body, while girls were 47.8 percent. The achievement gap between White and Asian/Pacific Islander students at Pinnacle High School and students in all other demographic groups has narrowed over recent years. 93% of White students and 93% of Asian students entering 9th grade during the 2007-2008 school year had met or exceeded the 8th grade testing standards for reading. For African American and Latino American students, the figures were 77% and 81%, respectively. In writing, most of the groups scored lower, but 88% of White students, 94% of Asians, 65% of African Americans, and 79% of Latinos met or exceeded state standards.

Although test scores for White and Asian students in Pinnacle Township schools had remained relatively stagnant in the years immediately preceding the study, African Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, Middle Easterners, and Multiethnic students had been catching up. During the year when I taught at Pinnacle, only 59% of African Americans entered high school having met state standards in reading. By the 2007-2008 school year, this figure had moved up to 77%. The district’s teachers seemed buoyed by these gains. Even while officially acknowledging that it was impossible to ascribe

causation to the narrowing of the achievement gap, the same staff that had struggled with Glenn Singleton's words two years before pointed to building-level and district-level initiatives aimed at improving student performance. The equity team at the high school, rooted in the conversation that I recounted in Chapter 1, had its equivalent in every other public school in Pinnacle Township. The unofficial, yet intensive, effort to hire more African American teachers and administrators had resulted in all three of the district's comprehensive high schools, and multiple elementary and middle schools, being helmed by Black principals. One guidance counselor at Pinnacle, a stately African-American man with a doctorate in mental health who had helped facilitate the initial "courageous conversation" in the spring of 2006, began a mentoring program for Black youth at the school in 2004. Successful Black male scholars in eleventh and twelfth grade were tapped to mentor younger and/or struggling students. Local African-American churches and community organizations also began tutoring initiatives. During one trip to the central school office, one associate superintendent pulled me into his office, and proudly informed me about a new national initiative that he had just joined, a consortium of superintendents from districts with high income households, highly educated parents and guardians, and racial achievement gaps who were coming together to brainstorm solutions. Clearly, the focus on the achievement gap was now nearly an obsession for Pinnacle Township's schools.

This proactive, can-do atmosphere was the context for the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group project. When I first met with Principal Martin Lunsford during the summer of 2007, he was very excited about the prospect of professional learning communities centered around discourse analysis. After glancing at a summary of my

plans, he wondered aloud why I was only concentrating on the English department. He shared with me that as an administrator, he believed that all of his teachers needed to know more about the language they were using with their students. He urged me to contact the equity team and partner with them in my efforts. After I chatted with the chair of the equity team (who was incidentally the *other* counseling staff member facilitating the 2006 Courageous Conversation), I was invited to present my self-analysis of teacher talk to the entire equity team and any interested staff members. The equity team members seemed very interested, and asked questions, mainly about teacher agency, professional development, and social justice. The general sentiment was that *all* teachers needed to learn how to reflect on their classroom talk, but the teachers who could benefit most from this kind of self-examination would never voluntarily engage in such an activity. I was asked to return to the equity team at a later date, after the culmination of the classroom discourse study group in the English department. Unfortunately, the end of the school year, the staffing upheaval caused by the opening of a new high school, scheduling conflicts, and concerns about the parameters of my university IRB approval prevented the results from the discourse study group from formally contributing to the efforts of the equity team.

Evolution of the Study

The design of the professional development activities for the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group was influenced by three professional development projects I was involved in as a doctoral student at the University of Michigan. During the fall of 2006, I began collaborative work with the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)

Squire Policy Research Office team, under the direction of past NCTE president Anne Ruggles Gere. At the request of the NCTE Executive Committee, the Squire Policy Research team prepared topical briefs on contemporary issues of interest to English teachers, administrators, and policymakers that were published in the membership newsmagazine, the *Council Chronicle*. The reviews of available research in the field conducted by our team were exhaustive, yet we were also charged with making our findings accessible to an audience that ranged from practitioners to United States Congressional staffers. The two years that I worked on the NCTE Squire Policy Research team afforded me many opportunities to learn how to effectively communicate research findings to non-specialists, and increased my knowledge about many topics at the forefront of English education. Furthermore, through my work with the team I began to refine my ability to analyze quantitative and qualitative research studies, and form my own epistemological stance on what counts as good research.

Later that semester, I began research and professional development work with linguist Mary Schleppegrell. The NCLB Reading First Task Force of the Michigan Department of Education contacted Schleppegrell about her work with English language learners and their teachers in California. Schleppegrell and a team of graduate students used methods of inquiry to address problems of practice presented by reading coaches affiliated with the Michigan Department of Education. First, we examined elementary language arts curricular materials that English language learners were expected to master as part of the Reading First program. We conducted informal interviews of teachers, coaches, and facilitators to determine which texts were the most challenging for students learning English. We then conducted functional linguistic analyses on each of these

texts. These analyses revealed areas of language, grammar, genre, and register that might be obscure or confusing for a child learning English. From our analyses, we developed practical classroom activities that focused on language and writing. The Reading First Task Force team then videotaped and observed the lessons being used in classrooms, then assisted teachers and coaches with the development of their own language-focused lessons.

Another applied research collaboration that I was a part of as a precandidate was the Literacy in Action (LIA) Professional Learning Community. When I joined language and literacy researcher Lesley Rex's LIA team as a new doctoral student in the fall of 2005, she had been engaged in partnership with a southeastern Michigan school district for the better part of a decade. During the two years that I was part of LIA, I helped to write professional development curricula, selected and authored texts for the group, created and edited research videos, wrote up ethnographic fieldnotes, and led sessions. This mode of teacher professional development differed considerably from my previous experiences. First, a problem was identified and foregrounded. Specifically, practitioners wanted to improve the literacy achievement of their students (primarily, though not exclusively African-American) in reading and writing on standardized tests. Next, historic barriers within the district between teachers at two rival high schools had to be broken down. We created safe space so that teachers could talk about their practice without fear of recrimination. Finally, our team engaged in dialogue with the teachers during the last LIA session of every school year about the kinds of topics they wished to explore. After scheduling the next year's calendar with the district, the team then selected texts and created materials that addressed teachers' articulated needs.

After some time, I began to hypothesize that participation in the LIA professional learning community was influencing the teachers' ways of thinking and speaking about their professional work. During each LIA session, the team introduced new ways of thinking about media literacy, the teaching of writing, the teaching of grammar, and other topics. Together, we explored new strategies, methods, and vocabulary. The teacher-participants were encouraged to "try it out" and to share the results during the next workshop. Yet I wondered if participants' self-representations were capturing the ways that LIA was affecting classroom interaction. More specifically, since the LIA community was focused on collaborative learning about language and literacy pedagogy, I wanted to know if the new terminology and concepts introduced during LIA workshops had in any way transformed classroom discourse between students and teachers.

The curriculum design for the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group was quilted together from these three projects and modified for the context of Pinnacle High School. From Gere's NCTE Squire Policy Research group, I applied careful standards for evaluating research on English education, as well as translating the language of educational research into professional development materials for teachers. From Schleppegrell's Reading First Task Force, I borrowed the protocols for transforming classroom texts into ready-to-use, high quality language based activities for students, and would eventually transform the PCDSG teachers' classroom transcripts into ready-to-use "discourse analysis worksheets" that were customized for each teacher.⁴⁰ From Rex's

⁴⁰ For samples of the teacher discourse analysis worksheets, please refer to Appendix A.

Literacy in Action project, I borrowed the workshop structure and protocols for interaction.⁴¹

The goal of the five PCDSG workshops was to guide teachers through interaction in analyzing their classroom discourse for moments of conflict. Therefore, I chose to divide the PCDSG readings into three sections: 1) the case for analyzing conflict (Dakin, 2008); 2) conflict in the language of schooling (Lemke, 1995; Schleppegrell, 2004); and 3) how to analyze the conflicts in your own classroom (Christie, 1999, 2002; Rex & Schiller, 2009).⁴² All of the readings were provided for the teachers in a coursepack binder, along with PowerPoint slides from the first two workshops, digital voice recorders, copies of other handouts, and snacks.

The PCDSG workshops would have to include two components that I had not seen modeled or participated in before. The first was the extensive use of technology to record classroom interaction, transcribe data, and engage in analysis. The second was guiding teachers through the process of discourse analysis itself. After meeting with the administration and teachers at Pinnacle in December 2007 and January 2008, I made initial choices about how to guide teachers into theorizing discourse conflicts, analyzing talk, and using technology to facilitate their self-inquiries. Figure 3.1 shows the initial design for PCDSG implementation, which I distributed to the teachers during an orientation meeting in early February 2008. When I first began the study, I envisioned the PCDSG as four whole group meetings and two small group meetings.⁴³ During the first two meetings, teachers would be introduced to discourse conflicts and discourse

⁴¹ Please refer to Appendix B for the PCDSG workshop agendas.

⁴² For the table of contents for the PCDSG “coursepack”, please refer to Appendix E.

⁴³ For a narrative timeline of the original research plan, please refer to Appendix D.

analysis. The next two meetings would be in small groups according to grade level. The final two meetings would feature teachers reporting on their findings to their peers.

The initial design and implementation had several flaws. First, teachers needed more than two group meetings to wrestle with the ideas that I was presenting to them. Although all of the teachers assured me they had at least skimmed the readings in the coursepack (refer to Appendix E), the pressures of the school year meant that they were not prepared to fully engage or take up the concepts without significant guidance. Institutional review board approval was not obtained until March, which delayed grant funding and the purchase of supplies. As a consequence, digital voice recorders (DVRs) were not distributed to teachers until mid-April. Finally, teachers were very reluctant to meet in small groups to analyze discourse conflicts. I adjusted the workshops of the discourse study group to reflect these constraints, and to better respond to participating teachers' needs and comfort levels. With the exception of the Getting Started Meeting and the follow-up actions, which went according to schedule, the changes in the PCDSG implementation are reflected in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.1 PCDSG PLC Anticipated Activities, February – April 2008

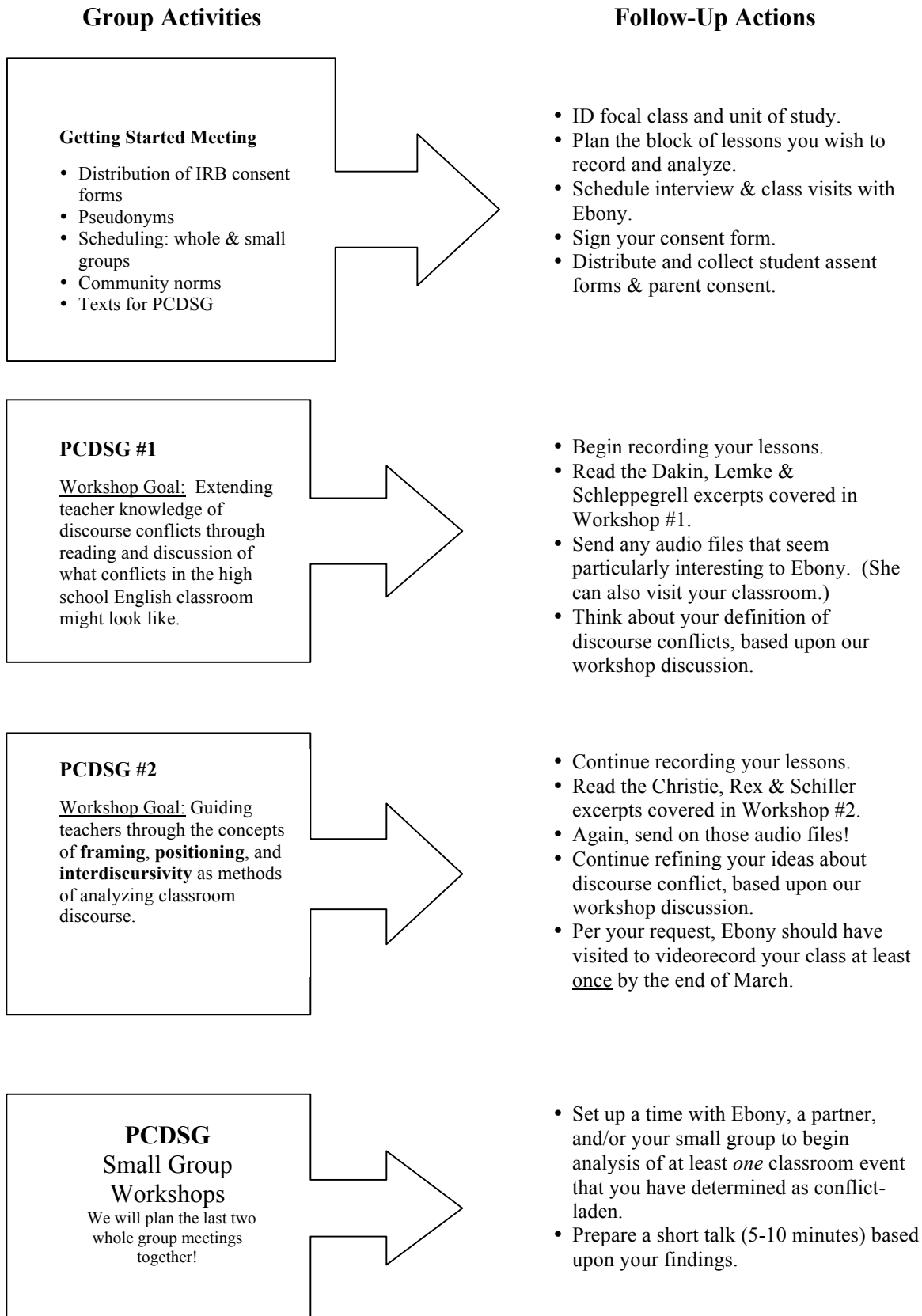
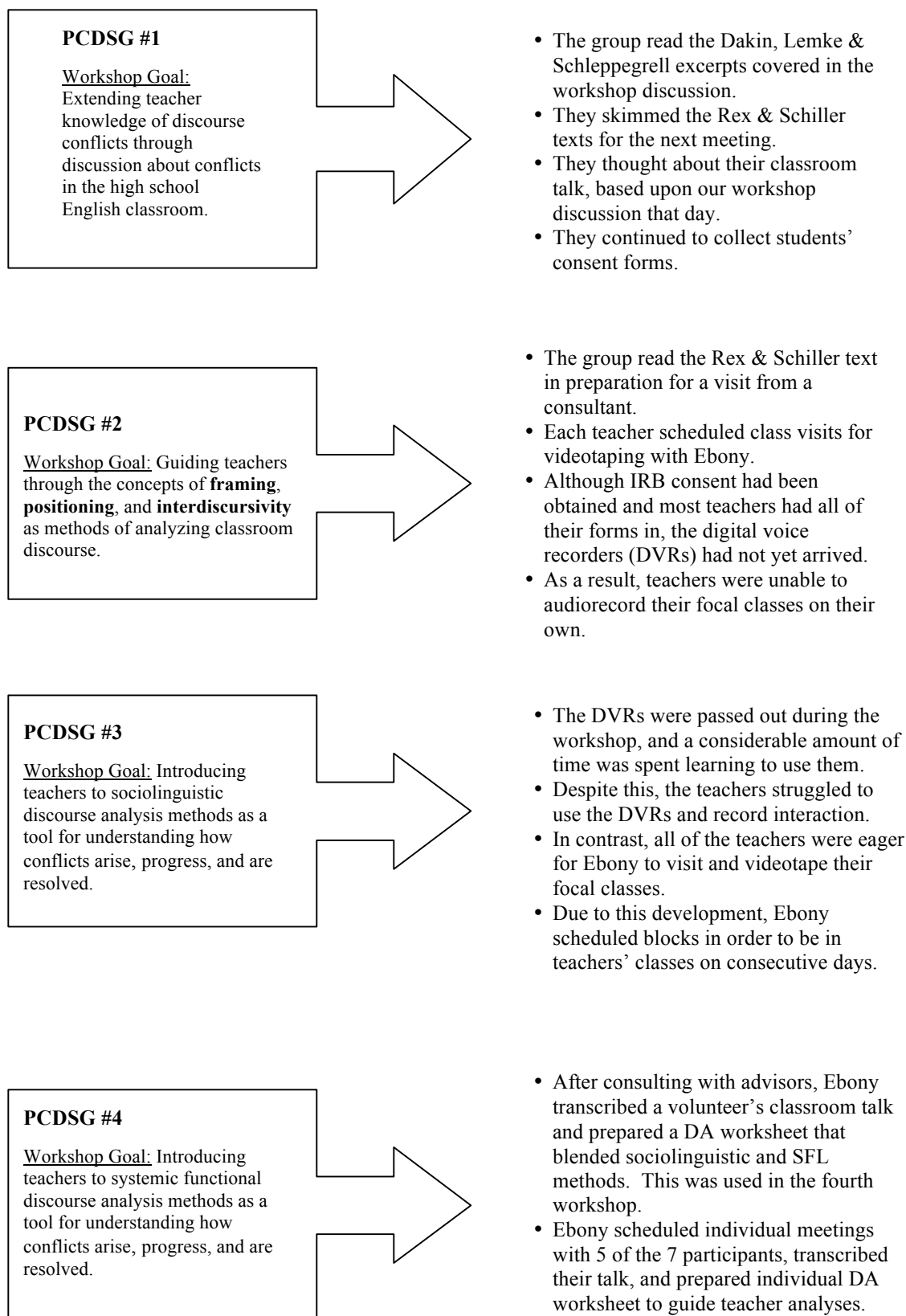


Figure 3.2 PCDSG PLC Actual Activities, February – April 2008

PCDSG Meeting

What happened afterwards



Study Participants

The seven participants in the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group were all recruited during an English department meeting in December 2007. They include an early-career African American female teacher [Natalie], a mid-career African American male teacher [Anthony], a mid-career White male teacher [James], three late career White female teachers [Ella, Jane, and Erin], and the late career White female department head [Marilyn]. Pseudonyms and focal classes for the study were teacher selected.

At the behest of several of these teachers and the department head, I came to a regularly scheduled English department meeting in December 2007 to talk about a self-discourse analysis of a transcript from my own teacher talk. After offering an invitation to convene a study group of teachers interested in learning discourse analysis methods during the second semester of the school year, seven teachers expressed their interest. Ultimately, all seven signed their consent to be part of the study group, and all seven participated until the culmination of the school year. For their participation, teachers were paid a \$75 stipend, but this was not announced until after the seven teachers committed to the study group.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ The PCDSG teacher stipends, along with all other materials for the PCDSG study, were provided through the generous support of a \$1500 Rackham Research Grant for Precandidates, University of Michigan. The grant was not awarded until Tuesday, March 4, 2008, three months after initial participant recruitment at the English department meeting.

Table 3.1 Teacher Participants in the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group

<i>Pseudonym</i>	<i>Focal Class for PCDSG Study*</i>	<i>Race</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Career Stage</i>
Marilyn Bacall	2 nd Hour (English 9 - Intensive)	White	Female	Late
Anthony Bell	3 rd Hour (English 10 - Regular)	Black	Male	Mid
Jane Bradshaw	4 th Hour (English 9 - Intensive)	White	Female	Late
Ella Daniel	1 st Hour (English 10 - Regular)	White	Female	Late
James Douglas	2 nd Hour (English 9 - Regular)	White	Male	Mid
Erin Gray	4 th Hour (English 10 - Intensive)	White	Female	Late
Natalie Osborne	6 th Hour (English 10 - Intensive)	Black	Female	Early

Affordances and Constraints of the Professional Development Design

There were many affordances provided by designing this opportunistic study based upon the discourse practices of teachers in a professional learning community. First, I was a community insider. Even after spending the preceding school year away from Pinnacle, the teachers in the department considered me a colleague who had expertise gained from the university setting. I was seen as both “one of them” and “one of us” at the same time, and even knew some of their students. Second, the participants were genuinely enthusiastic about participating in a study that was not directly about high school English curricular content or testing preparation. My collegiality with them, along with a new school administrative team and district-wide climate focused on the achievement gap, fostered a positive spirit within the group. Each workshop had a minimum of five teachers in attendance, and all participating teachers attended the first and the last workshops. Furthermore, the study had financial support from both the university and Pinnacle High School.

The primary constraints of the design of the professional development activities had to do with time, technology, and personnel. As a second semester study group, the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group literally ran out of time. PCDSG teachers walked through the model discourse analysis of James’ teaching, and five of the teachers were able to be guided through one brief analysis of their own practice. However, teachers did not have enough time to develop even basic independent proficiency in discourse analysis. Plans to continue our work together over the summer were futile, as families and vacations took precedence over extracurricular professional learning. Plans to continue during the next school year did not come to fruition, due to changing

circumstances at Pinnacle and within the district. Additionally, the lack of time interfaced with technological challenges. The teachers reported to me that they were having extreme difficulties using the digital voice recorders. Ultimately, none of them provided me with any of their voice data to transcribe.

Due to participating teachers' frustration with their DVRs, I recorded all of the classroom videos in the data set, which was emphatically not my initial intent. Without the personnel to record each of the focal classes when I was not there, potential rich moments of conflict-laden interaction may have been missed. Although I spent three weeks at Pinnacle prior to securing the video camera, the amount of video that I was able to record for each teacher was unequal. I spent one week in most teachers' classrooms recording talk and interaction during teaching as they prompted me, with one exception. Since James would be on paternity leave starting in mid-April, I asked him if I could spend two and a half weeks with him and his students. He agreed, and video from his classroom was used to generate the sample transcript and discourse analysis worksheet used in the fourth workshop.

Table 3.2 Summary of Data Collected, PCDSG Workshops

	<i>Video/Audio</i>	<i>Other Data</i>
PCDSG #1	1 video, 52 min. 1 DVR file, 50 min.	Agenda PowerPoint Slides
PCDSG #2	1 video, 64 min.	Agenda PowerPoint Slides
PCDSG #3	1 video, 114 min.	Agenda Mid-Project Survey
PCDSG #4	1 video, 82 min.	Agenda Transcript, James Douglas Discourse Analysis Worksheet
PCDSG #5	1 video, 86 min. 1 DVR file, 64 min.	Agenda

Table 3.3 Summary of Data Collected, PCDSG Participants

	<i>Video</i>	<i>Audio</i>	<i>Other Data</i>
Marilyn	Classroom teaching, 190 min. DA conversation, 19 min.	Interviews, 17 min.	Transcript (teaching) DA Worksheet
Anthony	Classroom teaching, 180 min. ST mentoring, 40 min. DA conversation, 45 min.	Interviews, 20 min.	Transcripts (teaching and mentoring) DA Worksheet
Jane	Classroom teaching, 231 min. DA conversation, 60 min.	Interviews, 20 min.	Transcript (teaching) DA Worksheet
Natalie	Classroom teaching, 105 min.	Interviews, 15 min. Informal DA conversation, 27 min.	N/A
Erin	Classroom teaching, 112 min.	Interviews, 30 min.	Transcript (teaching) DA Worksheet
Ella	Classroom teaching, 100 min. DA conversation, 25 min.	Interviews, 29 min.	Transcript (teaching) DA Worksheet
James	Classroom teaching, 622 min.	Interviews, 35 min.	Transcript (teaching) DA Worksheet

Summary of Data Collection and Analysis

Data Corpus and Selection Process

Forty-two videos, fifteen audio files, one hundred fifty-three email messages, seven working transcripts and worksheets for teachers, and seven informal written project evaluations, along with accompanying field notes and workshop materials were generated during the semester of the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group. These included videos of the five workshops, videos and audiofiles of focal classes that teachers wished to have recorded for analysis, audiofiles containing initial interviews with the teachers, and videos of teachers viewing their classroom interaction while reading a transcript of a researcher-selected "interesting moment" and engaging in some on-the-spot analysis of that moment. Additionally, I drew upon lesson plans, informal notes, and observations from my 2005-2006 teaching year at Pinnacle to inform my descriptions of the participants and the study contexts. Some of my general observations and teacher

research conducted at this school have been included in previous research (Sassi, 2008; Sassi & Thomas, 2008).

If what counts as data is dependent upon the researcher's theoretical assumptions, then my data selection process was contingent upon two factors. The first was the study's definitions of conflict as *an ideological dilemma evident in actions and discourses that impedes the negotiation of ethical positions in the classroom*, and of negotiated solidarity as *conflict-mitigating moves constructed through temporary alignment of actions and discourses that facilitate achievement of shared ethical positions*. The second factor was the significance of my having been invited to conduct action research in a place where I once taught. One level of trust had already been established, making another easier. I assured the school and the PCDSG teachers that this project would be one of shared meaning making. Thus, I took an **emic** approach to data collection and selection, selecting segments that highlighted specific ideological dilemmas and moments of *décalage*, and were remarked upon by the participants as being particularly significant. For example, in PCDSG #3, Marilyn revisited her evaluation of a teacher in the text under study in PCDSG #2, saying that she saw things differently after reading more about discourse analysis. Thus, the segment in PCDSG #2 that contains the original evaluation was analytically significant for my purposes in this study.

Organization of Data and Findings: Case Studies

In order to examine the ways that the PCDSG teachers engage conflict by negotiating solidarity with their students and colleagues, and to explore the implications

of doing so, I chose to organize the chapters about my research results into two case study chapters about individual teachers (Anthony and Ella), and one cross-case study about the group. I chose to represent the findings as case studies for several reasons. First, the complexity of the discourse conflicts that I found in the data required reporting that accounted for the need to explain complex social phenomena in context (Yin, 2009). According to psychologist and case study methodologist Robert Yin, “a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and contexts are not clearly evident” (2009: 18). I was also concerned with the findings of this study being generalizable to specific theoretical propositions, not necessarily to specific populations (2009: 15). Finally, I found that case studies would most usefully encapsulate the questions, purposes, ideological dilemmas, units of analysis, logic linking the data to the study’s purposes, and findings of this research.

Working from the assumption that a case study delineates “local particulars of an abstract social phenomenon in order to probe the material workings of some complex and abstract aspect of human experience” (A. H. Dyson & Genishi, 2005), each case should be viewed as a “case within a case”, drawn out of a single unit of analysis – the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group – during a particular moment of time in a specific educational setting. As with most qualitative case studies, these cases are particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic (Merriam, 1998). Each case is *particularistic* in that it not only describes, analyzes, and theorizes individual and group experiences during participation in a classroom discourse study group, but it also illuminates a gap in the research literature. In the case of Anthony Bell, his story addresses the lack of knowledge about

the professional discourses and literate practices of African-American male teachers. Ella Daniel's case adds to knowledge about the discursive practices of experienced White teachers who are struggling with discourse conflicts in hyperdiverse classrooms. The cross-case study about the PCDSG speaks to how social solidarities in the PCDSG evolved over time. Each case is *descriptive* in that it provides thick description of the individual and the context under study, using an emic approach along with the insider/outsider perspective of the researcher. Furthermore, these case studies assume ideological dilemma analysis as a *heuristic* for analyzing secondary English teacher talk across settings, informed largely by two meta-theories of language and classroom interaction, systemic functional linguistics and interactional ethnography, as detailed below.

Analytic Process

The following steps describe the process of data analysis using the ideological dilemma analysis framework that I theorize in detail below. First, in order to begin the iterative questioning process of interactional ethnography, I conducted a **content analysis** of all data, reviewing and writing memos for each video and audiofile. Next, I constructed a **theoretical comparison matrix**, examining each participating teacher's talk. The goal was to identify each teacher's primary self-identified ideological dilemma. After that, I **theoretically sampled from among the seven teachers** two teachers whose specific situations were least often represented in English education research. As articulated in the introduction (Chapter 1), the teachers selected for individual cases were Anthony Bell (Chapter 4) and Ella Daniel (Chapter 5). In a third analysis, I analyzed the

five PCDSG workshops for the ways that teachers talked about conflict (Chapter 6). Once I selected these theoretically significant cases, I **coded** classroom interactions and PCDSG workshops, identifying key concepts and categorizing them. The key case study participants, Anthony and Ella, selected key events in the PCDSG workshops, in their classrooms, and elsewhere in the school that they found dilemmatic; I selected other interactions that were related or similar. I then **retranscribed** each key segment using my own modification of the Atkinson and Heritage system. After that, I applied different kinds of **discourse analysis** to the selected data (Appraisal, Conjunction, Ideational, Identification, and Negotiation SFL analyses; Interactional Ethnographic analysis). Finally, I compared the findings from the discourse analyses to my ethnographic data, in order to triangulate my results.

Ideological Dilemma Analysis

The question orienting this study was **How do high school English teachers in a discourse study group talk about conflict?** In the previous chapter, I defined conflict in English education as “an ideological dilemma evident in teachers’ and students’ actions and discourses that impedes the negotiation of ethical positions in the secondary English classroom.” I proposed that these ideological dilemmas might be located at moments of interaction that I am defining as *décalage* (B. Edwards, 2003, 2009). When presented with an ideological dilemma, my analysis revealed that the teachers tended to negotiate solidarity through their discourses and actions. Yet each teacher, and the group itself, negotiated this solidarity in different ways, using different kinds of language and action in varying contexts. The different ways that the teachers addressed their

ideological dilemmas by negotiating solidarity can be identified, described, and theorized through the use of a process that I have designed for this study that I am calling **ideological dilemma analysis**: 1) analysis of text, 2) analysis of context, and 3) analysis of *décalage*.

My analytic process for this study consisted of three approaches to the data. For textual analysis, I used systemic functional linguistics. For contextual analysis, I used interactional ethnography. Both theoretical frameworks – systemic functional linguistics and interactional ethnography -- were also used within the PCDSG workshops to aid the teachers as they determine what constituted conflict in their classroom discourse transcripts, and analyzed a sample transcripts for both linguistic and situated meanings. The work of scholars in the systemic functional and interactional ethnographic traditions was introduced as part of the readings for the PCDSG. The teachers and I jointly focused on particular moments of *décalage* in the study group and in their classroom interaction where ideological dilemmas seemed to surface. For analysis of *décalage*, or the dilemma itself, I turn to theories of silence, third space, and critical race theory.

The integration of perspectives across these three traditions may address critiques raised in a recent literature review of critical discourse analysis in education (Rogers, Malancharuvil-Berkes, Mosley, Hui, & O'Garro Joseph, 2005). In this review, it was stated that “critical discourse analysis frameworks traditionally draw on Euro-American epistemological traditions, both in theoretical and analytic frameworks. Such frameworks have continued to silence and oppress historically marginalized groups of people” (Rogers, et. al, 2005). Acknowledging Fairclough’s three-tiered framework for critical discourse analysis in education, the ideological-contextual dilemma analysis used

for this study considers texts, interactions, and social practices in the field at the local, institutional, and societal levels (N. Fairclough, 1989; N. Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). The systemic functional approach provides attention to and rigor in dealing with the microstructure of texts, while an interactional ethnographic approach contextualizes interaction. Analysis of *décalage* takes up Rogers' call to draw upon the work of critical theory and critical race theory while attending to specific discourses, interactions, and professional literate practices that are within their contexts liberating and transformative.

Analyzing Text: Systemic Functional Linguistics

Systemic functional linguistics (SFL) has been used to inform theories of discourse analysis that “focus on the social as it is constructed through texts, or the constitutive role of meanings in social life” (Martin & Rose, 2003). To elaborate further, a systemic functional approach to language analysis provides tools to examine the language that speakers and writers use when talking or writing about particular things (construing the field), with particular people (enacting the tenor), using particular ways of structuring the message (responding to the mode). Functional linguistics posits three metafunctions of language: the interpersonal (the language features that enact tenor), the ideational (the language features that construe field), and the textual (the language features that construct mode). This theory of “language-in-use” has been most cogently elaborated by Michael Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan, first in England, then in Australia. It features an elaborated grammar that educational researchers and reformers have found useful for discourse analysis, curriculum design, and other linguistic applications. To analyze the texts in the three case studies, I used five of the discourse analysis systems developed by linguists

James Martin and David Rose (Martin & Rose, 2003, 2007): **Appraisal, Conjunction, Ideation, Identification, and Negotiation**. I describe each system further below.

Appraisal framework (feelings and evaluation)

The analytic system foregrounded in ideological dilemma analysis is **Appraisal**. Appraisal analyses are concerned with evaluating the kinds of feelings that are negotiated in a spoken or written text, the strength of the feelings that are being negotiated, the intertexts from which feelings are derived, and how listeners and readers are aligned through language (2007: 26). Appraisal analyses highlight the amount of speaker or writer engagement towards a topic, the interactants' feelings about the topic, and the participants involved. Appraisal analyses also evaluate the degree or gradation of the attitudes and engagement present in spoken or written text. Speakers and writers "use the resources of appraisal for negotiating our social relationships, by telling our listeners or readers how we feel about things and people" (2003: 22). I have foregrounded the Appraisal analytic framework within ideological dilemma analysis because Appraisal resources are used by speakers and writers to generate interpersonal meaning, which "realize variations in the tenor of social interactions enacted in a text" (2007: 17). In other words, Appraisal analyses foreground the interactive nature of spoken and written texts, as well as the attitudes and judgments of the speaker and/or writer.

Figure 3.3 Coding Key for Appraisal Resources

ENGAGEMENT -> (Source)	monogloss projection (direct quotes only) heterogloss -> <u>modality</u> concession
ATTITUDE ->	Affect Judgment Appreciation
GRADUATION -> (Amplification)	Force Focus

The Appraisal framework can be subdivided into three areas: Attitude, Graduation, and Engagement. Attitudinal language resources are further divided into three areas: Affect, Judgment, and Appreciation. Affect has to do with the kinds of feelings that the language construes: positive or negative, temporary or ongoing, external or internal, less or more intense, action or relation, etc. (Martin & Rose, 2003, 2007) While Affect designates what people actually *do* feel, Judgment language resources are about the institutionalization of feelings about people, or what people in a society *ought to* feel. Types of Judgments include judgments of social esteem (“Is this person capable? Is this person dependable?”), and judgments of social sanction (“Is this person ethical? Is this person good?”). Where Judgment language resources are about the institutionalization of feelings about people, Appreciation resources institutionalize feelings about products, performances, and fields (“Did it move me?” “Was it difficult to comprehend?” “Is it worth the money?”). Because the negotiation of solidarity is highly interpersonal, interactants in the study frequently used Judgment resources to talk about each other and people outside of the school. However, English education is also a

specialized field, and so interactants also used the language of Appreciation to assign value to literature and writing.

Graduation language resources are used to amplify the force of feelings towards someone or something (2007: 42). Reviewing some of the premises we have explored already in Chapter 1, and as we shall see in the cross-case study (Chapter 6), the teachers at Pinnacle were *very* excited to have a new principal, the PCDSG participants were *quite* eager to get started with the workshops, and later, the teachers were *somewhat* wary of sharing their classroom interaction in small groups. These modifiers “turn the volume up or down” (force) on words that describe. Continuing with this example, after *only* three months, the PCDSG teachers were *not quite* expert enough to present their analyses to the entire school and district. These modifiers “sharpen or soften” categories of people or things (focus). Graduation helps to provide nuance and texture to the language of interaction.

The sources of feelings and evaluations in language are located in the Engagement language resources of a spoken or written text. In theory, a text can be monogloss, containing only a single voice. However, much of our speech and writing is heteroglossic (Bakhtin, 1981, 1998). Speakers and writers report what others say and think in projections (“he said”, “she said”, “According to sources”, “Some say”), consciously or unconsciously hailing their authority to strengthen a position. Another method of multivoicing speech or writing is through the use of modality, which “sets up a semantic space between yes and no” (Martin & Rose, 2007: 53). Instead of an imperative choice between action (“do it”) and inaction (“don’t do it”), the use of modality presents a range of options: *you must do it, you should do it, you could do it, you shouldn’t do it,*

you don't have to do it. Statements of fact also can interpellate or hail other voices: instead of *it is* or *it isn't*, one could say or write that *it must be, it should be, it might be, it could be, it might not be*, etc. Martin and Rose observe that “negation of this kind is a feature of persuasive writing (and speech) where contesting positions need to be addressed and set aside” (2007: 54). Similarly, concession, or managing the expectations of speakers and listeners is also used to Engage. One can fulfill audience expectations or counter them through the use of counterexpectancy -- “Pinnacle High School’s climate used to be very tense, **but** an exceptional new principal, Mr. Lunsford, has changed things around here. **Still**, we have to stay on top of things so they don’t go back to the way they were before.” The conjunction **but** is concessive, and the conjunction **still** is continuative.

Appraisal analysis can reveal the tone or the mood of a discourse passage as a text unfolds. Martin and Rose contend that these language resources of feeling and evaluation “form a prosody of attitude running through the text that swells and diminishes... the prosodic pattern of appraisal choices constructs the ‘stance’ or ‘voice’ of the appraiser, and this stance or voice defines the kind of community that is being set up around shared values” (2007: 59). Keeping in mind the idealized “framework of shared purposes” and the realized “shared ethical position” that is paramount to negotiating solidarity in secondary English classrooms (Achinstein, 2002; Christie, 1999), an analysis system that reveals the strata of the language of interpersonal interaction is useful indeed. In this study, a full Appraisal analysis of a potentially conflict-laden moment in Ella Daniel’s teaching is presented in Chapter 5.

Conjunction framework (logical connections)

Conjunction analyses examine logical interconnections between ideas. Martin and Rose's system positions systems of conjunction as "a set of meanings that organize activity sequences and text" (2003: 116). Each conjunction can be placed into one of four macrocategories: **addition, comparison, time, and consequence**. The discursive context can be used to further subcategorize each conjunction according to its function within the text. In Chapter 4, the logic of Anthony's challenge to the rest of the PCDSG workshop participants about the ways that they are talking about underserved students is revealed through a Conjunction analysis.

Ideational framework (activities, experiences, and knowledge)

Speakers and writers use Ideation language resources to represent their experiences in the world. The Ideation discourse semantic system "focuses on sequences of activities, the people and things involved in them, and their associated places and qualities, and on how these elements are build up and related to each other as a text unfolds" (Martin & Rose, 2007: 73). These sequences of activities, or experiences, are realized by clauses and their elements (75). There can also be strong semantic relationship between related "people, things, processes, places and qualities that build the field of a text". This semantic relationship is called a *lexical string*. Elements of a string can be class to member (PCDSG :: Ella), part to whole (PCDSG Workshop #1 :: Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group), or contrastive (solidarity :: individuality). Speakers and writers use lexical strings to "knit" a text together. In Chapter 5, an Ideational analysis is provided of the text that Ella Daniel is teaching, *Dangerous Minds*, during the

conflict-laden moment that was analyzed using the Appraisal framework. While the Appraisal analysis shows how participants talked about the way they *felt* about *Dangerous Minds*, the Ideational analysis shows how ideas were *represented* in the text itself.

When activities and experiences index abstract concepts, the key meaning-making resource for this kind of discourse is known as ideational metaphor. Ideational metaphor “involves a transference of meaning from one kind of element to another kind” (Martin & Rose: 2003, 103). An example of an ideational metaphor is “Look at how they cheated before!” (Simon-Vandenberg, Taverniers, & Ravelli, 2003). The reader or listener is not supposed to actually “look” at the cheating as a response to the speech or writing, but to *consider* a past experience of “them” cheating. In contrast, grammatical metaphor is the kind of metaphor that is used in classroom teaching – “Giving effective directions is like putting together a sandwich.” As we shall see, different kinds of metaphors are a feature of secondary English teacher talk. In the case of Anthony Bell (Chapter 4), we see how Anthony Bell uses grammatical metaphor to mentor a struggling student teacher during the semester of the PCDSG.

Identification framework (participant tracking)

The Identification discourse semantic system helps the analyst to track how speakers and writers introduce people and things into discourse and keep track of them once there (Martin & Rose, 2007: 155). Resources for identifying people include **presenting** references if their identities are unknown, and **presuming** references if they are known. For things, there are **comparative** references. Identification has phases that

may or may not be parallel to the phases of text or talk. Tracking participants in teacher talk can be valuable for several reasons. It can illuminate the subject or topic under study. It can reveal how people, places, objects, items, and ideas are introduced into discourse, and keep track of them. Finally, identifying participants can help show how a discourse “hearer” might engage in sense-making as participant identities are revealed. In Chapter 4, we see through an Identification analysis the ways that Anthony Bell uses instructional and regulative discourse to position interracial identity as positive in his classroom and society, yet interrogating his students’ understandings of race, nationality, and class.

Negotiation (dialogic interaction)

Within systemic functional linguistics, the Negotiation discourse system can be used to analyze the structure of spoken interaction. There are **speech functions** that are grammatically realized in **mood**, and generate **responses** (Martin & Rose, 2007: 219). These responses are sequentially organized in **moves** within **exchanges**, and can also entail **challenges**. “There are three dimensions we need to consider in dialogue – the kind of moves that speakers make, how they are sequenced, and what happens when things don’t work out as smoothly as planned” (2007: 222). In Chapter 6, the Negotiation framework will be used to analyze the first PCDSG meeting, and examine how teachers talk about an abstract and potentially inflammatory concept -- conflict – with colleagues.

Transcription Methods, Keys, and Codes

The transcripts here are of two different kinds. One kind of transcript is rendered in “playscript format” for ease of reading. The second kind is a transcript more closely related to both the Jeffersonian style used for conversation analysis (CA), and the structuration maps used in interactional ethnography (IE). My rationale for using an elaborated transcription system for certain transcripts was to capture the extralinguistic features of particularly rich interactions – intonation, gestures, movement, etc. These will aid in the second and third aspects of ideological dilemma analysis -- analyzing context and analyzing *décalage*.

As a beginning researcher, I felt that it was important to practice transcription and coding methods for this small-scale, opportunistic study, in preparation for a program of qualitative research involving larger numbers of participants. Therefore, I transcribed and coded all of the data for this study without the aid of an outside transcriptionist or transcription software.

Figure 3.4 Transcription Symbols (Adapted From Atkinson & Heritage, 1984)

(.5)	The number in parentheses indicates a time gap in tenths of a second.
(.)	A dot enclosed in parentheses indicates a pause in the talk of less than two-tenths of a second.
(hh)	The letter h enclosed in parentheses indicates audible speaker breath; the more h's, the longer the breath.
:	Colons indicate that the speaker has stretched out the preceding sound or letter. The more colons, the greater the extent of the stretching.
()	Empty parentheses indicate an unclear utterance or fragment.
(guess)	Words within parentheses indicate the transcriber's best guess at an unclear utterance or fragment.
--	A dash indicates the sharp cut-off of the prior word or sound.
.	A period indicates a stopping fall of tone. It does not necessarily indicate the end of a sentence.
,	A comma indicates a continuing intonation.

?	A question mark indicates a rising inflection. It does not necessarily indicate a question.
<i>Ital.</i>	Italicized fragments indicate speaker emphasis.
CAPITAL	Capitalized speech indicate speech that is noticeably louder than surrounding talk.
small	Talk that is in a smaller font is noticeably quieter than surrounding talk.
> <	“Greater than” and “less than” signs indicate that the talk they encompass is noticeably more rapid than surrounding talk.
< >	“Less than” and “greater than” signs indicate that the talk they encompass is noticeably more slow and deliberate than surrounding talk.
=	The equals sign indicates contiguous utterances.
[]	Square brackets between adjacent lines of concurrent speech indicate the onset and end of a spate of overlapping talk.
[[A double left-hand square bracket indicates that two or more speakers begin a turn at the same time.

Analyzing Context: Interactional Ethnography

Returning to the assertion from my theoretical framework (Chapter 2) that language constructs, deconstructs, mediates, and problematizes our social identities, it is important to analyze the contexts from which discourses arise. If “what counts as literacy in any group is visible in the actions members take, what they are oriented towards, for what they hold each other accountable, what they accept or reject as preferred responses” as well as “how they engage with, interpret, or construct text” (Castanheira, et. al, 2001: 354), then extralinguistic factors that socially construct the context for discourse and interaction are analytically significant for the purposes of identifying and examining ideological dilemmas. For studying the teachers in the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group, I focused on the following concepts and approaches from interactional ethnography: **a social construction theory of context, an ethnographic logic of inquiry, iterative questioning, event mapping, and illustrative taxonomies.**

Contexts in Classroom Interaction

Interactional ethnography carefully theorizes context by drawing upon ethnographic research in educational settings (Rex, 2006b). The work of Judith Green, David Bloome, Fred Erickson, and Jeffrey Shultz and their followers provided several assumptions about context that are foundational for conducting interactional ethnography, as articulated by Lesley Rex in the volume *Discourse of Opportunity: How Talk in Learning Situations Creates and Constrains*:

- Contexts are constituted by what people are doing and where and when they are doing it.
- People in interaction become environments for each other.
- Contexts consist of mutually shared and ratified definitions of situation and of the social actions people take on the basis of these definitions.
- Contexts are embedded in time, can change from moment to moment, and are meaningfully socially related across time.
- With each context change, the roles and relationships among participants are redistributed to produce differing configurations of concerted action.
- Mutual rights and obligations of interactions are continually amenable to subtle readjustment and redistribution into different configurations of concerted action.
- Multiple participation structures occur within a single occasion.
- Participants read and provide contextualization cues for each other in their discourse (Rex, 2006: 11).

As we shall see in the case study chapters, the above assumptions proved to be especially applicable at Pinnacle High School, and within the PCDSG. In Chapter 4, contextual cues from Anthony's student teacher, Denise, prompted tactical changes in the language he used to critique her lesson. In Chapter 5, one of Ella's students assumed her teacher's usual role in classroom interaction, projecting instructional discourse related to their shared ethical position around the word *nigger* -- that it is forbidden, and no one should say it. In Chapter 6, we see the participants readjust and redistribute their roles and relationships whenever there is a difference in opinion.

Logic of Inquiry: The Role of the Ethnographic Perspective

Interactional ethnography takes an ethnographic orientation towards context, and an ethnographic approach to data. Although it is not ethnography in the traditional sense of the term, where researchers participate fully in the life of a culture and collect data for extended periods of time lasting several years or more, as with any ethnography, the analyst "enters the context with an overarching question", and then engages "in a set of iterative processes that lead to generating new questions, ones that were relevant to the local context being studied" (Castanheira, et. al, 2001: 358). Data is constructed from the records and artifacts generated from the context. Thus, "adopting an ethnographic perspective, and engaging in the iterative research cycle for constructing and analyzing these data, provides a theoretical approach to examining the relationship of discourse and interpretation in each class setting" (Green & Bloome, 1983, 1997). Within the parameters of this study, the relationship between discourse and interpretation was studied across participants, settings, and time. This can be seen in Anthony and Ella's

discourse across professional contexts in Chapters 4 and 5, and the evolution of workshop interaction over time in Chapter 6. The iterative process used during the early stages of data analysis helped to refine the orienting research question into subquestions that were derived *in situ* from the study data and context.

The following chart depicts the chronological evolution of the questions driving the creation and analysis of data in the study. During this process, I realized that the data generated outside of the PCDSG in teachers' classrooms was analytically significant in order to understand what they considered to be conflict. Thus, my research question changed from *How do high school English teachers talk about conflict in a discourse study group?* to *How do high school English teachers in a discourse study group talk about conflict?* (Refer to Figure 3.8 on the following pages.) This analytic approach generated rich data that was used to reconstruct the ecologies of talk that characterized the discursive practices of the teachers in the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group. These discursive practices, along with other features of their workshop and classroom interaction (such as their choice of curricular materials), constructs a grounded perspective of the teachers' professional literacies. Since professional literacies, like all literacies, are continuously being constructed, deconstructed, reconstructed (as well as co-constructed, co-deconstructed, and co-reconstructed), what counts as literacy will vary from individual to individual, from context to context, and from moment-to-moment. One tool that interactional ethnography provides for studying this moment-to-moment dynamic change is event mapping.

Table 3.4 Logic of Inquiry: Iterative Questioning for Initial Data Analyses

Research Question (and revisions)	Posing Question	Representing Data	Analyzing Events
How do high school English teachers <u>talk about conflict</u> in a discourse study group?	<i>How was conflict talked about within the parameters of the study group?</i>	Working transcripts and memos generated from video and audiofiles recorded during the five (5) PCDSG workshops.	Initial content analyses of the PCDSG workshops revealed that teachers were reluctant to talk about conflict named as such within the parameters of the study group.
	<i>If teachers did not explicitly talk about conflict during the study group, how <u>did</u> they talk about conflict?</i>	Theoretical comparison matrix generated from the working transcripts, memos, and field notes from the study.	The theoretical comparison matrix revealed that each teacher's talk seemed to coalesce around particular themes. These themes seemed conflict-laden for the teachers.
	<i>Did these conflict-laden themes emerge elsewhere in the study data?</i>	Working transcripts and memos generated from video and audiofiles of the PCDSG teachers' focal classes, initial interviews, and individual self-discourse analysis sessions.	The identified themes were present in all of the data for two PCDSG teachers, and in much of the data for the other teachers in the study group.
How do high school English teachers in a discourse study group <u>talk about conflict</u>?	<i>What is the nature of the conflict-indexed themes that emerged from the PCDSG teachers' talk?</i>	Theoretical comparison matrix generated from the working transcripts, memos, and field notes from the study; subsequent theoretical sampling.	The theoretical comparison matrix and theoretical sampling indicated that the conflict-laden themes represented dilemmatic clashes between the teachers' lived experiences and their philosophies/ideologies about education.
	<i>Since conflict in this particular context seems to involve dilemmas, what are each teacher's self-described dilemmas?</i>	Revisited the theoretical comparison matrix.	The theoretical comparison matrix revealed that the conflict-laden themes found in each teacher's talk <i>were</i> part of their self-described dilemmas.
	<i>How were these dilemmas enacted in their teaching?</i>	Working transcripts and memos generated from video and audiofiles of the PCDSG teachers' focal classes.	SFL and IE analyses of the working transcripts and memos revealed that these dilemmas were enacted in their teaching in very different ways by different teachers. The ways that these dilemmas were enacted interfaced with each teacher's identity and ideologies.

	<i>How were these dilemmas enacted in their choice of curricular materials?</i>	Working transcripts and memos generated from video and audiofiles of the PCDSG teachers' focal classes and initial interviews; ethnographic field notes taken after informal conversations with the teachers; access to curricular artifacts.	SFL and IE analyses of the working transcripts and memos revealed that these dilemmas were enacted in the teacher's choice of curriculum materials. These materials were reflective of teachers' identities and ideologies.
	<i>How were these dilemmas enacted in their engagement with the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group?</i>	Working transcripts and memos generated from video and audiofiles recorded during the five (5) PCDSG workshops.	SFL and IE analyses of the working transcripts and memos revealed that that these dilemmas were enacted in each teacher's engagement with the PCDSG. Their interaction with their colleagues was reflective of their identities and ideologies.
	<i>How did each teacher attempt to resolve these dilemmas?</i>	Three case studies: two (2) of individual teachers' ideological dilemmas, and one (1) cross-case comparison study.	Analysis of the case studies revealed that the PCDSG teachers were expert at attempts to negotiate solidarity with each other and with their students. The differing ways that they attempted to negotiate solidarity interfaced with their identities and ideologies. These attempts were met with varying levels of success.

Illustrative Taxonomies

In the cross-case study comparison, part-whole and whole-part relationships within the PCDSG were contrasted using illustrative taxonomies. In interactional ethnography, “the construction of a taxonomy of part-whole relationships between and among literacy demands, actions, and practices provides a critical tool for examining what counts as opportunities for learning; accessing academic content and practices; and forming identities as learners, students, peers, and competent readers and writers among other roles and relationships within and across content areas.” (Castanheira, et. al, 2001: 358). An illustrative taxonomy of part-whole relationships within the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group was used to compare and contrast each teacher’s social subjectivities, individual identities, ideological dilemmas, and ways of approaching the negotiation of solidarity. This IE analysis also provides a basis for examining the ways that teachers are taking up (or not) the shared ethical position determined by their curriculum, the local context of Pinnacle High School, and society. Finally, illustrative taxonomies, along with the other tools of interactional ethnography, can help aid our search for disarticulation, gaps, and disconnects in interaction – that is, *décalage*.

Analyzing Décalage

Here, I turn again to Brent Edwards’ assertion about *décalage* first articulated in the theoretical framework: that it is only through examining forms of *disarticulation* – that is, “points of misunderstanding, bad faith, (and) unhappy translation” – that we can properly understand a paradigm (in Edwards’ work, the African Diaspora; in this study, secondary

English classroom interaction) that has long been viewed as a totalizing construct (B. Edwards, 2009). It is clear that *décalage* (or disarticulation, or disconnect) is always present at the horns of the ideological dilemmas faced by the teachers of the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group.

Disarticulation and disconnects in classroom discussions among teachers and students have been observed by many others researching language in education (Cazden, 2001; A. D. Edwards & Westgate, 1987; D. Edwards & Mercer, 1989; Gutierrez, 1993; Nystrand, 1997; Nystrand & Gamoran, 1997; Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975). Sinclair & Coulthard's scholarship is foundational and predates much of the work in the ethnography of communication and functional discourse analysis in education. Cazden's Initiation-Response-Evaluation sequence of classroom discourse, an elaboration of Sinclair and Coulthard's I-R-F, is well known, as is Edwards and Mercer's study of approaches to classroom knowledge and talk. Gutierrez's study of instructional scripts between ten teachers of writing and their students provides a heuristic for describing the kinds of interactions one also finds at the Initiation phase of a literature unit. Gutierrez found that recitative dialogic exchanges followed a visible and regulative I-R-E format, while responsive/collaborative dialogic exchanges featured much less visible teacher regulation. Nystrand found similar results in his two-year study of eighth and ninth grade English classes. From the literature on classroom discourse, it seems that moments where I-R-E/F discursive norms were interrupted are important for understanding conflicts in talk and interaction.

The analysis of *décalage* for the purposes of this study relies on the research literature about discourse in English language arts and literacy classrooms. In order to

show moments where discourse and interaction are disrupted and/or disconnected, the normal flow of classroom interaction must be examined. In Chapter 4, I analyze the discourse structure of Anthony's classroom, and show how he disrupts traditional I-R-E/F formats to recenter and recontextualize power and authority. In Chapter 5, I contrast the disconnect between the ways that Ella and her students talk about a racially incendiary passage in the book *Dangerous Minds*, and what is on the page. Ella and her students use silence in order to constructively talk about a topic that has the potential for conflict. In Chapter 6, I analyze the norms of the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group, shifting from *décalage* in pedagogic discourse to *décalage* in a professional learning community. Finally, in Chapter 7, I discuss the implications of analyzing *décalage* for future research on teacher discourse analysis, considering the possible roles of silence, space, and time.

Affordances and Constraints of Ideological Dilemma Analysis

Ideological dilemma analysis, as I have conceptually framed it, can be a useful heuristic for identifying, examining, and interpreting discourse conflicts in schools and society. There are several affordances of this kind of analysis. First, taking an emic approach privileges localized meanings, categories, and interpretations. Due to the limited amount of time for this study and my previous relationship with the participants, I privileged each participating teacher's interpretation of their own classroom contexts, as well as their reading of conditions in the school and the district. Second, taking an interactional ethnographic approach to classroom and workshop data helps identify the stakes for each participant within a context. Very often, these stakes interface with their

ideological dilemmas. A systemic functional approach to language and discourse provides attention to the microstructure of texts, enhancing the validity of results and providing a means of cross-checking researcher interpretations. Finally, the analysis of *décalage* connects the talk and interaction happening in one department at one school during one particular slice of time to the implications of these discourses and actions for schooling and society.

There are also constraints to this analytic framework. By privileging participant data selection, other dilemmatic moments (e.g., from a student perspective) may have been missed. While the perspectives of students are valuable and essential, they were not directly relevant to the original purpose for the study, and thus not explicitly addressed in its orienting research question. Future studies of ideological dilemmas in schooling would do well to examine the interface between the ideological dilemmas of teachers and the ideological dilemmas of their students. Although systemic functional analysis is excellent for analyzing the texts of what participants say, SFL may miss unintended meanings that participants are making from language and gestures, and does not view silence as analytically significant. My interactional ethnography relies heavily on my experiences as a teacher at Pinnacle as well as upon my reputation as a teacher in my colleagues' view, and therefore would not be directly replicable. Because this study is opportunistic, it is unlikely other researchers could replicate the particularity of the design, and so the results, though revelatory, are unique.

Nevertheless, even acknowledging the constraints of my study design, implementation, and ideological dilemma analysis, I contend that this study brings an understudied and undertheorized subject to the forefront of research in English education

and studies of classroom interaction. As a early career, female English educator of color, my goal in the three case studies that follow is to not only illustrate the ideological dilemmas that these seven teachers regularly face in the conflict-laden contexts in which they teach and mentor, but to show what the entire profession might learn about the ideological dilemmas that pervade teaching and learning in the postmodern moment. Within the individual case studies, I position each of the teachers within larger metadiscourses that index their identities, ideologies, and social subjectivities. Throughout the semester of the classroom discourse analysis study group, the ways that several of the teachers envisioned their work and their place in the world gradually changed (Freire & Macedo, 1987; Martin, 1999b). Their experiences in the discourse study group not only helped to surface many of the oft-submerged philosophies and principles that underpin English education, enabling them to be accessible for scrutiny and critique, but they reported a greater sense of self-efficacy and understanding of the complexity of their work. One teacher, Anthony, even reported a desire to become a teacher educator and researcher after participating in the study group. The case studies begin with his story.

Chapter 4

Dilemmas of Ideology, Context, and Silenced Dialogues: The Case of Anthony Bell

“They study us like guinea pigs!”

-Anthony Bell, 9th and 10th Grade English teacher

Pinnacle High School

In the statement above, Anthony is expressing a fundamental dilemma in the way that educational research has traditionally represented the lives, language, and literate practices of African American men. Teachers like Anthony are relatively rare in English education, and studies of their language and literacy practices are sparse. The teaching profession is overwhelmingly White and female, and the enduring English literary canon is still very White, male and Western European. Historically, there has been a rich tradition of resilient Black female teachers working within segregated schools, constrained in the larger society yet empowered within the community (A. Fairclough, 2006). Their “othermothering” approach continues among the most effective contemporary African American women teachers (Irvine, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1994). In contrast, the performed identity of many African American male teachers, writers, and

other Black “men of letters” has been that of the protest tradition, from David Walker’s *Appeal* (Walker, 1829 (1965)) to *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (Haley, 1968) to rap music and hip-hop culture. All too often, Black men’s perspectives about schooling and society have been relegated to the margins and silenced (Delpit, 1988), while they are indeed “studied like guinea pigs”.

Therefore, my earnest intention and concern is to honor Anthony’s expertise and voice as I describe the ways that he mitigated conflict across school contexts by negotiating solidarity and alignment through his actions and discourse. The goal of this chapter is to illustrate the dilemmas of ideology and context that Anthony experienced during the semester of the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group (PCDSG). Dilemmas of ideology occur whenever teachers experience conflict between their lived and intellectual ideologies (Billig, et al., 1988) and those of their students, colleagues, the school culture and ethos, the district, community, and society. Dilemmas of context occur when teachers experience conflict as they shift between multiple personal and professional identities and social subjectivities, sometimes within the same interaction. These dilemmas are a central feature of interaction in English Language Arts classrooms, because one of the functions of first-language English teaching has historically been to wrestle with the ethical dilemmas of society through literature and writing (Christie, 1999, 2002), and by doing so, to prepare students for the cultural and literate demands of citizenship in a rapidly changing global world (Alsup, et al., 2006; Altwerger, et al., 2004). I will show how Anthony is an exemplar of the complex ways that teachers in the early twenty-first century negotiate these dilemmas.

Anthony Bell's classroom was next to mine during the year I taught at Pinnacle High School. We both began our careers in a major urban center in the same state, and bonded over similar orientations towards student centered, culturally relevant teaching (Gay, 2000). Two years later, when I returned as a professional development facilitator and researcher, he joined my classroom discourse analysis study group. Some of his prior experiences were similar to those of other members in the group. Like the only White male teacher, Anthony was in the second decade of his career. Like the only African-American female teacher, he was an alumnus of Pinnacle High School. Anthony's perspectives usually differed most from those of the most vocal participants in the discourse study group, who were White, female, and in their final years in the profession. Yet he was able to encourage and advise one of the veterans, helping her reframe her view of her students. Throughout the course of the semester, Anthony's stated objective for learning discourse analysis was to understand, structure, and facilitate more productive conversations with a struggling student teacher he was mentoring. Yet Anthony also used this discursive inquiry as an occasion to trouble the water in his classroom and in the study group workshops.

Across multiple contexts, Anthony negotiated solidarity with his students, with his protégé, and with his colleagues. For instance, Anthony's language practices ranged from blending instructional and regulative discourse while trying to convince his students to read a novel, to the strategic deployment of specific features of African American English (AAE) and ideational metaphor in order to encourage a struggling African American student teacher to accept his critique of her teaching, to contestation through the construction of a logical argument when he disagreed with the ways that his

colleagues and a guest consultant were positioning certain kinds of students. Outside of the study group, Anthony identified as both an insider and outsider, as someone who protested against the system, yet encouraged his students and his student teacher to become proficient navigators of it.

In his classroom, Anthony structured interaction based upon shared social group identity with his students. During our initial interview, he talked about the importance of reciprocity in his teaching practice.

Anthony: “Sometimes, I learn from my students. They give me a new perspective, and I think, ‘You know what? I never would have thought of it that way.’ I think it's good if both the teacher and the student understand where the other is coming from.”

Anthony did this kind of solidarity building facework with all of the students in his classes, not just those who were African American. Another social subjectivity that many of Anthony’s students shared may have been that of “troublemaker”, because counselors and administrators often steered students whom others found challenging to manage into his sections. Of all the settings I observed Anthony in, he seemed most comfortable in the classroom, interacting with students. He made efforts to negotiate shared positions when it came to both literature and classroom management with his students through the skilled use of instructional and regulative discourse, as many effective teachers do (Bernstein, 1990, 1996).⁴⁵ Without missing a beat, Anthony would correct student misbehavior in a nonsensational manner, and then continue with the topic under study as if nothing had happened at all.

⁴⁵ This shift from subject-matter instruction to classroom management is signaled by specific discursive features that are delineated in the first analysis section.

Perhaps because of his reputation for aptly dealing with student disciplinary challenges, during the semester of the discourse study group, Anthony was given another challenge. Denise Taylor, a student teacher seeking initial certification in English and special education, had been unsuccessful in a previous internship. Anthony agreed to take her on, but by the time of our work together, was extremely conflicted about what to do with her. Her struggles in the classroom were salient, and outside of the classroom, Anthony took exception with her traditional-conservative sociopolitical stances. When I served as the mediator in one mentoring conversation between Denise and Anthony, he was at first hypercareful with his words, selecting features of African American English (AAE) to build solidarity and save Denise's face. As the talk continued, Anthony's tone became more urgent. Just as it was important to Anthony that his marginalized English students arrive at a group consensus about the utility of academic success, it was vital to Anthony that Denise understood his positions about the philosophical and ideological underpinnings of teaching. His attempts to find common ground with Denise were less successful than with his students, but highlighted important ideologies that Anthony held about teaching and learning.

Anthony's interactions with his peers in the discourse study group were much more reserved than in any other setting. He rarely spoke, yet indicated his engagement with the group through a range of facial expressions, which I interpreted as boredom, offense, engagement, or amusement. When Anthony did speak within the context of the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group, it was often to interject a critical perspective. Often, teachers and teacher educators of color feel left out of discussions about teaching, especially the teaching of African American, Latino, and Native

American students. Educational lore derived from these teachers' lived experiences is sometimes discounted in favor of a research tradition that has historically contributed to the victimization and mischaracterization of African-Americans and other marginalized groups.⁴⁶ Analysis of the actions, discourses, and literate practices of teachers like Anthony have the potential to further the work of critical theory, discourse analysis, and critical race theory by attending to specific discursive practices that are within their contexts affirming, emancipating, and potentially transformative.

Review of Relevant Literature

The literature on African American male teachers is surprisingly limited, especially considering the vast amount of educational research conducted recently about African American students, particularly males. Yet the limited research there is reflects the diverse nature of African American male teachers' professional lives. Studies of Black educators include personal narratives (Delpit, 1995; Foster, 1997; Henry, 1995; James, 2002); policy research studies foregrounding the numerical decline of Black teachers in the United States post-*Brown v. Board of Education* (J. W. Brown & Butty, 1999; Irvine, 1988, 1989; J. F. L. Jackson & Moore, 2006; King, 1993; Lewis, 2006), and ethnographic accounts about the teaching practices of culturally relevant Black teachers (Irvine, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1994). One recent study that centered on Black male teachers at four integrated, majority-White high schools similar to Pinnacle identified patterns of experience that included fighting discrepant stereotypes as well as cultural switching

⁴⁶ Banks (2006) situates the origins of multicultural research as counternarratives that challenged prevailing notions about historically marginalized groups. He goes on to question the "value neutral" claims of the mainstream educational research community today.

(Mabokela & Madsen, 2007). Marvin Lynn's work examines critical pedagogy, critical race pedagogy, and Afrocentrism in the teaching practices of African American male educators, positioning these culturally relevant practices as critiques of White hegemony (Lynn, 2004; Lynn, Johnson, & Hassan, 1999). A growing number of young African-American male faculty position themselves as change agents who intentionally work as high school teachers in addition to their university roles as teacher educators, scholars, and activists (Morrell, 2002; Stovall, 2006).

These rich accounts and studies about the professional trajectories, vision, and impact of Black men who teach provide counternarratives to prevailing notions in the culture about Black masculinity. Within and outside of education, there is a profoundly negative metadiscourse about African American males that has existed since the founding of the nation (hooks, 1992). The Schott Report is the latest in an interminable series of statistics that positions young Black men as being perennially at-risk (Schott Report, 2008), noting that only half of those who turned 18 during the 2005-2006 school year graduated with their cohort. In public spaces, Black males of all ages are often perceived as criminals, predators, and even parasitic (Staples, 1989). In the media and popular culture, Black boys and men are both hypervisible (M. E. Dyson, 2006) and invisible (Moore, 2000). Oppressive characterizations that surround Black men's performed identities include "super stud, inherently gifted athletes, intellectually inferior, aggressive, lazy, disinterested in education, more interested in immediate gratification, irresponsible, socially deviant, sexual predator, 'cool', and difficult to control" (Cornileus, 2008). Explanations for collective academic underachievement range from structural-cultural explanations (Noguera, 2008) to oppositional identity (Ogbu, 1987).

Thus, individual Black men who are successful in academic pursuits may face an existential dilemma, as well as an ideological one, since the life experiences of all contemporary African Americans have been shaped by these representations (hooks, 1992).⁴⁷

Anthony Bell's life experiences and career trajectory differ from many of the African-American teachers in studies familiar to educational researchers. Anthony is a graduate of Pinnacle High, and attended the school during a time when it was less integrated than it was during the semester of the study. He enjoyed his integrated undergraduate university experience, and spoke fondly of the influence that one White professor in particular had on his life. Although Anthony has had some teaching experience in a nearby large urban metropolis, he has been an English teacher at Pinnacle for the majority of his teaching career. Anthony's earliest lived memories are of the post-Civil Rights Era Reagan administration and the early 1980s. Compared to the Black teachers in most of the research literature, most of whom grew up in segregated African-American neighborhoods, attended historically or predominantly Black colleges, or have lived memories prior to the 1970s, Anthony's discourse does not indicate that he feels that he is bearing the burden of an entire race on his shoulders, or that he must speak for all African American men. Nevertheless, many of Anthony's lived and intellectual ideologies are derived from his identity and social subjectivities – in his case, not only as

⁴⁷ The negative ideological metadiscourse about Black men and Black masculinity has always been countered by an alternative discourse within the African-American community. As hooks (1992) notes, "The portrait of Black masculinity that emerges... perpetually constructs Black men as 'failures' whose insanity is informed by their inability to fulfill their phallogentric masculine destiny in a racist context... there has never been a time in the history of the United States when Black folks, particularly Black men, have not been enraged by the dominant culture's stereotypical, fantastical representations of Black masculinity." Important counternarratives and expressions of self-definition from Black men themselves can be found in every generation, from Olaudah Equiano in the late eighteenth century to President Barack Obama's autobiography, *Dreams From My Father* (1995).

an African-American man, but as a critical educator who values his students' funds of knowledge (Moll, et al., 1992) and is interested in working towards social justice in his classroom, his school, and in the larger world.

The lived and intellectual ideologies that Anthony's discourse analyses index are **critical pedagogy** (Freire, 1970; Kincheloe, 2004; Macedo, 1994) and **critical race theory** (Dixson & Rousseau, 2005; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). First, Anthony's approach to his multicultural classroom was informed by critical pedagogy. Most cogently articulated in the work of Brazilian educator Paulo Freire and his followers, critical pedagogy is characterized by:

- 1) a belief that all education is inherently political and has the dual role of both emancipation of the student and advancing knowledge;
- 2) a belief that all positions are subject to scrutiny and critique, even critical pedagogy itself;
- 3) a commitment to social justice, equality, anticolonialism, and the alleviation of human suffering;
- 4) a belief that schooling must do no harm to students; and
- 5) effective teachers must become scholars and researchers of their own practice (Kincheloe, 2004).

In the conversation that Anthony has with his students that is analyzed below, and in his contributions to group discussion during the discourse study group workshops, Anthony's talk often reflects one or more of these positions. Yet at certain times, Anthony's discourses move from critical pedagogy into critical race theory. Critical race theory (CRT) was first developed by legal scholars in the 1980s to challenge dominant

societal metadiscourses/Discourses about race through the stories of those who have been historically racialized and continue to have the real conditions of their existence influenced by their embodied racial experience (Bell, Delgado, & Stefancic, 2005).

The six unifying themes of CRT are that 1) racism is endemic and normal in American history, society, and life; 2) claims of neutrality, objectivity, colorblindness, and meritocracy should be regarded with skepticism; 3) race has contributed to all contemporary manifestations of group advantage and disadvantage; 4) the experiential knowledge of people of color should be privileged in analysis of law and society; 5) the theory is interdisciplinary; and 6) critical race theorists work toward the goal of ending racial oppression as a part of the broader goal of ending all oppression (Lynn & Parker, 2006). From this work in legal studies, educational researchers Gloria Ladson-Billings and William F. Tate generated three central metapropositions for CRT in education:

1) race continues to be a significant factor in determining inequity in the United States;

2) U.S. society continues to be based on property rights; and

3) the intersection of race and property creates an analytic tool through which we can understand social and school inequity (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995).

When Anthony spoke with me during informal, off-the-record conversations, and when he analyzed his own teacher discourse, he indexed some of these themes and propositions. Yet even while retaining his own ideologies that valued critical and critical race perspectives, Anthony negotiated solidarity with his students, his student teacher, and his colleagues. The discourse, rhetoric, and language register choices that he used

form a unique portfolio of professional literacy that is derived from his personal values, lived and intellectual ideologies, and embodied experiences.

Data Selection and Ideological Dilemma Analysis

Table 4.1 Research Subquestions, Data Selection, and Ideological Dilemmas

<i>Research Questions</i>	<i>Data Selection</i>	<i>Dilemma</i>
<i>How are Anthony's ideological dilemmas enacted in his teaching?</i>	Lesson Segment, final student reading selection (9:45 – 14:05; 15:30 – 17:14)	How do you open the curriculum up to student choice, yet promote issues that you know are relevant to your students' lives?
<i>How are Anthony's ideological dilemmas enacted in a mentoring conversation he has with a student teacher?</i>	Meeting with student teacher Denise & researcher (19:44 – 24:40)	How do you critique a struggling student teacher who is one of the few other African American adults in the building?
<i>How are these dilemmas enacted in his engagement with the classroom discourse study group?</i>	Classroom Discourse Study Group Workshop #1, Workshop #3 (1:22:56 – 1:25:54), and Workshop #5	How do you contribute your perspective within a professional learning community when other members hold different perspectives?

Anthony himself selected the discourse segments analyzed in this chapter as being of significance. First, Anthony flagged the third discourse study group workshop as being extremely problematic for him, and considered leaving the group. In order to contextualize his interaction during that workshop, and to triangulate my analysis, I also selected segments from the first and final workshops. A week later, Anthony asked me to join him as he met with his struggling student teacher to discuss a lesson that had gone wrong. Later in the semester, Anthony invited me to videotape a “reading choice” lesson that he was excited about teaching, where students were to choose their last novel of the year. I have chosen to present Anthony’s discourse where he is most at home -- in the

classroom -- first. From there, I will work backward through time, ending with the first discourse event in the series.

Findings

Anthony as Teacher: “Is Obama Black? Is He White?”

On a hot, humid day in early May, late in the morning, teachers and students alike languidly walked the halls at Pinnacle High School one hour before lunchtime. Yet the atmosphere at the beginning of Mr. Bell’s third hour class was informal and welcoming. The class was diverse, approximately one-third White, one-third Black and Black/biracial, and one-third Asian and Middle Eastern. Young men outnumbered young women, comprising about three-quarters of the class. Anthony leaned against the windows at the far end of the room with a notebook in hand, greeting students one by one as they entered. Denise, the student teacher, meandered into the classroom one minute before the warning bell rang. Her attempts to engage the students were a bit less successful than Anthony’s casual stance. They largely ignored her in favor of Anthony until she announced at the beginning of the hour that it was her last day “being in front of this class.” She thanked the students, and began to pass out candy.

When the final bell sounded, Anthony shut the classroom door and passed out the official Pinnacle English Department booklist. Typically, students never see this list; most Pinnacle English teachers choose from among the grade-level possibilities and design literature units for whole-class instruction. Once every student had a booklist and Denise’s candy in hand, Anthony began.

Anthony: All right, here's what I'm doing for the last book of the year. I'm actually going to let you guys choose what you want to read. We're going to decide that as a class, all right? So what I'm doing right now, rather than sit and try to explain the books, everybody has a book list. It's coming to you, and we're going to go through and figure out what we want to read as a class.

Anthony then handed his laptop to one of the female students who was sitting next to his desk, and told the others that their classmate would look up titles that they were interested in on the Internet. For the next ten minutes, students called out titles they might be interested in reading, and Anthony provided his opinion about each title.

The following is the basic, text-only transcript that Anthony and I used when we looked at the video of this lesson segment together. It is from the beginning of the class period described above.

Excerpt 4.1 Transcript, Anthony Bell's 3rd Hour Class, Curriculum Initiation, Student Reading Choice (9:45 – 14:05)

Anthony: So take a minute, scan the list. Maybe there's something on the list. Maybe there's something on there that really gets your attention.

(Anthony passes out book lists. He interacts with students, and they interact with one another.)

Anthony: Who doesn't have a book list? *(crosses to the other side of the classroom)* I've still got some people who don't have a book list, right?

Maria (S1): What semester is this?

Danielle (S2): Can we get the laptops and like, look at the books?

Anthony: We've got one from... we've got a list from first semester, and one from second semester. Anything we haven't read is fair game.

Joe (S3): Hey Mr. Bell, what books did we already read?

Kristal (S4): We read *Black Boy*, *Dangerous Minds*...

Maria (S1): I don't know what these are about.

Anthony: I'm going to tell you what they're about.

(Students are comfortable and relaxed in the classroom, snacking, and reading over their list. Denise, the student teacher, is passing out lollipops. Several read specific titles aloud. All discernible chatter is about the task at hand. Anthony hands his district-issued laptop to Danielle, a girl who is sitting at the front.)

Anthony: All right, you ready to go through the list?

Joe (S3): You gonna tell us about it?

Anthony: *(passing out more lists)* All right, first semester... mmm. Let's see. Some of these books I haven't read, so I can't talk about them. But we have Danielle over here who's volunteered to look them up on the Internet, and tell us about the books. All right? Anything catch your eye, first of all?

Pedro (S5): Yeah, caught my eye.

Anthony: *(points to the student)* What would you like to read?

(Several students talk at once. Anthony focuses on the boy, who is talking quietly.)

Anthony: What? *Letters*? What semester list is that on? First or second?

Pedro (S5): First.

Anthony: All right. Danielle, could you look up *Letters* on the Internet?

Danielle (S2): Uh... look up what?

Anthony: *Letters*.

Danielle (S2): Oh.

Randy (S6): Man, look for a book that's not too...

(Several students talk in rapid succession. Anthony is listening to their questions.)

Maria (S1): Which *Letters*?

Anthony: Randy says to pick a book that's not too hard.

Michael (S7): How about *12 Angry Men*?

Maria (S1): No!

Several girls at once (SSSS): We already read that!

Anthony: All right.

Danielle (S2): I think most people like this one... *(reading from Wikipedia, the first entry from a Google search)* "*Catcher in the Rye*... first published in 1951..."

Unidentified boy in the back of the room (off camera): Gay!

Danielle (S2): "...the novel has been a frequently challenged book in its home country for its liberal use of profanity and portrayal of sexuality and teenage angst."

(Several students talk in rapid succession. Anthony comes to sit down at the front of the classroom.)

Anthony: All right, how many of you have heard of *Catcher in the Rye* before? A lot of people want to read that. I hope you're not like elementary kids, because it has a whole lot of cursing in it. Basically, this guy is trying to explore... ____, you're talking!... basically this guy is trying to explore what it's like growing up and the whole purpose of education. He's kind of coming into his manhood. He's away at school. He's trying to discover himself... um... those kinds of issues. We could read it, but I'm not going to lie to you. It's not necessarily one of my favorites.

Terrance (S9): What about *Winter Dance*?

Anthony: Let's keep going down the list. *(Looks over at Danielle)* Could you look that up? What's *Winter Dance* about?

Jamal (S10): How 'bout *When the Legend Dies*?

Terrance (S9): *Winter Dance!*

Anthony: All in time, all in time.

Interactional ethnography is concerned with particular questions about the context of a literacy event. The interactional ethnographic perspective provides a heuristic for analyzing context by examining *who can say or do what to and with whom, when and where, under what conditions, in relation to what actions or artifacts, for what purposes, and with what outcomes* (Castanheira, et al., 2001; Green & Dixon, 1994; Rex, 2006b). *Who can say or do what to and with whom* is significant in the discourse segment above, for Anthony's classroom teaching reveals a tapestry of talk that is unlike his peers in the discourse study group. In most of the English classes at Pinnacle that I observed, the teacher was the center of and the most frequent participant in talk. Most discourse patterns seemed to closely follow the traditional I-R-E/F (Initiation-Response-Evaluation/Feedback) format, as detailed in the work of Cazden and others (Cazden, 2001). Many of the Pinnacle teachers tended to ask follow-up questions after providing feedback, extending the conversation with the student. Thus a typical discourse segment might follow the following pattern of participants: **T – S1 – T – S1 – T**, where T = the

teacher and S = the first student in the segment. Sometimes, during the final evaluation of the first student's contribution to the class, the teacher would then call on a second student, resulting in the following pattern of participation: T – S1 – T – S1 – T – S2 – T – S2 – T – S3 – T, with S2 and S3 = the second and third students to participate in the segment, respectively. Participation in classroom discourse was restricted to the teacher and one student at a time, with the other students ostensibly listening in.

Anthony's talk here seemed to be following a different pattern. Here is the event map representing the patterns of participation in the segment above: T – T – S1 – S2 – T – S3 – S4 – S1 – T – T – S3 – T – S5 – T – T – S5 – T – S2 – T – S2 – S6 – S1 – T – S7 – S1 – SSSS – T – S2 – S8 – S2 – T – S9 – T – S10 – S9 – T. The group of SSSS represents students talking in unison. Although Anthony is still the most frequent participant, the traditional I-R-E/F structure is disrupted in several ways. Towards the beginning of the segment, Anthony *initiates* talk about the book lists. Two students, Maria and Danielle, immediately *respond*. Although Anthony provides feedback for Maria immediately, it is not until several minutes later that Anthony provides feedback to Danielle. His teacher *feedback* is in nonverbal action, not discourse -- Anthony responds by handing his student the laptop computer. Later in the segment, the students are evaluating and responding to other students' feedback about the potential books to study.

What Anthony's students are learning is how to participate in making decisions about curriculum. Due to Anthony's discourse structure and lesson plan, students were freed to make choices about their own learning. When he analyzed this segment, Anthony told me that the students did not ultimately choose the novel he would have preferred them to read. However, the value of the lesson is that he and his students

become interactional partners *with whom* academic literacy is being jointly constructed. *When* this lesson occurred during the school year is also key. It is clear that Anthony and his students have already read several novels as a whole class, and these books are referred to throughout the segment. Without the contextual knowledge about what kinds of novels are typically read in tenth grade English, the conversation would have been very different. Therefore, the lesson was socially, culturally, and developmentally appropriate for the time of the school year. Finally, what Anthony and his students chose *not* to take up is also significant. The homophobic remark that one student muttered in response to Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye* was either unheard or uncontested during the conversation.

How Anthony and his students took up opportunities to engage in discourse about the final book to read, *under what conditions*, *for what purposes*, and *with what outcomes* can be examined through the lens of systemic functional linguistics. As stated in Chapter 2, systemic functional linguist Frances Christie has spent more than two decades investigating discourse in English classrooms. Her findings lead to questions about the very philosophical and ideological underpinnings of the field (Christie, 1999, 2002; Christie, et al., 1991; Christie & Macken-Horarik, 2007). Christie contends that subject English is *the* most highly contested site in the school curriculum, precisely because it is “intimately bound up with discussion of matters to do with the national psyche and identity, as well as with notions of the economic and social good of English-speaking countries” (2007: 156). The subject is so very contested is because the main goal for the learner in secondary English is the acquisition of acceptable *shared ethical positions*. Christie's discourse research revealed that teachers through discourse are specifically

concerned with developing certain social, cultural, and political attitudes in students *alongside* the teaching of reading and writing. Teachers model these shared ethical positions to their students by talking about the moral and ethical significance of particular works of literature (*instructional discourse*), and talking in ways that direct the students towards functioning as an appropriate pedagogic subject within the English classroom (*regulative discourse*). Anthony's objective for this lesson is for the students to form consensus about the literature and themes to be studied before proceeding deeply into a text of their choice.

Less than two minutes after the segment above, talk turned to consideration of James McBride's memoir, *The Color of Water: A Black Man's Tribute to His White Mother*. In the excerpt below, Anthony talked at length about the ethical and moral significance of this novel. Because in this section, gestures, movement, and silences are analytically significant, I have provided an elaborated transcript. Talk that is regulative is shaded in gray, talk that is instructional is unshaded, and talk that seems to serve both functions is both shaded and underlined.

Excerpt 4.2 Transcript and Instructional Discourse Analysis, Anthony Bell's 3rd Hour Class, Student Reading Choice (15:30 – 17:14)

Line #	Speaker	Talk	Gestures and Visual Cues
1	<i>Anthony</i>	<u>(Can) I tell you about some books that I like.</u>	
2		Very briefly. (Uh.)	Leans forward in chair.
3		<u>How many of you</u>	Lifts book list over head.
4		A teacher next door, Ms. Parker, she	Puts arms down; turns towards desk.
5		A couple of years ago, I heard these kids talking about this book called <i>The Color of Water</i> .	
6		The title (.2) immediately got my attention.	Leans back in

			chair; crosses legs. Off camera.
7	<i>Maria</i>	(I) read it.	
8	Anthony	<u>Yeah, I actually read it.</u>	
9	<i>Maria</i>	I (read) what you're talking about. Last year.	
10	Anthony	And the thing (.2) about the book is (.5)	Looks up at the ceiling
11		<u>I want to steer away from that a little bit, cause you guys >talk about<</u>	
12		<u>"We always read books about race. We're always reading books about race. I'm tired of this."</u>	Imitates students' voices in a comic manner.
13	<i>Several students</i>	[(unint. chatter)	
14	Anthony	[>Heard a student tell me that<	
15	<i>Several students</i>	[(unint. chatter)	
16	Anthony	[>Heard a student tell me that yesterday<	
17	<i>Randy</i>	[[I don't want to read it.	
18	Anthony	[[This book (.2) <i>definitely</i> deals with some racial issues.	
19	<i>Randy</i>	I don't want to read it.	
20	Anthony	<u>But IT'S KIND OF (.2) a different spin.</u>	Students stop talking and are quiet.
21		Because it talks about (.3) an interracial family.	Makes circling gesture with hands.
22	<i>Randy</i>	(unint. chatter)	
23	Anthony	Trying to get along. <u>And I know we definitely >>have some biracial kids here, and<<</u>	
24		<u><the struggles that they go through trying to fit into society.></u>	
25		<u><<and what it means for a Black man to date a White Jewish woman.>></u>	
26		<u><<<and how she goes about raising her kids>>></u>	
27		<u>It's <<amazing>> It really helped me see things, cause I taught African American lit a number of years ago (1.5)</u>	
28		<u><What interracial students go through.> (.3) <u>What their struggle is.</u></u>	
29		<u>Is Obama Black? Is he White?</u>	
30		<u>What is he? (Huh?)</u>	
31		Desiree, put that up before I lose my mind.	Turns to the left and looks in the direction of the student. Class remains silent.
32		<u>Can he really understand what it's like to be an African American?</u>	Turns back to the entire class.
33		<u>Especially when he was brought up in a different country?</u>	
34		<u>If you're rich African American,</u>	Raises hands.
35		<u>Can you understand what it's like to be middle class, or what it's like to be poor?</u>	Lowers hands.

As stated in Chapter 2, pedagogic discourse consists of two inextricably intertwined discourses: instructional discourse, which transmits skills and relationships; and regulative discourse, which appropriates discourses from beyond the school to create order, relations, and identity (Christie, 1999). Regulative discourse in classrooms is the foundation for instructional discourse, as the regulative *projects* the instructional. In this segment, Anthony's regulative discourse is realized in both direct and indirect lexis. Direct regulative discourse is indicated by the *mood* of clauses, whether declarative, interrogative, or imperative. For instance, his command to a wayward student is regulative: "Put that up before I lose my mind" (line 31). Yet so is the question that opens up this segment: "Can I tell you about some books that I like? Very briefly" (lines 1-2). Even though Anthony disrupted traditional I-R-E classroom discourse patterns earlier in this lesson, at this point, he regulates classroom talk through the tactical use of questions and commands, personalization of content through frequent use of the pronoun "I", and through the ventriloquation of student voices (line 12).

Anthony's instructional discourse in this segment and throughout the main part of lesson was focused on the significance of specific texts. The themes of Anthony's instructional talk are those that one would expect in a conversation about *The Color of Water*. Yet after the mention of the book's "interracial family" in line 21, he began to blend instructional and regulative discourses. He immediately drew parallels between the novel and particular students in the class -- "I know we definitely have some biracial kids here". From that point, he shifted back and forth between registers, conflating the interracial family in *The Color of Water* with the students of mixed heritage in his class.

Whether the “struggles” he refers to in lines 24 and 28 are those of the book characters or his students is ambiguous.

Then he turned to a specific case, that of one of the most visible biracial persons in the nation at the time of the study, then-Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama. Anthony asked his students, “Is Obama Black? Is he White?” (line 29), then continued with, “Can he really understand what it’s like to be an African American” (line 32). The question was rhetorical; the class knew it and remained silent. Anthony’s referencing of the presidential candidate was both instructional and regulative. It was related to the topic under discussion -- implicit in the reference is the fact that both Obama and James McBride, the author of *The Color of Water*, have shared identity as biracial people with White mothers and Black fathers. However, I also coded the reference as regulative because through a series of rhetorical questions, Anthony was demanding interactive engagement from his students. His questions about McBride and Obama seem to index the earlier reference to “biracial kids” within the class. Anthony’s discourse positioned them alongside an award-winning author and a famous orator and politician, yet also challenged this subset of students and the entire class by questioning their understandings of race, nationality, and class (lines 32-34).

During this segment, Anthony was negotiating solidarity with his students, for at least three potential conflicts were diffused. First, several students seemed to be agitated about the prospect of reading another book about race (lines 12-15). This anxiety concerning talking about racial and ethnic differences is consistent with the literature about diverse high schools (Pollock, 2004; Sassi & Thomas, 2008). One young man in Anthony’s class insisted that he did not want to read *The Color of Water*, and repeated

this assertion (lines 17, 19). Later in the segment, a student, Desiree, was distracted by something at her desk (line 31). In these potential conflicts, there is some evidence that perhaps not all the students have negotiated solidarity with Anthony during this conversation. The statement of disagreement and off task behavior can be interpreted as explicit and implicit lack of alignment (Candela, 1999). A shared ethical position about what book they ought to read and why had not been achieved (Christie, 1999), and students were willing to let Anthony know it. Thus, he faced an ideological dilemma – wanting to value the interests and perspectives of his students, while also aiming to explain the value of texts that he thinks are important for them to read.

Anthony deployed specific discursive resources in response to each potential conflict. First, he stopped the chatter about the book by ventriloquizing students' previous opinions on "books about race": "We always read books about race. We're always reading books about race. I'm tired of this." (line 12); he repeated this statement (line 16), and raised his voice slightly to get students' attention (line 20). Anthony did not directly address the young man who stated, "I don't want to read it," but instead began a description of the novel's plot and significance. Yet later in the segment, when the entire class was quietly listening to him except for one student, he addressed her by name, and commanded her to stop her behavior (line 31). Despite these potential tensions, classroom instruction proceeded without interruption. There could have been very different outcomes to Anthony's mimicking of student voices, raising his voice in the classroom, or correcting a student in front of her peers. Students did not respond negatively to Anthony's talk and interaction, suggesting that a classroom environment existed wherein students did not perceive his responses to their actions and discourse as

threatening. It seems apparent that Anthony is managing interaction in the classroom through regulative discourse, while his instructional talk seeks to be relevant and connected to students' lived experiences.

Other features of Anthony's actions and discourse appear in later transcripts. He talked with his hands, his face, and at times his entire body, frequently adding emphasis to his words by gesturing. In order to add emphasis to a particular word, phrase, or clause, he paused before speaking at length, then talked more slowly. The more deliberately he spoke, the more gravitas he wished to convey. After he and I watched the video of this classroom period together, he said: "I was trying to get the kids to buy into certain books... I was telling them 'You might want to read this, or you might want to read that, but eventually you might want to read *all* the books.' That's what I *really* wanted them to do." He noted that the class voted to read *A Farewell to Arms* in the end, instead of his preferred choice, *The Things They Carried*. After talking over the discourse structure of his lesson with me, Anthony said that he believed that his students became more interested in reading, which was his goal for encouraging them to explore the themes of multiple texts.

Within the classroom, Anthony used the same register of standard middle-class English (SMCE) that he used within the discourse study group. Yet his talk with his student teacher Denise Taylor revealed a more culturally specific manner of speech, along with the ideologies informing his pedagogy.

Anthony as Mentor: “You’ve Got to Respond to That Question in 2.2 Seconds!”

Two weeks before the May discussion about end-of-term reading possibilities, the atmosphere and tone in Mr. Bell’s third hour class had been quite different. Denise Taylor, Anthony’s student teacher, was leading instruction without much student cooperation at all. A former school bus driver who had returned to a local university to obtain teacher certification, Denise would be certified in secondary English and special education at the end of the semester if she could only succeed with Anthony’s classes. This was her second attempt at student teaching. As noted in the introduction, Anthony was very concerned about Denise’s effectiveness. Until this classroom observation, these concerns were only anecdotal for me. On this day, they were evident.

Upon Anthony’s request, I observed Denise guiding students through brainstorming and writing storyboards based upon their reading of Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart*. However, very few students were paying attention to Denise or the activity. One student was tossing an orange; another was using a laptop to surf the web. Many students were talking and had their backs to the front of the room. Denise frequently shouted directives for students to pay attention, but she was ignored. Anthony, working at his desk distractedly, called out one female student’s name and told her to get out. When she complied, he picked up her belongings from the desk and followed the student out of the classroom.

Upon Anthony’s return to the classroom, I got up to speak with him. He pulled me into the hallway and immediately began to express his frustration with Denise’s teaching methods. A few weeks before our conversation with Denise, Anthony had shared his desire to eventually become a teacher educator with me. He told me that he

wanted to be “that ‘no bullshit’ professor”, providing preservice teachers with hard-earned knowledge from his practice. Thus, because he valued mentoring new teachers, Denise’s struggles in his classroom caused considerable conflict for Anthony. He said that while he did not think she was serving students well, her background in special education was a strength she possessed. Indeed, Anthony frequently expressed his belief in her potential – he thought she would become an effective educator if she would take the time to think more deeply about planning.

At the time of this particular conversation, Anthony’s primary conflict with Denise was that she frequently came to class unprepared and expected him to allow her to teach anyway. Anthony characterized her lesson planning strategy as “one sheet at a time,” then quietly began to confide in me, his obvious exasperation: “I gave her this book two months ago. ‘What is the objective?’ I keep asking her. This is her *second time* student teaching. My kids can be rowdy, and I know I’m not the perfect teacher, but... what do you think I should do? Maybe you, me, and her should sit down together.” I suggested to Anthony that if he wished for me to talk with Denise about her classroom language and management, the three of us could watch the video of her teaching, and have an informal chat about it.

When I arrived at Anthony’s classroom on the specified date, he and Denise were talking intently about the day’s instruction. I waited several minutes before asking if they wished to reschedule. Anthony told me that he wanted to see the video of Denise’s teaching right away, but Denise seemed hesitant. Nevertheless, during the prep period, the three of us viewed twenty minutes of the video together on my laptop. After I stopped the playback, both Anthony and Denise were silent. I asked Denise how she

thought her teaching went. She replied that it went better than she thought. She then shifted her talk immediately to the misbehaviors of specific students. I tried to redirect the conversation by getting her to revisit the components of her lesson plan. Rather than focusing on clear directions, I suggested that the lesson could be improved by rearranging it. Then I asked Anthony for his observations.

His response and our subsequent conversation follows. The conversation shifts between Anthony's evaluation of his student teacher's pedagogy and Anthony's articulation of his own practices and beliefs. It provides a window into what he values about teaching and learning, and how he talked about those values. In order to surface those values, and highlight Anthony's specific critiques of Denise's classroom interaction, I present a targeted Appraisal analysis within the transcript below. Recall from Chapter 2 that within systemic functional linguistics, Appraisal analyses evaluate the kind of emotions that are negotiated within a spoken or written text. This analysis concentrates on two features of Appraisal: Graduation and Attitude (Judgment and Appreciation).

Excerpt 4.3 Transcript and Targeted Appraisal Analysis (Attitude & Graduation), Anthony Bell's Mentoring of ST Denise Taylor, 5/9/2008 (19:44 – 24:40)

Line #	Speaker	Talk	Gestures and Visual Cues	Analyst's Notes
1	<i>Ebony</i>	But I want to have <<um>>	Gestures hand toward Anthony.	
2		[Anthony talk.		
3	<i>Anthony</i>	[As far as getting		
4		As far as what the video showed me, uh (.4)		
5		I thought it was too much	Clasps "praying hands" at face, looks up at ceiling.	force → amplification

6		Too much foolishness in the classroom, number one.		force → amplification
7	<i>Denise</i>	Yeah.		<i>D: agreement</i>
8	Anthony	It's too much shuffling, it's not enough >attention focused on you<		force → amplification
9	<i>Denise</i>	[Right.		<i>D: agreement</i>
10	Anthony	[It's too much interaction between students.		force → amplification
11		It's too much (.1) ah (.4) I felt like the lack of RESPECT wasn't there		force → amplification
12	<i>Denise</i>	[That's true		<i>D: agreement</i>
13	Anthony	[Like when you		
14		Like when you come in front of the classroom, there's supposed to be a certain (.2) <PRESENCE> that you bring and I didn't see that?		Judgment; #1, obligation
15		And then it's like I felt like you were letting a lot of (.2)		Judgment; #2, observation
16				
17	<i>Denise</i>	[()]		
18	Anthony	[little stuff (go), yeah, that was distracting.		
19		But I also felt like the lesson could have been (.1) a little clearer for the kids, you know.		Judgment; #3, obligation
20		It's like you got something in mind that you want to teach them, but they're not understanding what it is.	Points two fingers towards his head.	Judgment; #4, observation
21	<i>Denise</i>	Right.		<i>D: agreement</i>
22	<i>Ebony</i>	But Anthony, I have a question (.1) I want you two to be talking most (.1) but Anthony, was it the clarity per se? Because she was speaking (.1) if I were to transcribe this, I'm transcribing in my head, she had the sentences. What I thought was that it was just too much at once. She was giving all of the instructions, all at once, and didn't have the attention. Almost like, with this age group, I've found that you almost have to walk them through. Especially if it's regular students.	Researcher commentary to participants.	
23	<i>Denise</i>	[()]		
24	Anthony	[It should have been on paper.		Judgment; #5; obligation
25	<i>Ebony</i>	<<Oh>> okay.		
26	Anthony	It was too oral.		Judgment; #6; observation
27	<i>Ebony</i>	I see.	Nods.	
28	Anthony	You know, >it's one thing< it's it's it's		Appreciation; Metaphor #1; "Sandwich"
29		It's like putting together a sandwich. You know?		

30		It's like if you don't say >first you put the lettuce here, the bread here, then you put the lettuce and the tomato on top<	Shadows making a sandwich with his hands.	
31		And you almost need a <i>diagram</i> with these kids.		
32	<i>Denise</i>	Okay.		
33	Anthony	[Especially some of those that		
34	<i>Denise</i>	[So now you're talking to me about special ed.		
35		Everything I do with special ed has to be >step by step by step<		
36		You take the bread out of the paper, out of the package, you lay it on, get a paper towel		Appreciation; Denise ventriloquizes the sandwich metaphor.
37		[Put a paper towel down		
38	Anthony	Not necessarily.	Nods.	<i>A:</i> <i>disagreement</i>
39	<i>Denise</i>	then you have to put the bread on it, go over to the cabinet, walk two steps over		
40	Anthony	Yeah, not necessarily then		
41		[But		
42	<i>Denise</i>	[Step by step by step		
43	Anthony	It was just the clarity, you know, because I was getting confused		
44		Like first you talked about the, uh (.1)		
45		I knew your total plan was to have them do a story or a storyboard	Makes circling motions with hands.	
46		you know, but I think like you said before, you're making a lot of assumptions (.2)		Judgment; #7; observation
47		you know, and then, when you put that with the behavior		
48		>>you see what I'm saying<<, that that's too much		force → amplification
49		It's just that you got the <i>behavior</i>		Judgment; #8; observation
50		then you got to account for the lack of <i>clarity</i>		
51		then you've got students like Cindy who'll say,		
52		who'll say, "Well, what's the point of this," or she asked me how is writing that story going to get them into college [So it's almost like you got to explain.		Judgment; #9, obligation
53	<i>Denise</i>	[I thought that was Natasha.		<i>D:</i> <i>disagreement</i>
54	Anthony	Well, one of them. One of them. Cindy		

55		asked me. So you've got all these different levels that you got to deal with. It's tough! So it's like you		Judgment; #10; obligation
56		You're combating a lot of different things.		
57	<i>Denise</i>	So when I come at you at a college level, you whine. When I come at you at an eighth grade level, you whine. I come at you at a	Imitates whiny teenager voices.	
58		[()]		
59	<i>Ebony</i>	[Well		
60	<i>Anthony</i>	[That's the nature of the		Appreciation; Metaphor #2; "Nature of the Beast"
61		That's the nature of the beast. >You see what I'm saying?<		
62		They're going to complain. If you gave them chocolate cake, they're going to complain because somebody wanted vanilla, or somebody wanted strawberry cake.	Gestures with hands.	
63		It doesn't matter. You could have a party and bring pizza		
64		"well, I wanted hamburger"		
65		It's just the way that kids are.		
66		But the thing that <i>you</i> want to do is, you know		Judgment; #11a; obligation
67		if you deliver that concise lesson with a clear objective, you know		
68		and they feel like they're benefitting		
69		Oh.	Looks up at the researcher, who has vacated her seat	
70	<i>Ebony</i>	Keep talking. Keep talking.		
71	<i>Anthony</i>	And they feel like they're benefitting from it	Denise moves into the seat that the researcher vacated, within camera range	Judgment; #11b; obligation
72		it doesn't matter, you see what I'm saying?		
73	<i>Denise</i>	Mm-hmm.		
74	<i>Anthony</i>	They're never going to like what you do. A lot of students aren't. They're not going to want to be in school in the first place.		Anthony's comments on students' affect.
75		But as long as you've got that clear lesson? You're good.		Judgment; #12; obligation
76	<i>Ebony</i>	What do you mean when you're telling her about a clear lesson? So something actually written down, or		
77	<i>Anthony</i>	There needs to be a clear, uh (.8) I		

78		I guess it kind of goes back to the objectives. You know what I'm saying?		
79	<i>Denise</i>	Yeah.		<i>D: agreement</i>
80	<i>Anthony</i>	Because it's one thing to see	Gestures with hands.	Appreciation; Example #1 from Anthony's practice
81		a lot of times students need to see the bigger picture. Like when I was		
82		when I talk to my students and I say "reality check", or "how does this apply to your life", or "how can you use this?"		
83		It's kind of like what you did this morning with the <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> lesson, and see how people are, especially when you look, see how economics affect the outcome of the jury meeting.		
84		Like when I was... If you have a better lawyer, you have a better chance of getting off.		
85	<i>Denise</i>	Right.	Frowning.	<i>D: verbal agreement;</i> facial expression shows some disquietude.
86	<i>Anthony</i>	And it's like you have to make them see how it's relevant to their <i>life</i> . And if you say "write a story", you know, it's incorporating things from the culture, and yes, we do this		Judgment; #13; obligation
87		but what if they say "how is this going to help me get into college" or something like that?		
88		You've got to be able to respond to that question in 2.2 seconds.		
89	<i>Denise</i>	Hmm.		
90	<i>Anthony</i>	You see what I'm saying? It's already got to be there, you know?		Judgment; #14; obligation
91		Or uh, like sometimes I'll say when I do a lesson, "I'm just trying to get to know you better. Because if I get to know you better, then I can understand where you're coming from, and we can bond. We can work as a team, rather than as opponents."	Gestures with hands.	Appreciation; Example #2 from Anthony's practice
92		So as long as you can fire that off in two seconds, you're good. You know?		Judgment; #15; obligation

Although Anthony's stance towards his student teacher was that of a mentor who wished to help a struggling novice save face, what he chose to say to Denise was quite candid. Looking at the features of Anthony's talk that highlight his observations of Denise's teaching practice, what he felt that she ought to do, as well as examples from his teaching practice and philosophy can provide insight into the kinds of meanings that Anthony and Denise co-constructed in this conversation. As stated in Chapter 3, Appraisal analyses can help analyze attitudinal linguistic resources that highlight the feelings and values that are being negotiated by speakers and readers (Martin & Rose, 2003: 25-28).⁴⁸ Since Anthony was engaged in critiquing a video of Denise's teaching, it is perhaps most useful to look at Attitude. An analysis of Anthony's attitudes in his critique, as well as Denise's as she responded revealed the ways in which Anthony used Appreciation and Judgment resources to talk about what he observed in Denise's teaching, as well as the changes that he wished to see.

When Anthony began his critique, the participant he addressed initially was implied (lines 3-7). As he began to give Denise feedback, Anthony tactically deployed a linguistic resource from our home and community dialect, African-American English (AAE), the *it expletive* (McAdams, 2005). Expletives are words that are present in syntax, but do not contribute to meaning. In order to save Denise's face, Anthony code-switched into AAE to both depersonalize his critique of her teaching, and personalize his role as mentor. Although most of his lexical choices other than the expletive "it" were standard, his tone and mine matched the AAE cadences of Denise's speech. This conversation was one of the few safe spaces for this kind of code-switching at Pinnacle,

⁴⁸ Please refer to Chapter 3, "Methodology", for the full list of Appraisal analysis codes.

because we were all native AAE speakers. Not only did Anthony not lose social status for speaking AAE, she and I were able to easily comprehend his meaning-making about the atmosphere of the classroom on the day that Denise taught. Additionally, because of Anthony's lexical choices, Denise did not feel the need to defend herself against a face threat.⁴⁹

Yet for all of Anthony's concern with socializing Denise into the teaching profession and establishing rapport with her through the fictive kinship of a shared linguistic and cultural background, the modality of Anthony's language is salient. Although Anthony chooses to say "it's too much foolishness" instead of "Denise, you allowed far too much off-task behavior," he nonetheless says the phrase "too much" five times in his opening statements (lines 5-11). A Graduation analysis reveals that this is evidence of high modality. Linguist Michael Halliday describes modality as "a resource that sets up a semantic space between yes and no, a cline running between positive and negative poles" (Martin & Rose, 2003). Modals implicitly introduce other possibilities into a spoken or written text. The force of his *it*-depersonalized critique is amplified by the phrase *too much*. Instead of there having been, *too little*, *not enough*, *lots of*, or *just enough*, Anthony communicated to Denise that there was *too much* of certain undesirable behaviors. Therefore, while protecting Denise at the beginning of the conversation, Anthony nonetheless conveyed his displeasure with classroom interaction during her lesson.

A close examination of Anthony's discussion with his student teacher shows that he

⁴⁹ This is consistent with the literature on politeness. According to Brown and Levinson, "There is also evidence from Black English that the Black dialect may be switched into for emphasis, or to show speaker involvement (stressing the 'we'), while standard English is used to stress detachment (stressing the 'they')" (1987).

provided feedback on what he *observed* in Denise's teaching, as well as what she was *obligated* to do. In systemic functional linguistics, language resources that are used to evaluate character are coded as Judgment. Instead of dividing my analysis into personal or moral, direct or implied, I have chosen to distinguish between Anthony's observations of what Denise is doing, and his recount of what Denise is obligated to do, in the chart below.

Table 4.2 Judgment Analysis, Anthony Bell's Mentoring of ST Denise Taylor, 5/9/2008 (19:44 – 24:40)

Judgment # (Line numbers)	Observation (What Denise is <i>doing</i>)	Obligation (What Denise <i>ought to do</i>)
1 (14-15)		When you come in front of the classroom, there's supposed to be a certain <i>presence</i> that you bring.
2 (16-18)	You were letting a lot of little stuff go.	
3 (19)		I also felt like the lesson could have been a little clearer for the kids.
4 (20)	It's like <i>you</i> got something in mind that you want to teach them, but they're not understanding what it is.	
5 (24)		It should have been on <i>paper</i> .
6 (26)	It was too <i>oral</i> .	
7 (46)	Like you said before, you're making a lot of assumptions.	
8 (49-50)	It's like you got the behavior, and then you got to account for the lack of clarity...	
9 (52)		So it's almost like you got to <i>explain</i> .
10 (55-56)		So you've got all these different levels that you got to deal with. It's tough! So it's like you, you're combating a lot of different things.
11 (66-68, 71-		But the thing that <i>you</i> want to do

72)		is, you know, if you deliver that concise lesson with a clear objective, and they feel like they're benefitting from it, it doesn't matter.
12 (75)		But as long as you've got that clear lesson? You're good.
13 (86)		And it's like you have to make them see how it's relevant to their <i>life</i> .
14 (86-87)		And if you say "write a story", you know, it's incorporating things from the culture, and yes, we do this, but what if they say "how is this going to help me get into college" or something like that?
15 (88)		You've got to be able to respond to that question in 2.2 seconds.
16 (90)		You see what I'm saying? It's already got to be there, you know?
17 (92)		So as long as you can fire that off in two seconds, you're good. You know?

The Judgment analysis reveals two phases in the conversation. Towards the beginning, Anthony shifts between talking about his observations of Denise's practice, and what she was obligated to do instead. His Judgments about her teaching are both in the areas of interaction and lesson design. As he summed up his observations, he told her, "It's like you got the behavior, and then you got to account for the lack of clarity" (lines 49-50). Denise's inattention to the management of the classroom, as well as the objective of her lesson being unclear, were critiqued by her mentor. Around the middle of the conversation, Anthony shifted from direct observations about Denise's teaching in the video to talking about what he needed to see in the future from her. He shifted from

commenting on her teaching persona (lines 14-15), to comments about her lesson planning (lines 66-78), to insisting that students needed to understand the relevance of what they were learning in class to their lives (lines 80-92). Analysis of Anthony's Judgments of Denise's teaching practices -- both what she did and what he wanted her to do in future lessons -- reveal that Anthony concentrated most on what Denise could do to improve instead of berating her with many specifics from a lesson that had gone awry.

In addition to Judging Denise's performance, Anthony uses stories from his teaching practice about how she could improve her practice. In doing so, he is Appreciating the value of certain teaching practices and philosophies through lexical metaphors. Metaphors are speakers' and writers' representations of experience that connect figurative concepts to literal meaning. In the first metaphor, Anthony described lesson planning and delivery as being "like putting together a sandwich" (line 29), helping students follow instruction the same way that one might walk them through a lunch recipe. He then used another metaphor: "You almost need a *diagram* with these kids" (line 31), to which Denise responded eagerly, "Now you're talking to me about special ed" (line 34). She picked up the metateaching metaphor that Anthony is attempting to use right away (lines 34-42), but when she became too literal, Anthony shifts his tactics from using a metaphor to ventriloquizing one student's question about relevance (lines 43-52). Although he is once again speaking SMCE, he employs another recognizable feature of AAE, this time the rhetorical device of circumlocution (Smitherman, 1977). This is another indirect linguistic resource that Anthony had available to him. Once again, Denise and I understood this politeness move. This time, however, Denise was a bit threatened, complaining about students whining (line 57).

This launched Anthony into a second metaphor that he calls “the nature of the beast.”

Anthony: That’s the nature of the beast. You see what I’m saying? They’re going to complain. If you gave them chocolate cake, they’re going to complain because somebody wanted vanilla, or somebody wanted strawberry cake. It doesn’t matter. You could have a party and bring pizza... “well, I wanted hamburger.” It’s just the way that kids are.

With this metaphor, we uncover an ideological dilemma in Anthony's mentoring of this student teacher. He stated to her that on the one hand, students will never be satisfied and always complain, so Denise had better get used to conflict and a lack of consensus. Yet on the other, an effective teacher can convince students to work as a team by being clear with them about the objective of the lesson and by telling them how the lesson relates to their lives. Secondary English teaching and learning is inherently dilemmatic because English is not only a chief site of schooling where societal ideologies are transmitted, but schooling and the English language are paradigms that society and individuals have ideologies *about* (Chapter 2, this study). As teachers wrestle with dilemmas of teaching and learning, they often find that this wrestling is interminable, an inescapable part of their professional role. The desirability of negotiating solidarity with students, and the reality of conflict, are two aspects of the profession that Anthony is trying to communicate with his student teacher.

It is also noteworthy that there are differences between what Anthony perceives as his feelings towards students, and what he projects as his obligation towards them. He recommended to Denise that when faced with students asking her about the relevance of a lesson, she ought to “be able to respond to that question in 2.2 seconds” (line 88).

However, when he teaches his students, he wants them to know that “I’m just trying to get to know you better. Because if I get to know you better, then I can understand where you’re coming from, and we can bond. We can work as a team, rather than as opponents” (line 91). One may ask whether Anthony is aware about these dilemmatic aspects of his or his student teacher’s discourse. Although Anthony had been working with the discourse study group all semester, he seemed to be representing his instructional discourse practices to Denise, a novice, as transparent and readily accessible. This lack of transparency, combined with the dilemmas embedded in Anthony’s discourse, contributed to this moment of discursive disconnect or disarticulation -- *décalage* -- between mentor and student teacher.

Given more time in the PCDSG, one might question whether or not Anthony could have used his new knowledge about discourse analysis to make explicit the specific features of the effective classroom interaction that he is asking of his student teacher. Several questions follow: What if Anthony had been aware of the ideological dilemmas he was invoking and how they might confuse Denise? What if the two had talked about those dilemmas and how they co-exist in teaching? Finally, if Denise had access to analyses of her mentor’s teacher discourse, what might she have discovered about the effective language skills and rhetorical practices in Anthony’s discourse that might have furthered her own ability to reach and teach their students?

Anthony as Colleague: “It’s Like the Assumption That These Students Couldn’t...”

In the previous two sections, I have examined some of the ways that Anthony strategically constructed and mediated his social subjectivities as teacher and mentor through the use of language and rhetoric. Within the context of the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group, one of Anthony’s contributions was his tactical use of language to deconstruct and problematize group understandings of discourse and interaction (Erickson, 2004). This was consistent with his perspective as a critical educator who believed that all positions are subject to scrutiny and critique. For instance, during an early meeting of the study group, before group learning about discourse analysis began, Anthony talked about how he would deal with a student who was using racist and inflammatory language during a classroom discussion. While most of his colleagues talked about various ways they would silence the transgressor, Anthony’s perspective was a bit different. After several of the other teachers talked about how they would deal with a disruptive student, Anthony said to his colleagues:

Anthony: If the kid were to say something like that in my class, I would try to figure out, “Is this kid looking for attention?”, number one. Are they serious? Do they have a history of hate? Maybe... try to look at the foundation at their home setup? It’s a lot that goes into a student making a statement like that. It might not be just as simple as... are you looking for... I like to call it “looking for a rush out of the teacher”. What’s the *purpose* of that statement, you know? Or do they truly believe that? And I guess I feel like, if a student truly believes that, they probably wouldn’t be stupid enough to say it in class.

Anthony's student centered, critical perspective encouraged him to look at the subtext of classroom interaction, that is, *the text beyond the text*. Sociopolitical contingencies at Pinnacle High School meant that students who held views seen as prejudicial would not typically voice them aloud. Instead of suggesting ways to silence the student and enforce consensus around a socially contested topic, Anthony asks the purpose of the hypothetical student's misbehavior, and suggests a heuristic for analyzing its source. This willingness to think deeply about discourse in informal ways exemplifies what teachers who are effective classroom managers do as a matter of course.

Perhaps because of his critical lens, halfway through the study group semester, Anthony clashed with his colleagues and a guest consultant about the ways he believed that marginalized students were being positioned in their discourse. To provide some context, five of the seven teachers were in attendance at this workshop. The five included the four late-career White teachers (department head Marilyn, as well as Ella, Jane, and Erin), and Anthony. A guest consultant had come in to talk about the value of teachers studying their classroom discourse. The consultant had just completed an action research project at an alternative school. Ten minutes before the segment that is analyzed below, the conversation shifted from talking about specific concepts from the book, to a discussion of the group's challenges in teaching underserved students academic writing. The following segment was the only time that Anthony spoke during the two hours of the meeting.

Excerpt 4.4 Transcript, Anthony Bell and Guest Consultant, PCDSG #3 (1:22:56 – 1:25:54)

Line #	Speaker	Talk	Gestures
1	<i>Ebony</i>	Anthony? You had something to say, Anthony?	Off camera.
2	<i>Anthony</i>	I guess it's just (.3) it's like the <i>assumption</i> that <these students> (.2) couldn't	
3		I guess it doesn't surprise me at all (.2)	
4		Because if you were to look at (.3) >maybe I'm generalizing< the complexity of their life	Gestures with hands, palms facing down.
5	<i>Consultant</i>	Yes.	Nods.
6	<i>Anthony</i>	And what they had to deal with and go through	
7		why <i>couldn't</i> they learn (.5) more? It seems to me >>like they would be able to learn more easily than other kids<<	
8		because they've already had to learn so much just to survive [you know	
9	<i>Consultant</i>	[Yes.	
10	<i>Anthony</i>	It's almost like a	
11		I guess for somebody	
12		>>Most people looking from the outside in<<	
13		it would be a great discovery (.2)	
14		but for me, I just felt	
15		yeah.	Nods, leaning forward.
16	<i>Consultant</i>	Yeah.	
17	<i>Anthony</i>	Because their street skills and whatever (.2)	Gestures with hands, palms facing down.
18		they have to constantly adapt (.6)	Waves with hands.
19		I'm at a loss for words, but it's just	
20		[()	
21	<i>Consultant</i>	[No, I agree with you. I know what you mean.	Nods.
22	<i>Anthony</i>		Shakes his head and looks away.
23	<i>Consultant</i>	And that's the case, but some of them are more verbally <i>articulate</i> (.2) than others. So (.3) one young woman in the class had the whole thing ahead of time. She just	
24		She was just trying to convince everybody of things using warrants and counterarguments. She was <<way>> beyond the others. Very sophisticated. And this was a young woman who had been taking care of her family. She's sort of the child in the family that has to hold everything together.	Wide gesture with hands.
25		So it makes sense that she had acquired these skills. But it's how do you then (.1) um (.2) first of all surface those skills? Get the students to demonstrate those skills? To, and then to dignify them? To value them?	

26		To say, "Yeah, that's it! That's what we want!	Gestures with hands.
27		"Now here's how you do it when we want you to do it in school, so it looks like it's fitting the purposes for what we want you to do in school. Here's how you do it for a test, here's how you do it when you're writing an essay, how there are different rhetorical situations."	
28		And they get it. They get it <i>absolutely</i>	
29		but it's a question of keeping them, keeping up the momentum to get them to do it with you.	
30		[()	
31	<i>Anthony</i>	First, I want to ask you	
32		>why do they want to do it?< Why <i>should</i> they want to do it?	
33		You know, this is for a certain time	
34		for a certain space in time, they learn more. Like you said before, if they can't take it and apply it to their life, it's a waste of time.	
35	<i>Consultant</i>	[(It is indeed.)	
36	<i>Anthony</i>	And that's how a lot of these students see this.	
37		You got, you want them to learn something for a certain class, but once that class is over, it serves no purpose whatsoever.	Shakes head.
38		You have to make a connection.	
39		So I guess () I see your point.	Frowns.

In this excerpt, Anthony finally spoke after more than an hour of silently listening and following the talk in the group that afternoon. He admitted that he was “at a loss for words” (line 19), but this conversation was about the most important aspect of the profession for him – students like the ones he teaches. Therefore, I conducted three analyses on the segment of talk. A selected Appraisal analysis focusing on the **graduation** of his lexis shows both the passion he feels in this discussion, and his care in negotiating his social role in the group. Analysis of the **conjunctions** in this segment makes his argument for underserved students salient. Finally, an Ideation analysis of his words illuminates the ways that Anthony brings the perspectives of students into the workshop, giving them voice and agency in a conversation among colleagues.

Anthony's passion for working with students that other teachers at Pinnacle found difficult was reflected in his language. Recall that in Chapters 2 and 3, I positioned Appraisal analysis as useful for examining ideological dilemmas. A selected Appraisal analysis of Anthony's use of Judgment was also provided in the previous section. Within the Appraisal framework, a Graduation analysis helps to evaluate the degree of the attitudes and engagement present in spoken or written text. In this analysis, I examine Anthony's language for **force** and **focus**.

Figure 4.1 Graduation Analysis of Anthony Bell's Discourse, PCDSG #3

<u>Anthony's Discourse in PCDSG Meeting 3</u>	<u>Graduation Analysis</u>
I guess it's just	focus → soften
I guess	focus → soften
like they would be able to learn more easily than other kids	force → amplification
It's almost like I guess for somebody	focus → soften
It would be a great discovery	force → amplification
Because of their street skills and whatever They have to constantly adapt	force → amplification
You know, this is for a certain time For a certain space in time	focus → sharpen focus → sharpen
You want them to learn something for a certain class,	focus → sharpen
It serves no purpose whatsoever	force → amplification
So I guess	focus → soften

In Graduation analysis, **focus** is the sharpening and softening of experiential categories. We see that Anthony used the phrase "I guess" to *soften* his critique of the group's discussion. On the other hand, he used the word "certain" to *sharpen* his position

that the acquisition of school-based academic knowledge is “for a certain time, for a certain space in time... for a certain class”. To drive his points home, Anthony amplified the **force** of his language. In Anthony’s worldview, not only could underserved students learn, their acquisition of survival skills had the potential to help them “learn *more easily* than other kids.” Not only did these students have to adapt, they had to “*constantly* adapt” to a variety of circumstances. Without proper contextualization for this group of students in schools like Pinnacle, they will feel as if academic knowledge “serves no purpose *whatsoever*.” He is discursively walking a fine line between critiquing his colleagues’ talk and defending his students.

Anthony’s language tactics here are not only carefully graduated, but they are logical as well. A conjunction analysis highlights the ways that Anthony sought to animate his students’ voices and identities, and reveals the logic of his discourse during this tense moment (Martin & Rose, 2003, 2007). For this analysis, I first divided his words into clauses, and placed each conjunction in boldface. Next, I sorted each conjunction into one of four macrocategories derived from functional linguistics: *addition*, *comparison*, *time*, and *consequence*. Finally, I used the discursive context to further subcategorize each conjunction according to its function within the text.

Figure 4.2 Conjunction Analysis of Anthony Bell’s Discourse, PCDSG #3

<u><i>Anthony’s Discourse in PCDSG Meeting 3</i></u>	<u><i>Conjunction Analysis</i></u>
I guess it’s just	<i>staging</i>
It’s like the assumption that these students couldn’t	<i>staging</i>
I guess it doesn’t surprise me at all because if you were to look at the complexity of their <i>life</i> what they had to deal with and go through	<i>staging</i> consequence → countering consequence → condition

why <i>couldn't</i> they learn more?	
it seems to me	
like they would be able to learn more easily than other kids	comparison → similarity
because they've already had to learn so much just to survive	consequence → justify
You know	
It's almost like	
I guess for somebody	
Most people looking from the outside in	
It would be a great discovery	
But for me, I just felt...	comparison → different
Yeah.	
Because of their street skills and whatever	consequence → justify
They have to constantly adapt	
I'm at a loss for words but it's just...	
First I want to ask you	time → successive
Why do they want to do it?	
Why <i>should</i> they want to do it?	
You know, this is for a certain time	
For a certain space in time	
They learn more.	
Like you said before,	comparison → similarity
If they can't take it	consequence → condition
And apply it to their life	addition → additive
(then) it's a waste of time.	
And that's how a lot of these students see this.	addition → additive
You got	
You want them to learn something for a certain class,	
But once that class is over	comparison → contrast
It serves no purpose whatsoever	
You have to make a connection	
So I guess	concluding → concessive
I see your point.	

This conjunction analysis revealed Anthony's tactical use of language as he sought to defend students he believed were being attacked during the prior conversation about the challenges of teaching academic writing. Using very few words, he constructed a counterargument about the inherent academic ability of underserved students. As he began to speak, he used the interpersonal metaphors "I guess" and "it's like" in order to

stage his comments.⁵⁰ In his conversation with Denise, Anthony used metaphors to talk about his beliefs about teaching and learning. However in the study group, he is not a mentor, but a colleague. Therefore, his lexical choice signaled the difference in his position within the PCDSG. He began by aligning himself with the group as an equal even though he strongly disagrees with their perspective. His comments thus framed, Anthony then summarized the preceding discussion -- “it’s **like** the assumption that these students couldn’t” (line 2) -- signaling that he would provide a comparative point of view that had not been expressed. He then provided strong evidence of the students’ innate abilities, using the consequential conjunction *because* as the backbone of his argument: “**because if** you were to look at the complexity of their *life*” (line 4), “**because** they’ve already had to learn so much just to survive” (line 8), and “**because** of their street skills and whatever/They have to constantly adapt” (line 18). Prior to Anthony’s intervention, the group had been talking about ways of using the tools of discourse analysis to help students “surface those skills”, per the consultant’s response (line 35). Yet Anthony positioned the academic writing skills that the group is discussing as being “for a certain time, for a certain space in time”, and asserted that students needed to understand the relevance of these skills to their lives.

Concerns about relevance, access, and power were implicit in Anthony’s conclusion, signaled by the conditional *if*: “**If** they can’t take it, **and** apply it to their life, **(then)** it’s a waste of time” (line 34). At the end of his dialogue, Anthony signaled that he was preparing to conclude his argument by using the concluding *so* (line 39), and the

⁵⁰ One extension of the analysis of this segment is to ascertain Anthony’s reactions to certain words from the consultant’s talk that may have unwittingly referenced negative ideological metadiscourses about African-Americans. For example, when the consultant states that some of the students are “more verbally articulate than others”, Anthony frowns and looks angry. Many African Americans consider being called “articulate” in the post-Civil Rights era an insult.

concessive *I guess*, but changed his mind and yielded the floor. He tells the consultant that “I see your point,” but his nonverbal body language for the rest of the workshop, and his words to me after it, showed that he did not. Anthony’s experiences during this group meeting reflected the experiences of the educators of color that Lisa Delpit interviewed more than twenty years before. As Delpit stated in 1988, “One of the tragedies in the field of education is that scenarios such as these are enacted daily around the country. The saddest element is that the individuals that (Black educators) speak of in these statements are seldom aware that the dialogue *has* been silenced” (Delpit, 1988). In the case of the PCDSG, none of the other participants shared me with that they were aware of Anthony’s feelings during this workshop, or that his disagreement with the consultant and the group about marginalized students remained unresolved.

When he spoke to the guest consultant and his colleagues, Anthony animated his students’ voices, constructing a descriptive narrative identity of the underserved populations at Pinnacle and other schools. As stated in Chapter 3, speakers and writers use Ideation language resources to represent their experiences in the world, which are realized by clauses and their elements. These elements include **participants, processes** (words that tell what participants are doing, saying, sensing, being, and/or having), and **circumstances** (qualities, classes, parts, etc.)

Table 4.3 Ideation Analysis of Anthony Bell's Discourse, PCDSG #3

#	Participants	Processes			Circumstances (related quality, class, part, etc.)
		Doing	Saying/sensing	Being/Having	
2	I		guess		
	it			(is)	Just/like the assumption that
	these students		couldn't		
3	I		guess		
	It		doesn't surprise me		at all
4	If you		were to look at		the complexity of their <i>life</i>
6					and what they have to deal with and go through
7	they	<i>couldn't</i> learn more?			
	they	would be able to learn			It seems to me that more easily than other kids
8	Because they	(have) already had to learn so much			just to survive.
12	it			would be	a great discovery. (for) most people looking from the outside in
14	but for me, I		felt		
17					Just because their street skills
18	they	have to constantly adapt			
19	I			(am)	at a loss for words
31	I		want to ask		you
32	they		want to do it		why
	they		should want to do it		why
33	this			(is)	for a certain time
34	they	learn more			for a certain space in time
	Like you		said		before
	If they	can't take apply			it
	it			(is)	to their life
36	And that			(is)	a waste of time
					how a lot of these students see this
37	You		want them		
	(they)	learn			something for a certain class
	it			serves no purpose	once that class is over

				whatsoever	
38	You	have to make			a connection
39	So I		Guess		
	I	see			your point

A list of the processes reads like an advocate's case for these students: *couldn't, were to look at, couldn't learn more?, (have) already had to learn so much, have to constantly adapt, learn more, can't take, apply, want them, have to make, see*. According to Anthony, with everything that this group of students has to "deal with and go through" (line 6), their lives were more complex than the group was allowing for. He pressed further by subverting traditional notions of power and positioning the students at the alternative school as being "able to learn more easily than other kids, because they've already had to learn so much to survive" (7-8). Although he directly refers to student perspectives, most of the references to the consultant and his colleagues are indirect (i.e., "people looking from the outside in"), unlike his measured yet forceful critique of his student teacher Denise. The participants in Anthony's talk were restricted to himself, the consultant, the PCDSG teachers, and the alternative students that had been the focal point of conversation for several moments. All direct references to the guest consultant are found in the circumstances, not the theme of each of his sentences. Yet when the consultant indicated assent to what he was saying, he stopped verbally contributing to the workshop and resumed his silence.

After the workshop was over that day, Anthony asked to speak with me privately. His first comment in a ninety-minute, unrecorded conversation in the departmental office was "They study us like guinea pigs!" Here, Anthony is referencing an insider-outsider perspective, invoking fictive kinship with me as an African American woman and overlooking the inconvenient fact that I was the only researcher in the PCDSG. When I

nodded, he expressed concerns about White and middle-class colleagues having a conversation with an outsider about deficiencies in the spoken and written discourse of students of color. He mentioned that he took issue with the use of “big words” in the workshop. “Interdiscursivity -- what is that?” he asked me. “Why did they have to make up a word just for that when the kids can do it naturally?” Yet when I probed a bit further, I learned that it was not merely the use of certain words that bothered Anthony, it was also the subtext of the workshop that day.

The rest of our unrecorded conversation indexed the themes and metapropositions of critical race theory. If racism is endemic and normal in American history, society, and life, then Anthony was saying it was endemic and normal at Pinnacle, and why the school had been struggling with an achievement gap for many years. Given this fact, Anthony was skeptical about the colormuteness of the workshop discourse series up to that point. Only by listening to Anthony vent his legitimate frustrations, appealing to our shared social subjectivities as African American critical pedagogues, and assuring him that his contribution was valued and essential did I secure his continued participation in the group.

On that day, although Anthony was discouraged by the conversation, he spoke out in a way that contributed. He spoke for the students whose voices were not represented and reminded the group that teachers are not the only individuals in classroom interaction who are imbued with knowledge and value. He remained committed to student advocacy even when students were not around. After that workshop and our cathartic talk, Anthony seemed to realize that his perspective would have a place in the proceedings. He

remained a dedicated member of the discourse group, supporting his colleagues through the final debriefing of the discourse analysis study group before summer vacation.

Discussion: How Anthony Negotiated Solidarity

Pinnacle High School English teacher Anthony Bell navigated the linguistic, social, and cultural milieu of Pinnacle High School by shifting between his professional roles as teacher, mentor, and colleague in order to attain solidarity with his students and his colleagues. He shifted among these roles and negotiated solidarity through the strategic use of language, forming a framework of shared purposes with others at Pinnacle High School. At times, his language was reflective of a critical orientation. However, at other times, his language was concessive. Although Anthony held strong opinions about teaching and learning, he did not allow those opinions to interfere with his effectiveness in the classroom, as a mentor to Denise, or as a colleague in the Pinnacle English department.

With his students, Anthony negotiated solidarity through recontextualizing and realigning power in the classroom. In his teaching, Anthony disrupted traditional discourse structures and intertwined instruction and regulation. As noted, the ways that he talked to his students differed from other teachers in the Pinnacle English department, who retained more traditional Initiation-Response-Evaluation/Feedback patterns in their classroom talk. He encouraged his students to participate in making decisions about school curriculum, and helped them to develop lenses for extrascholastic reading selections. In making his teaching “relevant to their life”, Anthony emphasized the common ground that biracial students in the class had with famous figures notable for

their cultural achievements. Although the students did not choose the book that Anthony wanted them to read, he felt that the larger objective of his lesson was met. Students who were not usually enthusiastic about school-based literacy activities were discussing books, making choices, and choosing what they wanted to read. Through this conversation, the solidarity building that began earlier in the school year in Anthony's class is apparent. The students' talk indicates that they view themselves not just as disinterested individuals, but also as a group with a framework of shared purposes ("Man, look for a book that's not too...").

Anthony negotiated solidarity with his student teacher, Denise, by initially aligning himself with her, as he did with me, as racial fictive kin. As Denise's mentor, he deployed the lexical features, rhetorical structure, and intonation of African American English in order to soften his critique about the lack of control she had over the classroom, and her negligence in lesson planning. As he spoke with Denise, Anthony did not choose to utilize language about discourse and interaction that were provided within the PCDSG workshops. Instead, he used the lexis of Judgment descriptive language to talk about what he observed in her lesson, and what she ought to do in the future. He also used metaphors about his own teaching practices and philosophies in order to encourage her to adopt his ideologies. Yet this strategy proved to be ideologically dilemmatic, because the dilemmas embedded in Anthony's discourse, contributed to discursive disconnect or disarticulation -- *décalage* -- between mentor and student teacher.

Within the context of the PCDSG, Anthony negotiated solidarity with his colleagues by interjecting an opposing perspective, then remaining silent when the group did not take it up. Outside of the PCDSG, Anthony's student centered, critical

perspective encouraged him to look at the subtext of classroom interaction, that is, *the text beyond the text*. In the study group, he used ways of talking about language and discourse derived from his life experiences and critical epistemologies. He also raised provocative issues to disrupt his colleagues' understandings about race. Although Anthony defended students passionately and considered leaving the PCDSG at one point, his alignment with me as fictive kin and commitment to his students and Pinnacle encouraged him to remain a member of the group. Yet although his disagreement with the group during the consultant visit threatened his remaining in solidarity with the other teachers, in the end, he concedes ("I see your point") and vents to me instead of leaving the workshop series altogether.

Rendering the silenced dialogues and the ideological dilemmas of one African-American male teacher audible has manifold implications for teaching and learning. As Schleppegrell (2004) points out, "having gained control of (academic) registers, students can then manipulate them and use them to construct the diversity of meanings that reflect their own cultural contexts and goals... new kinds of meanings will emerge as students make academic registers their own" (2004: 162-163). Teachers who are knowledgeable about language and have the ability to analyze their own discourse are well positioned to reveal to their students linguistic codes of power that matter in academic contexts and in an unequal society. This case study describes the language, discourse, and literature practices of one African-American English teacher involved in such a study group. Anthony's identities, social subjectivities, and ideologies trouble traditional paradigms of what discourse conflicts in secondary English teaching might look like. Further work in this area might consider the ways that teachers' social subjectivities mediate their tactics

and strategies for managing conflict, and how that mediation might affect classroom discourse and interaction. In the next chapter, I further this emerging line of inquiry through the case of Ella Daniel.

Chapter 5

Dilemmas of Ideology, Context, and Invisible Knapsacks: The Case of Ella Daniel

“It’s like when I say something, and I mean it in a certain way, and the reaction that I get is just *out there* to me. And these bells are going off about okay, *something just happened there*... I’m not sure what it was, but it was not what I meant to happen, and the understanding was *different*... than what I meant it to be.”

*-Ella Daniel, 9th and 10th Grade English teacher
Pinnacle High School*

This quote from Ella Daniel, a teacher participating in the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group, was taken from our third workshop. The ambivalence that Ella expressed about “something just happening there” can be read as a reference to the ideological dilemmas that arise in the complexity of secondary English classroom interaction. The previous case study illustrated the ways that Anthony Bell, an African American male teacher at Pinnacle, discursively negotiated solidarity in situations of conflict. Anthony valued his ability to reach underserved students and was critical of his colleagues’ perceptions of them. Ella, one of the four late-career, White middle class teachers in the PCDSG, provides a contrasting case. She reflects the majority demographic in the PCDSG (the subgroup that also includes Erin, Jane, and Marilyn, the department head) and in Pinnacle, where more than half of the English teachers in the

department were White and female. The implications of the whitening of the teaching force at a time when the nation's schools are becoming increasingly diverse are profound (Epstein, 2005). Yet we know from the research literature that the race of a teacher does not necessarily indicate their effectiveness or student achievement in their classrooms (Irvine, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 1994). Teaching practices that are culturally responsive and relevant can be efficacious for teachers across racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds.

In this chapter, I will explore some of the ideological dilemmas that Ella Daniel faced in her teaching and in the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group (PCDSG). Along with the others in this subgroup, Ella participated in the PCDSG workshop discussions much more frequently than the group of senior, male, and African American teachers that included Anthony, James, and Natalie.⁵¹ As with Erin, Jane, and Marilyn, the stories that Ella told in the PCDSG were drawn from decades' worth of classroom experience. Ella and Jane were both members of the school and district equity teams, with declared interests in issues of inclusion and social justice. Erin drew from her lived experiences as a Jewish woman and her professional experiences as a teacher in both the United States and Germany to inform the ways that she approached conflict in her classroom. Erin firmly believed that minority language and discourse rights must be respected, even when those languages and discourses might lead to interpersonal conflict. Marilyn used her authority as English department head, status as an honors and Advanced Placement teacher, and use of humor to diffuse potentially difficult situations. The antics of students, the problems of the colleagues she supervised, and the demands of

⁵¹ Some of the reasons for these variable rates of participation in the PCDSG workshops will be explored further in Chapter 7, "Implications and Directions for Future Research".

administrators rarely ruffled her, as she believed that after many years in the classroom and the district, all conflicts could be resolved with time and experience.

However, unlike Erin, Jane, and Marilyn, Ella was much more self-reflective and self-conscious about her ideologies. Jane's management of a challenge in her teaching illustrates by comparison. Jane was facing a sharp increase in student plagiarism in her honors and Advanced Placement classes, yet this did not cause her to question her own position and approach to this matter, or to consider the ways that her students' use of new media technologies might be changing their views about fair use and academic honesty. Instead of examining her own ideological positions, after she analyzed a conversation with her students about plagiarism, Jane questioned their ethics. As she responded to her students about an example of sharing exam questions that they believed was not ethically problematic, Jane told her class, "I think there might be some cloudiness in terms of how a student views (that). There really isn't any cloudiness in terms of how I view it, and how most teachers view it." For Jane, this conflict was external and temporary, not internal and ongoing. Jane implied to her students that all teachers view academic dishonesty the same way that she does, thereby presenting a contested topic with a range of views as unitary and uncontested. For Ella, Jane, and Marilyn, definitions of conflict were pre-established and social solidarities with students and colleagues had already been negotiated through their experience and status within the school.

Unlike the other late-career, White middle class teachers, Ella found conflict extremely problematic. During the initial interview, she confided to me that

I should start out, because I know you're not going to kick me out at this point... as a person, **I'm not very comfortable with conflict.** It makes me nervous. I'm a middle child, so I'm always trying to sort of, make it okay. Which can be a good thing in teaching, because I don't want to live with a bunch of conflict. But I know also that you don't just want to stamp it out either, 'cause conflict is a reality.

As Ella considered conflict in the English classroom before the study began, she admitted discomfort, yet acknowledged it as “a reality.” The way that she dealt with conflict was by serving as a mediator who “makes it okay.” Ella’s interest in mediating conflict had been the impetus for a connection that we made while I was a teacher at Pinnacle two years before the study. I had experienced a particularly tense lesson while starting a Native American literature unit in a diverse class, and less than an hour later I was sitting in Ella’s van in the teacher parking lot pouring out my frustrations. When the researcher who was studying my class and I decided to have a privilege walk to address the conflict, Ella was fascinated and asked if she could sit in the back of the classroom. Afterwards, she reflected about how the privilege walk in my class afforded previously marginalized students safe space to share their struggles, their “gladness at being able to share some of the hard parts of their lives”, and to “declare this in a situation that was as safe as it was” (Sassi & Thomas, 2008). My informal chats with Ella continued during the period between my teaching year at Pinnacle (2005-2006), and my return as a workshop facilitator and researcher in January 2008. More than any other teacher in the PCDSG, Ella continually shared with me the ways that she had to reconsider and adjust her teaching in response to increasingly diverse classrooms. She was exceedingly

forthcoming about her struggles to understand her students' discourses and actions, and hoped that learning discourse analysis would help her communicate more effectively with them.

Review of Relevant Literature

The ideological dilemmas that Ella Daniel experienced, and her attempts to resolve them through language and action, are not only specific to her Pinnacle classroom. If conflict involves *ideological dilemmas evident in teachers' and students' actions and discourses that impede the negotiation of ethical positions in the classroom*, these ideological dilemmas are inherent in conflicting identities which index entrenched societal metadiscourses/Discourses about White teacher identities (Gee, 1999, 2005)⁵². For example, some of the metadiscourses that are indexed within Ella's teacher talk and that of her peers included those that name White teachers in multicultural schools in limited, essentializing ways. For instance, one prevalent metadiscourse is that of the **guru** or **expert** who acknowledges his/her Whiteness and works through it in order to better serve students from diverse backgrounds (Harding, 2005; Howard, 1999; Kozol, 1991; Landsman, 2001). Another is that of the **clueless** and/or **bigoted** White teacher who must confront his/her racial and class privilege (Codell, 2001; Lauri Johnson, 2002; Paley, 1979; Sleeter, 1993). Yet another metadiscourse is that of the **savior** or **hero** who comes into a multicultural, underserved context and experiences phenomenal success with the most challenging students imaginable (R. Clark, 2006; Gruwell, 1999; LouAnne Johnson, 1992; Kozol, 1967; Ladson-Billings, 1994). Later in this chapter, we will look

⁵² I am using indexicality here in its pragmatic sense – that is, indexes are language structures that point to another, often unspoken context of use (Horton-Salway, 2001; Ochs, 1990; Wetherell, 2001).

at the ways that Ella uses one “heroic White teacher” text to talk about “the n-word” with her students. Ella’s teacher talk also indexes metadiscourses of colormuteness in postmodern, diverse schools (Pollock, 2004; Sassi & Thomas, 2008), as well as metadiscourses about first-language teaching in English speaking countries (Christie, 1999, 2002; Christie & Martin, 1997; Pollock, 2004; Sassi & Thomas, 2008). All of these metadiscourses/Discourses not only circulate throughout contemporary schooling contexts in the United States, they are also contextually appropriated by teachers and staff within Pinnacle High School the Pinnacle English department, the PCDSG and ultimately, in Ella’s classroom through her selection of literature and choices in discourse and interaction.

In order to analyze Ella’s interaction across classroom and study group contexts, I blended a number of theoretical approaches. First, I took an **emic approach** to data selection (Cresswell, 1998), privileging meanings made by local participants. Ella, like Anthony and the other PCDSG participants, frequently named and alluded to interactions she found dilemmatic. Additionally, as a former Pinnacle High teacher who sustained relationships with colleagues and students, I used my experiences within the context to inform this process. An interactional ethnographic approach made it possible to describe the norms and expectations of key discourse participants in each dilemmatic incident (Castanheira, et al., 2001; Green & Dixon, 1994; Rex, 2006b; Rex & Schiller, 2009). The stakes for Ella were different when she was teaching, when she was selecting curricular material and preparing lessons, when she was speaking with me, and when she was talking with colleagues. While talking with colleagues, Ella was in an equal, if not dominant subject position; she shared the same gender, race, class, and generational

identities with the other dominant members of the PCDSG. When speaking with me, she positioned me as both a colleague and a confidant; our shared interests in conflict resolution, racial and ethnic reconciliation, and my position as a university researcher and teacher-leader may have mitigated the asymmetry between our differing race, generational, and class identities. When choosing an anchor text for a literature unit during the PCDSG semester, Ella told me that she was looking for texts that might be controversial (although she did not tell me why), and decided to prepare a unit on LouAnne Johnson's autobiographical novel *Dangerous Minds*. Yet Ella presented potentially conflict-laden passages in *Dangerous Minds* with extreme care and caution. Although Ella was hyperaware of the differences between herself and her student and admitted to discomfort with conflict, it was interesting to note that within the context of her classroom Ella chose to negotiate solidarity around one of the most inflammatory racial epithets in contemporary society.

During the semester of the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group, I found that many of the most frequent occasions for negotiating solidarity in the PCDSG teachers' classrooms, in personal conversations and one-on-one interviews with the teachers, and in the PCDSG workshops involved race as a factor. This was certainly the case for Ella Daniel.

Data Selection and Ideological Dilemma Analysis

After scanning all of my video and audio data for Ella, I have selected the following data for analysis of her ideological dilemmas during her interactions with her students and colleagues:

Table 5.1 Research Subquestions, Data Selection, and Ideological Dilemmas

<i>Research Subquestion</i>	<i>Data Selection</i>	<i>Ideological Dilemma</i>
<i>How are Ella's ideological dilemmas represented in the curricular material she has chosen?</i>	Textual Analysis, <i>Dangerous Minds</i> (LouAnne Johnson, 1992), Page 28	What should be said and left unsaid when teaching controversial literature?
<i>How are Ella's ideological dilemmas enacted in her teaching?</i>	Lesson Segment, <i>Dangerous Minds</i> and the "N-Word", 5-9-2008 (19:16-26:56)	How do you lead a student discussion about the "n-word" when you are White?
<i>How are these dilemmas enacted in her engagement with the PCDSG?</i>	PCDSG Workshop #3 (1:07:18 – 1:12:21)	How do secondary English teachers and their students establish shared ethical positions across diverse lifeworlds?
<i>How are these dilemmas enacted in her engagement with the PCDSG?</i>	PCDSG Workshop #2 (36:05 – 37:09)	How can one talk about evolving views about conflict in the classroom, when the very notion of conflict is personally unsettling?

Among the PCDSG teachers, Ella most restricted my access into her classroom. She expressed considerable anxiety about having her focal class recorded, because she was struggling with managing such a diverse group. It so happened that Ella's anxiety was unfounded. From my observations, it was obvious that she had established positive rapport with her students. My short time in Ella's first hour class yielded one of the richest discourse segments from the entire study – a whole-class discussion about authorial and character use of the "n-word" in LouAnne Johnson's autobiographical novel *Dangerous Minds*. Even more productive was an analysis of the specific page

from the novel *Ella* and her students were discussing. I have foregrounded the textual analysis of the passage from *Dangerous Minds* that Ella and her students had read in order to contextualize the discussion that followed.

From the PCDSG workshops, I found two segments of data that were analytically significant. In the last chapter, we saw Anthony Bell's response to the group's discussion during the third workshop. While Anthony found the discussion troubling, Ella found it affirming and cathartic. Ten minutes before Anthony's challenge in PCDSG #3, Ella related to a discourse analysis concept through personalization -- she recounted three stories derived from her teaching experience that were very emotional for her. Ella's case study concludes with an excerpt from PCDSG #2 that will be further elaborated in the next chapter, in which she shared how her approaches to classroom conflict changed over time. In both meetings of the discourse study group, Ella articulated her progressive ideologies, as well as the challenges she experienced while teaching underserved students. Taken together, this repertoire of Ella Daniel's professional language and interaction provides a window into the experiences of a White veteran teacher as she navigated the challenges of increasingly diverse and complex contexts for teaching and learning.

Findings

Ella as Curriculum Designer: "Black Kids Can Say It"... But "Not in This Classroom, They Can't"

One of the most interesting moments that I observed in Ella Daniel's teaching occurred as she launched whole class discussion of *Dangerous Minds*, LouAnne Johnson's autobiographical account of a White, female Marine Corps veteran who

becomes a successful teacher of at-risk students. This was the first day that the students and Ella talked about the novel as a class, so they were engaged in the process of establishing consensus on the themes and moral lessons of the novel before proceeding further (Christie, 1999). As we shall see in the next section, talking about race within the context of a multicultural classroom with many different points of view proved to be very difficult. However, prior to analyzing classroom conversations about literature, it is sometimes helpful to first examine the text that is being referred to in the discourse. The text and analysis below will serve to orient the classroom discourse between Ella and her students in the next section.

Although Ella gave her students a reading assignment that was several pages long, they only discussed page 28 (see Figure 5.1), and interpreted the meaning of the story events on this page by focusing on the way that one word in particular—“the n-word”—was being used.

Excerpt 5.1 **Page 28, *Dangerous Minds***

Stacy Wilson, a pretty black girl with about four hundred tiny braids on her head, reached out and smacked Rod on the arm, hard.

“You acting like a stupid nigger, Roderick,” she said jovially. “Shut your face.”

The class broke up.

“That reminds me of my only other rule,” I said loudly.

“I knew it,” said a voice from the corner. “No teachers have only one rule. They get off on rules.”

I ignored the taunt. Although I had not intended to create any other rules, I felt compelled to add one more.

“My second rule isn’t really a separate rule,” I explained. “It is a result of breaking the first rule. I want you all to understand that there is one thing I will flunk you for on the spot.” That was an outright lie; teachers don’t have the power to flunk students based on a single incident. But the students didn’t know that and I didn’t either, at the time.

“I will not tolerate any racial, ethnic, or sexual slurs in this classroom. It is not fair to erase someone’s face. In this room, everyone is entitled to equal dignity as a human being.”

“Black kids can call each other niggers,” Stacy protested.
 “Not in this classroom, they can’t,” I insisted.
 Stacy shrugged her shoulders. “It don’t matter what you say anyway,” she said.
 Miss Sheppard already done flunked most of us anyway before she left.”

In order to contextualize the classroom interaction detailed on this page, I wanted to understand how experiences were being construed by the author within the written word and world of the autobiographical recount. Page 28 was a recounting by the author of a challenging classroom discussion about race she had engaged in with her students. The functional discourse analysis system of Ideation provided me with a method for analyzing LouAnne Johnson’s recounting of her fraught experience. Ideation analysis reveals how “experience is construed in discourse. Ideation focuses on sequences of activities, the people and things involved in them, their associated places and qualities, and on how these elements are built up and related to each other as a text unfolds” (Martin & Rose, 2007). Within the Ideation discourse system of this page, I analyzed lexical relations between “people, things, processes, places, and qualities” (2007: 75) to surface six lexical strings. Table 5.5 depicts the lexical strings as they appeared in the text: *race, rules, regulative discourses and actions, student responses to being regulated, the teacher’s external processes, and the teacher’s internal processes*. These strings reflect dominant themes in the classroom discussion engaged in by the students and teacher in the text.

In this section, I analyze how the text under study by Ella and her class compared -- and contrasted -- to their discourse. I chose to analyze how the text of “Page 28” unfolds from one clause to the next. I did so by identifying six lexical strings: *race,*

rules, regulative discourses and actions, student responses to being regulated, the teacher's external processes, and the teacher's internal processes.

Table 5.2 Lexical Strings Identified on Page 28, Dangerous Minds

Lexical String	Text	Where Found
Race	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>pretty black girl with about four hundred tiny braids on her head</i> 	Narration
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>stupid nigger</i> • <i>any racial, ethnic, or sexual slurs</i> • <i>black kids</i> • <i>niggers</i> 	Dialogue
Rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>had not intended to create any other rules</i> 	Narration
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>my only other rule</i> • <i>only one rule</i> • <i>get off on rules</i> • <i>second rule</i> • <i>separate rule</i> • <i>breaking the first rule</i> 	Dialogue
Regulative discourses and actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>reached out and smacked Rod on the arm, hard</i> 	Narration
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>You acting like a stupid nigger, Roderick</i> • <i>shut your face</i> • <i>I want you all to understand</i> • <i>I will flunk you for on the spot</i> • <i>I will not tolerate</i> • <i>it is not fair</i> • <i>everyone is entitled</i> 	Dialogue
Student responses to being regulated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Stacy protested</i> • <i>Stacy shrugged her shoulders</i> 	Narration
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I knew it</i> • <i>No teachers have only one rule</i> • <i>They get off on rules</i> • <i>Black kids can call each other niggers</i> 	Dialogue

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>It don't matter what you say anyway</i> 	
Teacher's external processes (processes in bold)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I ignored the taunt</i> • <i>I felt compelled to add one more</i> 	Narration
	<i>None.</i>	Dialogue
Teacher's internal processes (processes in bold)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I had not intended to create any other rules</i> • <i>that was an outright lie</i> • <i>teachers don't have the power to flunk students based on a single incident</i> • <i>students didn't know that</i> • <i>I didn't either, at the time</i> 	Narration
	<i>None.</i>	Dialogue

The most prominent lexical features of this passage are the words and phrases about race. Reading, writing, and talking about race in classroom settings can often be uncomfortable for teachers and students (Bolgatz, 2005; Pollock, 2004; Sassi & Thomas, 2008; Singleton & Linton, 2005). As we will see in the next section, Ella's conversation with her students revealed this uncertainty and discomfort. In *Dangerous Minds*, different characters used words and phrases about race differently. Stacy, an African-American student, used words and phrases that are not only colloquial but potentially incendiary: "stupid nigger", "black kids", and "niggers." LouAnne Johnson, the White teacher in the book, made lexical choices that evaluated a problematic student positively ("pretty black girl") and that are more academic and professional in nature ("racial"; "ethnic") to talk about race. The lexical analysis reveals that the heated exchange between students Stacy and Roderick, and their teacher was about more than race. The

discourse focused on the role of rules and regulation in the classroom, and who had the right to control actions and discourses in schooling.

Just as Stacy introduced the social category of race in this passage, she also preempted the teacher's regulative role by correcting Roderick's misbehavior. In the story action before this excerpt from page 28, Roderick has just raised his voice and cursed at Miss Johnson. Stacy responded to her classmate's actions and words by using physical force ("smacked Rod on the arm, hard"), a racial slur ("stupid nigger"), and a command ("shut your face"). Her response may have been inappropriate for a school setting, but it was regulative. It was marked by the use of the vocative ("You acting like a stupid nigger, Roderick") and the use of the imperative ("Shut your face"). In contrast, most of LouAnne Johnson's regulative discourse was less direct, focused on herself and her mental processes, internal desires, and thinking. She presented 'truths' through the use of mental and relational processes: *that reminds me of my only other rule, I want you all to understand, I will not tolerate, it is not fair, everyone is entitled.*

In all classrooms, language plays a major role in negotiating relationships between teachers and students. Student responses to having their language use regulated in the story world of *Dangerous Minds* are very different compared to the responses that Ella's students have to being regulated. **In order for solidarity to be negotiated, students must be complicit.** The underserved students in LouAnne Johnson's classroom were not willing to go along with her program. Just as teachers have particular stakes in avoiding conflicts and negotiating solidarity, adolescents and young adult students have their own stakes that do not always align. High school students exist and participate in their own home, school, and community contexts and cultures, each with a

set of socially appropriate actions and discourses that may not be valued at school (Moll, et al., 1992; Rex, 2006a; Schleppegrell, 2004; Scott, Straker, & Katz, 2008). We know from studies about talk and interaction in schools that the linguistic resources through which teachers regulate classroom discourse are also available for students' appropriation (Candela, 1999). Students can and often do interrupt the traditional Initiation-Response-Evaluation/Feedback classroom discourse structure (Cazden, 2001), tipping the balance of power in their favor. Thus, students can cause conflict through their negative evaluations of teachers (Park, 2008), as well as negative responses to peers' perceived social identities (Leander, 2004). In this case, Stacy's, the dominant student interactant in this passage, response is unorthodox in two instances: she negatively evaluated a classmate, Roderick, and her new teacher, LouAnne Johnson. By doing so, she provides an exemplum of sorts for Ella's students by saying indirectly that *this is inappropriate classroom behavior*.

That the riskily contentious topics of race and regulation are resolved through a student-spoken exemplum, and that Ella chose this excerpt for her students to discuss raises a number of questions. Did Ella recognize—unwittingly or not—her own ideological dilemmas in LouAnne Johnson's depiction? Perhaps she recognized this excerpt as a description of conflicts in her ways of thinking and acting toward and with her students about regulation and race. What did she want her students to think about and learn from Stacy's approach to the testy situation? Although Ella positioned the novel as something that she and her students were "doing together," telling her students she had not read it before the lesson, it was evident that she had read far enough ahead to carefully direct what might have been a contentious conversation. When one of her

students mentioned “some bad words in there,” Ella was well prepared. She immediately mentioned “Page 28”, and a few minutes later, directed the students to answer “Question 11.” Therefore, what was presented as exploratory and shared was also premeditated and strategic (Erickson, 2004). In the next section, I represent how Ella’s strategy for having a difficult conversation about race unfolded tactically in moment-to-moment classroom discourse.

Ella in the Classroom: A Teacher, Her Students, and the “N-Word”

As Ella and her tenth grade English students began discussing *Dangerous Minds*, quickly their talk turned to the use of *nigger*, which they referred to throughout as the “n-word.” With Ella leading, a careful discussion unfolded that both Appreciated the value of the word negatively and Judged the main character/author and her students for their liberal use of the forbidden word. Through their tactical use of language, Ella and her students revealed their attitudes towards the speech rights of the author and the characters when it came to “that word.”

First, I will present a simple, text-only transcript of the interaction. This was the transcript that Ella and I used while she looked at the video of this lesson segment. Next, I will present a more detailed transcript that analyzes Appraisal features of key interactions between Ella and her students around the n-word. Finally, I will discuss other linguistic features foregrounded by other analyses (i.e., Identification/Tracking and Interactional Ethnographic), and examine what the lesson segment might reveal about how one of Ella’s ideological dilemmas was being enacted in her classroom teaching, how she dealt with it, and the affordances and constraints of her approach.

Excerpt 5.2 Transcript, Ella Daniel's 1st Hour Class, Curriculum Initiation Phase, *Dangerous Minds* Literature Unit (19:16-26:56)

Interactants

Ella Daniel – White female teacher

Mac – White male student

Kidada – Multiracial female student

Ryan – White male student

Serena – White female student

Omar – African American male student

1. Ella: ...Let's open it up to you guys. What's your first reaction to the book? I have to admit, this is the first time that I've ever taught this book. And since we were scheduled to read another book, just because of the number of books in the depository, we're now reading *Dangerous Minds* instead. I've never read this book before! So we're definitely doing this together. All right, first impressions? Mac, Kidada, anybody else? Okay. (*Points to Mac*) Try it out. Let me hear it.

2. Mac: Um, I really don't know.

3. Ella: Do you like it? Not like it?

4. Mac: I like it, yeah. I thought I wasn't gonna like it at first, so I just kind of started reading it, and then I just read like 40 something pages. It was so good, I just kept reading.

5. Ella: Why didn't you think you were going to like it?

6. Mac: Because I don't read.

7. Ella: Okay, in general, you don't read. Kidada?

8. Kidada: Oh. When I was reading, I was noticing that there are like really bad words in there.

9. Ella: Oh yeah, right! Some "bad words in there." Which maybe means that we should jump right to number... (*looks at handout*)... eleven, because that's the first bad word at least that comes to my mind.

10. Unidentified Male Student (off camera): Oh God.

11. Ella: She uses the n-word in the book, on page 28, I think is the first time. So does anybody have some comments on that? Why would she use the n-word? Should she? Should she not use the n-word? I'm just throwing it in there to spice things up... (*Students are quiet.*) Ted? Ryan? Your lips are moving back there.

12. Ryan: She's using it as a sentence enhancer.

13. Ella: As a sentence enhancer?

(*A few students laugh.*)

14. Ella: Okay. Boy. That's good. What does that mean?

15. Ryan: She's... she's using it because she *wants* to use it. Technically, that's not the first time they use a *bad word* in there.

16. Ella: Okay, you say these are bad, supposedly bad kids...

17. Ryan: Supposedly bad kids.

18. Ella: And not the first time she's used a bad word there. So it's a sentence enhancer, really used to accurately portray her character. Right? That these are the words that the characters would use. Any other comments? Yeah, Serena?

19. Serena: She's using it to prove a point. Like, if they don't want her to say it, then she doesn't want to hear it back from them. Because she heard people going back and forth, calling each other names, and she was trying to figure out what to do.

20. Ella: Okay. You said something... if they don't want her to use it?

21. Serena: Or like, if she's trying to prove a point that she doesn't want to hear that stuff in her class, then she would show them how it sounds to her...

22. Ella: Okay. How did it sound to her? Why don't we go to that page? And that could be helpful. Because you see, one of the things she says about it is that "it erases someone's face". (*flips through the book*) Page twelve... is that what you're talking about? Serena, when she explains how it sounds to her, and then Mac, if there's something else?

23. Serena: Well... on page 28, like... yeah... they're yelling at each other.

24. Ella: Serena, could you try to speak up, please?

25. Serena: Um, sorry.

26. Ella: I'm old and hard of hearing. Yes?

27. Serena: They keep going back and forth with each other, and she says she doesn't want to hear it, and Stacy says that Black people can call each other that, and she's saying that she doesn't want to hear it. She's trying to say that if I said it, then how would you guys feel about it? If I said it – meaning, White – how would you feel? She's hearing it from you guys, and it's disrespectful.

28. Ella: Okay. Well, what I'm not finding is "if I said it, how would it sound to you." Ah! Now in this edition – "Stacy shrugged her shoulders. 'It don't matter what you say anyway.'" About, okay, she's going to flunk someone who uses that word. She says... she does say that it "erases their face". Let's go with the cards here and go with Omar. What do you think?

29. Omar: (*unint.*)

30. Ella: Should she be using the n-word here?

31. Omar: No.

32. Ella: Okay. (*beckoning gesture*)

33. Omar: (*unint.*)

34. Ella: Okay. Now, Mac is bringing up that it enhances the sentences that she's using because it accurately portrays the characters. So what about that?

35. **Omar:** Um... (*unint.*)

36. **Ella:** Pardon me?

37. **Omar:** I have no idea.

38. **Ella:** Okay. (*nods*) You need to think about it a little bit. Let's bring up then the fact, for example, that this past summer, *that past summer*, last past summer matter of fact, the NAACP had a funeral for the n-word. And the idea was that the African American community itself, these leaders of the African American community, were trying to say that this word has no place in our vocabulary. You should just leave it out. Now these kids are arguing that hey, we get to say it to each other, and it's just part of our vocabulary. So they're saying, hey, we get to choose what's in our vocabulary. A bunch of grownups aren't going to tell us what words we can use and not use. Will you take a minute here... let's take two minutes... and write down in that space your thoughts on the use of the n-word? Can they say (*reading from the book*) "we can be able to do it"? She says that "black kids can say it to each other". And then we know that the grownup in the room doesn't want that to happen. We know that in larger society, grownups...

39. **Unidentified Male Student (off camera):** *Some* grownups.

40. **Ella:** Largely don't want that word to be used. (*referring to the handout*) You can go on the back. That's why I initially, I didn't make it two-sided because I wanted you to have enough room to write. (*sound of the pencil sharpener*) Your thoughts on it? Also, at this time we can say you don't have to write down the answers to every single question. Occasionally on these questions, we'll take a minute so you can write down your thoughts. If you don't know the answers to these questions, then it's a good idea to jot down what we end up agreeing to. But in general, you don't have to necessarily be filling them all out. All right, so two minutes. I'm watching the clock. Two minutes always feels like a long time.

41. **Unidentified Male Student (off camera):** Number eleven, right?

42. **Ella:** Yep.

One way of analyzing what Ella was doing in this interaction is to view her as attempting to align herself in solidarity with her students. In order to communicate effectively with others, speakers and writers often attempt to negotiate solidarity with their audiences of listeners and readers. Solidarity is a "complex process that may involve feelings of different kinds and thus communities with different membership" (Martin, 2004). This process of negotiating solidarity can be quite complex in twenty-first century communicative contexts. These contexts often require the ability to speak and write effectively to multiple audiences for multiple purposes. However, when these audiences are quite diverse in nature, it is sometimes difficult to build solidarity with one subgroup within the audience without alienating another subgroup. Subgroups often have

competing social interests, as well as competing intragroup shared meanings. For example, Lemke (1995) points out that “if one discourse says that the *freedom fighters* are being held in a *concentration camp*, while the other says that the *terrorists* are being held in a *prison*... it is not enough simply to substitute some words in one for apparently corresponding words in the other.” The difference is at the semantic level.

What Ella and her students call the “n-word” -- *nigger* -- is arguably the most controversial epithet in the history of the United States. Its semantics are rooted deeply in not only American history, but can be traced to classical times. According to the Ferris State University Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia, the etymological origins of the word *nigger* can be traced to the Latin adjective *niger*, which means black (Pilgrim & Middleton, 2001). The word evolved into its current forms in the Romance languages (e.g. Spanish, *negro*) and came to be used to describe enslaved persons captured from sub-Saharan Africa. By the early 19th century, it was well established as an ethnophaulism, or racial-ethnic slur. During the century between the Emancipation Proclamation and the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the word continued to carry extremely negative connotations. However, as African Americans continued to develop a parallel, segregated culture, some chose to use the term to refer to themselves, either derogatorily or as a term of endearment (Kennedy, 2002). In more recent times, the “n-word” has been reappropriated by youth who identify with hip-hop and/or urban culture, among others. There continues to be significant tension around the usage of the word, as well as an unspoken consensus that its use by White Americans should be discouraged at best, and in most cases, should be forbidden.

Over the course of this conversation, Ella and her students solved the semantic difficulty of talking about the “n-word” in a multicultural classroom. The first was by interpellating the book *Dangerous Minds* as an implicit participant in the conversation. The students only talked about “the n-word” in relationship to the book. They did not personalize it, or talk about its use in the immediate context of the classroom or the school. Neither did they relate it to their lives. However, they were quite critical of the narrator/protagonist and her students as they judged the use of “that word.” They judged story actions as if they were a real person’s choices. In a sense, they were, as *Dangerous Minds* is an autobiography. As these students were used to mostly talking about narratives in which the author and the protagonist can be more easily differentiated from one another, there seemed to be some blurring when one tries to track previous referents to the pronoun “she.” Were they referring to the author of the book, LouAnne Johnson, for using a forbidden word in the text or to the student, Stacy, for using the word in the classroom? Or to both?

As stated in previous chapters, Appraisal analysis can help analyze attitudinal linguistic resources that highlight the feelings and values that are being negotiated by speakers and readers (Martin & Rose, 2003: 25-28).⁵³ Of these attitudinal resources, in order to understand how the word *nigger* is being positioned here, it is perhaps most useful to look at Affect – specifically, how Ella and her students used Appreciation and Judgment linguistic resources to establish a shared ethical position about the use of the “n-word” in literature and life, and in doing so, contributed to the norms of their classroom as a discourse community.

⁵³ Please refer to Chapter 3, “Research Methods”, for the full list of Appraisal analysis codes.

Excerpt 5.3 Appraisal Analysis – Lesson Segment, *Dangerous Minds* and the “N-Word” (19:16-26:56)

Line #	Speaker	Talk	Gestures and Visual Cues	Analyst's Notes
8	<i>Kidada</i>	Oh. When I was reading, I was noticing that there are like really bad words in there.		Appreciation: reaction, quality Graduation → force Heterogloss ; from this point forward, Ella and the students are in conversation with the novel.
9	<i>Ella</i>	Oh yeah, right. Some <i>bad words in there.</i> Um. Which maybe means that we should jump <right to> number (.4)	Nods. Picks up stapled packet from desk. Turns page on packet and looks at it.	
10	Unidentified Student (Male)	Cause that's the first bad word at least that comes to my mind.	Puts packet back on desk. Off camera.	
11	<i>Ella</i>	[[They [[She uses the n-word (.1) in the book <On> <page> 28 I think is the first time. Um (.1) So anybody have some comments on that? Why would <<she>> (.1) <use> the n-word? Should she, should she <u>not</u> use the n-word?	Looks down at packet on her desk.	<i>Judgment</i> : critique; <i>Appreciation</i> : reaction, impact (word is verboten). <i>Appreciation</i> : valuation.
12	<i>Ryan</i>	She just throwing it in there to (.1) spice things up? (.5) Ted? I mean, um, Ryan? Your lips are moving [[back there [[aw	Looks around the classroom	<u>Modality</u> of obligation; interpellates the novel, the curriculum, and societal norms. Graduation – focus.

13	Ella	<p>She's using it as a sentence enhancer. As a <i>sentence enhancer!</i></p>	<p>Walks off camera towards the back of the classroom. Student laughs.</p>	<p><i>Appreciation:</i> valuation.</p>
<i>Unidentified Student (Male)</i>				
14	Ella	<p>Okay. Boy. That's good. What does that mean, though?</p>		
15	Ryan	<p>Uh. (-4) She's She's using it cause she wants to use it. () That's not the first time they use a bad word in there.</p>		<p><i>Judgment:</i> social sanction, propriety.</p>
16	Ella	<p>() Okay. You You're saying these are bad, supposedly</p>		<p>Projection. <i>Judgment:</i> social sanction, propriety. Counterexpectancy? In lines 60-63, Ella seems to be conflating the teacher in the story incident with the narrator of the novel. <i>Appreciation:</i> composition, complexity</p>
17	Ryan	<p>[[bad kids</p>		
18	Ella	<p>[[Supposedly bad kids, but Not the first time she's (.1) used a bad word there. So it's a <i>sentence enhancer</i></p>		<p>Explicit instructional discourse.</p>
And really then to accurately portray her characters.				
Right?				
That these				
This is the words that the (uh) characters would use.				
Any other comments?				
Yeah, Serena?				
19	Serena	<p>Well she's using it to prove a point. Like if they don't want her to say it Then she doesn't want to hear it back from them because she heard people going back and forth, calling each other names and so she was trying to figure out what to do.</p>	<p>Off camera.</p>	<p><i>Judgment:</i> social sanction, propriety.</p>
Ella reappears on camera, walking back to the front of				

- 20 *Ella* Okay. You said something
- 21 *Serena* If they don't want her to use it?
(Well) like
If she's trying to like prove a point
That she doesn't want to hear that stuff in her class (.2)
then (.1) she was showing them how it sounds to her when they
say it
- 22 *Ella* Okay. And how *did it* sound to her?
Why don't we go to that page?
And (.1) that could be helpful.
Because you see, **one of the things she says about it is**
that "it erases someone's face"
- 23 *Serena* 12 (.1) page 12 () is that what you're talking about, Serena?
When **she explains how it sounds to her?**
And then Mac, if you have something else?
<<Um>> (.3) well they ()
On page 28 (.3)
Like yeah two () yelling at each other
- 24 *Ella* Serena, honey, can you try and speak up?
Please? Uh
- 25 *Serena* [Sorry.
- 26 *Ella* [>I'm old and hard of hearing.< Yes?
- 27 *Serena* **They keep going back and forth with each other saying**
shut up
and **she says she doesn't want to hear it**
- the classroom.
Faces the students
again.
- Projection.**
- Turns back towards
desk.
Walks to the left to
get a book.
- Modality** of possibility.
Judgment: social sanction, propriety.
- Projection.**
- Faces the students
again momentarily.
Flips through book.
Looks up.
- Ella walks over to
the classroom
windows and
adjusts the
temperature
controls.
Points at student.

<and> uh | Stacy says | that black people can call each other that and | she's saying | that she doesn't want to hear it. | She's trying to say | that | if I said it | (.1) | (then) | how would you guys feel about it?

| If I said it | meaning white | how would you feel? | (.5) | She's hearing it from you guys and it just sounds disrespectful.

Okay. Ah.
Well, what I'm not finding is
"if I said it, how would (.2) it sound (.1) to you" (.3)
Oh!

>>"Not in this classroom they can't
"Stacy shrugged her shoulders
>"It don't matter what you say anyway" (.3)
Uh

About okay
if she's going to flunk (cause) someone uses that word

Um (.1) | she says it | She says that | She does say | it erases their face | (.2)
Uh (.3) <<let's go with the cards here->>

and go with

Omar? What do you think?
()

29 Omar
30 Ella **Should she be using the n-word here?**

Appreciation: reaction, impact. Also part of the ongoing *Judgment* of the characters.

Student interpretation of the passage under study.

Coding of book text based upon video cues.

Reads from the book.

Emphasizes dialect.

Makes beckoning gestures with hands.

Flips through the index cards in her hand.
Selects a card and reads it.

Switch to the regulative register.

Judgment: social sanction, propriety.

31	<i>Omar</i>	No.		
32	<i>Ella</i>	Okay	Makes beckoning gesture with book.	
33	<i>Omar</i>	()	Makes gestures with both hands that seem to indicate length.	<i>Appreciation:</i> composition, balance
34	<i>Ella</i>	Okay. Now, Mac is bringing up sentences that she's using that it enhances the	Makes slight "bowing" gesture.	<i>Appreciation:</i> composition, balance
35	<i>Omar</i>	Because it accurately portrays the characters (.2)	Points at self.	
36	<i>Ella</i>	So what about that?	Makes "arch" gesture.	
37	<i>Omar</i>	Um (.5) ()		
38	<i>Ella</i>	Pardon me? I have no idea. Okay. You need to think about it a little bit. Let's um bring up then the fact that for example that this <i>past</i> summer (.2) that past summer last past summer matter of fact (.2) <<the>> <<um>> NAACP had <a> (.3) <i>Funeral</i> for the n-word and the idea <<was>> that (.1) the African American community itself or these <i>leaders</i> of the African American community itself were trying to say <that> this word has no place in our vocabulary. We should just leave it out. Now these kids are arguing that hey, we get to say it to each other	Identification analysis conducted on lines 130-150 for teacher DA. <i>Judgment:</i> social sanction, propriety.	

and (.5) it's just part of our vocabulary
So they're saying
hey, we get to choose what's in our vocabulary
A bunch of grownups aren't going to tell us what (.1) words we can use and not use.

Will you take a minute here?

Let's take two minutes and <write down in that space> your thoughts (.1) <on> the use of the n-word

<Can> they say (.1) <uh> "We can be able to do it" I think she says that "black kids can say it to each other" (.3) <And> <<then>> (.1) we know that the grownup in the room doesn't want that to happen we know that in larger society

grownups (.2) largely [Some grownups.

[don't want that word to be used. You can go on the back.

Judgment: social sanction, propriety.

Makes beckoning gesture.

Makes a "balancing scales" gesture with her hands.

Reads from book.

Judgment: social sanction, propriety.

Looks up and addresses the class. Makes circling gesture.

Judgment: social sanction, propriety. Student challenges Ella's negative appreciation of the n-word as universal; judges Ella. Regulative; refer to Figure 5.2 for remainder of this segment.

39 Unidentified Student (Male)

40 Ella

The Appraisal analysis of this lesson segment reveals how Ella is negotiating solidarity with her students around the “n-word” on Page 28 of *Dangerous Minds* through both Appreciation and Judgment language resources. It is important to note that Ella and her tenth graders were *not* engaged in social analysis in this segment. That is, they were not addressing the question of who had the rights to use the word *nigger* in the real world. Instead, in this lesson segment and throughout the course of the period, they were careful to limit their discussion of *nigger* to the author and the characters in *Dangerous Minds*. Thus, the discussion fits the secondary English classroom subgenre of “Curriculum Initiation,” where a shared ethical position is adopted. In other words, the rules for engagement inside the literature unit were established through the use of Appreciation language resources. In the transcript, both Ella and the students who spoke largely used Appreciation to talk about what is going on at the beginning of the novel. After Ella solicited students’ reaction to the book (“I liked it”), some reacted to the ways that the word *nigger* was used in the composition of the text, speaking to its role in achieving balance (*nigger* “enhances the sentences she is using”) and complexity (*nigger* “accurately portrays her characters”). During the lesson segment and the period as a whole, neither Ella nor her students actually *said* the word. It can be postulated that this class, and perhaps others at Pinnacle, used “the n-word” as a politeness norm within sanctioned school discourse. This was not overtly questioned by Ella or any of the students during the discussion, save for one quiet off the floor correction. When Ella asserted, “We know that in larger society, grown ups largely don’t want that word to be used.” a male voice responded, “Some grownups”. Indeed, the entire class discussion about the “n-word” that day was not emotional at all, which given the context of the

school and what Ella told me about prior discussions in this class, was very surprising. Race has been a central focus in Pinnacle conversations, which are often emotionally tense, aggravated interactions; nevertheless, students of all races are used to voicing their opinions whenever the topic arises (Sassi & Thomas, 2008; E. E. Thomas, 2008). It was clear that there was an unspoken consensus *not* to talk about the real world implications of the forbidden word.

The forbidden word *nigger* thus safely contained within the Appreciation of an approved work of literature, Ella and her students turned towards Judgment of the author's and the characters' use of the word. Judgment describes the ways that people should and should not behave, and describes their character. In the previous chapter, we observed how Anthony used Judgment in order to critique his struggling student teacher. In this case, Ella and her students Judged the author's and her students' use of the "n-word" through negative social sanction. They Judged the word as "bad", which indeed it was within this classroom if it could not be named. Furthermore, the ethical implications of using the word were explored by one of the students, Serena, before Ella shifted the discourse from the novel to larger society. Serena, who is White, assumed the subject position of the author/teacher, LouAnne Johnson as "she", and spoke for her, ventriloquizing, "She's trying to say that if I said it, then how would you guys feel about it? If I said it – [I] meaning, White – how would you feel? She's hearing it from you guys, and it's disrespectful." In this case, "you guys" referred to the Black and Latino students on the page and to the heroic White teacher. Thus, Serena affirmed the position on the word *nigger* that LouAnne Johnson (both author and teacher) explicitly held, and that, as evidenced through the absence of the word in the discourse, *her* teacher Ella

Daniel also held. In doing so, Serena negotiated solidarity with Ella, appropriating both the instructional *and* regulative registers to help establish a shared ethical position on the forbidden word.

Tracking the way that *nigger* was referred to throughout the lesson segment is also informative. Many synonymous words and phrases were used to stand in for what could not be said. According to Ella, *nigger* was “the n-word”, “that word”, “some bad words in there”, “the first bad word”, and it can “spice things up.” The students who spoke up consistently referred to it as the “n-word”. Ella then brought in a second, new discourse into the discussion. She appealed to the authority of groups that have condemned “the n-word”: *the NAACP, the African American community, leaders in the African American community, and grownups*. One student challenged her by insisting that only *some grownups* “don’t want that word to be used”, but the others allowed Ella’s position to stand without protest. Before the discussion moved to the way that *nigger* might be used by different groups in society for different reasons, Ella quickly moved away from instructional discourse about the subject matter and began to regulate the writing assignment that students were to complete after the discussion. The remainder of the period continued with discussion of the word within the context of *Dangerous Minds*, as students completed their worksheets of prepared questions.

In some ways, this lesson segment was a courageous conversation in action. Ella did not avoid talking about the word *nigger* completely; she and her students engaged it within the context of the novel. They did not say the word, but instead chose to use other words and phrases to represent the “n-word” instead. Since this was an English classroom, not a town hall meeting about the use of the racial epithet *nigger* in

contemporary American society, the discussion of the “n-word” was contained within the secondary English classroom macrogenre, and was managed by Ella *and* her students through the instructional and regulative registers. Although *nigger* was never said, racial differences among the characters were named not only by Ella, but also by the students. From the discourse segment above, Serena, a White student named both the race of LouAnne Johnson (“White”) and the race of her students (“Black kids”). There is much to be said about constraining the conversation in this way within multicultural, complex classrooms. By relegating a racial slur to the word of *Dangerous Minds* instead of the world outside of the English classroom, temporary alignment can be achieved, and conflict can be averted. The ideological dilemma of talking about the “n-word” in a multicultural classroom helmed by a White teacher is addressed by the solidarity that Ella and her students negotiate: *Certain words are so bad that they should remain unspoken.*

However, taking a more critical approach, we might ask whether or not Ella and her class ever truly do negotiate solidarity about the “n-word.” During the entire class period, including the discourse segment presented here, Ella remained in control of the classroom discussion. Also, the three students who spoke at length -- Ryan, Mac and Serena -- were White. Ella called on Omar, who is African American, for his opinion, and Omar, comparable to Anthony in the PCDSG, had little to say. When Ella asked Omar what he thought about Mac’s view that the n-word operated as a sentence enhancer, he said, “I have no idea.” Without an after class interview with Omar (such as the one with Anthony) to learn what he was thinking and what he meant, we cannot know whether “I have no idea” veiled or expressed what he was thinking about what Ella and the White students’ were saying. We could speculate that he had no thoughts about

Mac's point, or that he, like Anthony, was ready to burst out, but holding back. If the former interpretation is valid, then the claim that solidarity was being negotiated would seem to include, or at least not exclude, Omar as well. If the later interpretation were the case, then Omar, and perhaps other African American students, were poised on the edge of an inflammatory outburst.

Within this potentially volatile condition, Ella redirected her students to the worksheet she has prepared with questions for them to respond to. The questions were meant to allow students a personal space to record their thinking about the use of the n-word in the text. Students would be voicing their opinions off the floor and out of public view. This move can be read as a strategic way of diffusing what could have been a tense situation. However, Ella also told her students, "If you don't know the answers to these questions, then it's a good idea to jot down what we end up agreeing to." With these words, she reinstates another source of contention within the class. Whatever students' individual views, eventually everyone in class was expected to come to a common agreement about how to think about the use of the n-word in the text. Group consensus should become the position of each individual.

Also of note is that only White students contributed substantive responses to the conversation about the way that the "n-word" was being used by LouAnne Johnson and her students. The discussion remained contained, and in doing so allowed the group to remain on task. However, these gains came at the expense of other substantive curricular objectives: examining, questioning, and perhaps even critiquing the use of the n-word in the world (or perhaps, more dangerously still, immediately outside in the halls of Pinnacle High School). Other than Ella's anecdote about the funeral for the "n-word",

there was little discussion about the societal metadiscourses/Discourses that *nigger* indexes. Ella used the authority of African American leaders as evidence that the word should be forbidden to all, yet did not address the widespread use of one version of the “n-word” within the lexis of certain registers of African American English. Neither did she examine the historical context of the word, the contemporary ideological dilemma of speech rights (“Black kids can say it”, with the attendant implication that White people *cannot*), and even why the word might have made her and others uncomfortable. Ideally, the class could have had a much more “substantive” discussion, and yet -- had Ella done for Omar a version of what I had done for Anthony? Realizing that he was feeling aggravated and unable to engage in the discussion on the terms that she, Ryan, Mac and Serena had provided, had she moved on to keep him from derailing the class discussion? With her worksheets, Ella had strategically planned to manage a predictable conflict so as to make it possible to keep everyone in the game, without realizing that stating the goal of consensus could undermine her efforts. As a former teacher at Pinnacle, I might speculate on the reasons why Ella chose not to take the risk -- both personal and professional.⁵⁴ However, ultimately, solidarity was negotiated, consensus on the themes and morals of the novel was achieved, and Ella Daniel’s classroom moved on to learn another day.

⁵⁴ The impetus for this study was analysis of a classroom lesson of my own at Pinnacle, where I chose to open up the conversation beyond the literature to talk about race in society (Sassi, 2008; Sassi & Thomas, 2008). Ella’s choices might usefully be juxtaposed against my own.

Ella as Professional Learner: “The Frame Clash Thing, Basically Misplaced Assumptions...”

Returning to the third PCDSG workshop, which was presented from Anthony Bell’s perspective in the prior chapter, makes it possible to see how Ella responded to the same events. Participating teachers were engaged in a discussion about a variety of discourse analysis concepts with an outside expert in language, literacy, and culture. The goals of the workshop were to continue reviewing definitions of conflict in high school English classrooms, and to move deeper into our introduction to discourse analysis methods as a tool for understanding how conflicts arise, progress, and are resolved.

Ten minutes before Anthony’s impassioned speech, the group had been discussing the concept of **frame clash**, or “an experience that runs counter to your expectation” (Rex & Schiller, 2009). All of the participants were engaged in discussion, save for Anthony, for reasons that were articulated in Chapter 4. A few minutes before Anthony’s own frame clash with the group, Ella negotiated solidarity with the consultant and some of the other teachers by sharing three personal stories from her classroom.

Excerpt 5.4 Transcript, PCDSG #3 (1:07:18 – 1:12:21)

1. Consultant: So whenever there’s a clash, that’s a moment of opportunity to say “Whoa, what just happened there?”

2. Ella: I see that all the time, I mean, especially with my new experience of working with these kids. It’s like when I say something, and I mean it in a certain way, and the reaction that I get is just *out there* to me. And these bells are going off about okay, *something just happened there* that, I’m not sure what it was, but it was not what I meant to happen, and the understanding was *different*... um, than what I meant it to be. And I have a couple of examples, but do you want to, um...

3. Marilyn: No, I wanted to...

4. Ella: Um, let’s see. Well, I was also, my question about that too was... I can see myself in the future when that happens, like with having taken my new knowledge and all that, and talking

to kids about what a frame clash is, that when it happens to say, “Oh... think this was a frame clash here. Let’s talk about it.” And I don’t know if you talk about do, is that advised, or not, ill-advised. Two things. One that wasn’t a *bad* frame clash, but...

This one kid, first nine weeks, right, I give him his um, first nine week report card grade print out and he’s got an A. And it turns out this is the first A he’s ever gotten in an English class. In the first place he looks at me, his face is so bright, and he goes to give me this (*holds up her fist*), you know this? (*Ella simulates a “fist bump”, known in hip-hop culture as a “pound” or “dap”.*) And I go (*holds out her hand as if offering a handshake; the group laughs*). And I’m like argh! (*Covers her face with her hands.*) I was mortified, because I just thought, “I could have done that!” But see, I think that’s an example of a frame clash.

5. Consultant: How did he react?

6. Ella: It was just awkward. It didn’t matter, it wasn’t like it was a big bad deal or anything. But it was just, “Okay, we expected different things, and so...”

7. Marilyn: Yeah.

8. Ella: Or the other thing was, and again, they can’t be *bad*, I can’t think of one right now that’s really bad...

We watched a movie, and part of it was, you know, that this young woman and this man who was actually played by Tupac Shakur, okay, so there was sort of investment in it, um, they were kind of gettin’ along, get, not gettin’ along, and in the end they were certainly in the getting along phase. So when the credits started rolling, I’m saying, “So okay, now we know they’re gonna get married, they’re gonna have other kids.” And they were just “*Are you kidding, Mrs. Daniel? Where are you getting that? That is just not... Why do you think that?*” And it was just sort of, uh, “Okay...”

9. Marilyn: That’s a great one.

10. Ella: “What do you think?”

11. Marilyn: “No happy ending...”

12. Ella: They just thought it was really crazy. (*shrugs*)

13. Ebony: Wow.

14. Marilyn: Yeah.

15. Ella: (*mutters*) My little middle-class, White happy ending.

16. Marilyn: (*laughs*)

17. Ella: Anyway. So... (*gestures towards the consultant*)

18. Marilyn: That’s a good example, though.

19. Consultant: That’s a wonderful example.

20. Ella: But I’m... But what I’m thinking about is, a lot of times it’s not that sort of jovial, sort of “it doesn’t really matter how it goes” kind of thing, when it’s... Oh, I’ve thought of one.

Cause I tried to do, I mean, I sort of debated, do we really do the “What do you expect about your students? What assumptions?” And I just couldn’t make myself stop to do that. But as I thought about examples of the frame clash thing, those were basically misplaced assumptions. But one of them was a student that I’ve been having... trouble with. Difficulty with. And... at one point, we had had some good talks, and emotionally we’re making some connection, and I mean, I had said something about, “You know, you ever wanna talk some more about what...” You know, because she’d made some allusions about things that were happening at home, and she couldn’t talk about, because people didn’t get her trouble, and I said, you know, “You can talk to me about it if you want.” And, um, you know, I’m 53 years old, I’ve had some experiences. She just dismissed that – sadly, not accusingly or anything – but she just said, “Your life is nothing like mine.” And afterwards I just thought, now, I’m sure that’s true in a basic way. On the other hand, she doesn’t know what tragedies I’ve had in my life...

21. Marilyn: That’s true. That’s true.

22. Ella: What various things have happened. And again, I think that though, that some of what I’m trying to think of, but can’t right now, some of when you go off on a kid when there’s a frame clash, they go off on you, and all of a sudden it’s...

23. Consultant: That’s another great example. Because that’s an example of not your assumptions about her, but her assumptions about you. Cause kids have assumptions about us as teachers, too.

As stated in Chapter 2, ideological dilemmas inhibit the development of shared ethical positions, and the even more elusive framework of shared purposes that teachers are striving for in classroom interaction. These dilemmas are revealed through what we labeled as “frame clashes” in the PCDSG workshop. In my analyses of the PCDSG, I term them as *décalage*. While Anthony would have his moment of *décalage* during this workshop about fifteen minutes after this segment, Ella revisited three moments of *décalage* that occurred in her teaching where “something just happened there”. The first involved different kinds of nonverbal communication, and the second and third involved different ideological expectations.

First, Ella talked about a missed opportunity for alignment in nonverbal interactions with a student (line 4). She held out her hand for a handshake; her student held up his fist for a “bump” or “pound” (refer to Image 5.1). The group laughed with

recognition and understanding at these differences in nonverbal greetings between members of different cultures interacting within the same classroom.

Image 5.1 Ella's Fist Bump and Hand Shake; Erin in Background (PCDSG #3)



Taking a social semiotic approach to the screenshots, I used Kress and van Leeuwen's notion of **point of view**, derived from the work of Michael Halliday, to look at this moment of *décalage*. There were several points of view, or **perspectives**, in Ella's story and accompanying gestures. First, there was Ella's perspective. She held out her hand to shake, a nonverbal gesture that effectively symbolized her ideology as a peacemaker. Yet her student raised his fist, a nonverbal gesture that was indicative of his affinity with postmodern hip-hop culture. From Ella's newly informed point of view, this academic version of "rock-paper-scissors" was an occasion where she could have matched her student's hand gesture as an opportunity to negotiate solidarity ("I could have done that!").

There are other points of view implicated in this moment, mediated by positioning, social status, and time. During the moment that Ella narrated her story, there were four other teachers listening (Anthony, Erin, Jane, and Marilyn), as well as the guest

consultant and myself. The entire group laughed at the first story, including Anthony. Another point of view was surfaced by the consultant asking a follow-up question of Ella (“How did he react?”). Ella responded that the moment was “awkward,” but not a “big bad deal” (line 6). This indeed may have been the case, but it is interesting to consider what kinds of meanings her student as well as any others observing the interaction might have made of it. Did the students laugh? Did they feel awkward? Did they agree with Ella’s evaluation that the difference in nonverbal gestures was not a “big bad deal,” or did they find it significant?

The second story that Ella told involved a frame clash between different social conventions for romantic endings. Ella’s expectations were very different from those of some of her students. After the class viewed a film in which slain hip-hop artist Tupac Shakur is the romantic lead, she made a prediction that her students found absolutely absurd: “So okay, now we know they’re gonna get married, they’re gonna have other kids” (line 8). According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the national research clearinghouse for public health statistics, “lower percentages of non-Hispanic Black men aged 25-44 years have ever been married compared with non-Hispanic White men of the same age range... among women 25-44 years of age, non-Hispanic White women have the highest percentage that have ever been married (84%) and non-Hispanic Black women have the lowest percentage that have ever been married (56%)” (CDC Website, 2009). As an African American man playing a character who was a member of the working poor, it was statistically unlikely that marriage would have been the most logical post-film outcome for Tupac’s character. Ella’s frames about love and marriage were derived from her perspectives as a White, middle class woman, most of whom are

married by age thirty, while her students' perspectives were derived from lived experiences that were far more aligned with the characters in the film.

The final story that Ella tells revealed an emotional experience she had with a troubled student. Ella believed that she was negotiating solidarity with this student, but the student rebuffed her efforts, saying, "Your life is nothing like mine" (line 20). While Ella validated her student's observation to the group, her words and her tone indicated that she was less than pleased with what the student had said, which was borne out by her next statements ("She doesn't know what tragedies I've had in my life... what various things have happened"). The most powerful members in the group that day, Marilyn and the guest consultant, validated her intentions. Marilyn responded to Ella's observations about the student not knowing about the tragedies in her life by saying "That's true", while the consultant observed that "kids have assumptions about us as teachers, too." The value of her final story is that Ella moved the concept of *frame clash* from the professional into the personal. While she acknowledged that she led a very different kind of life than this student and the others she was teaching, the *décalage* -- disarticulation and disconnect -- that this often caused unsettled her greatly.

What kinds of assumptions might her students have had about Ella? All of the stories that Ella chose to share with the PCDSG from her practice indexed another story that she told during our initial interview. In it, she talked about a frame clash that she experienced early in the semester with Omar, the African American student who seemed reluctant to talk in the first hour class that talked about *Dangerous Minds*:

Ebony: In your opinion, what counts as conflict? You can give a general definition, or talk about a specific situation.

Ella: Well... I had a negative interaction in first hour. And this was just about, well, I passed one of the first hour students in the hall, and he was talking about he was “gonna FUCKING HAVE TO MOVE!” It was really loud, and so it was one of those... “Omar, come on, you need to watch your language.” But he would not even acknowledge. You know, sometimes it can all go away if the kid just says, “Sorry, Ms. Daniel”, you know, but it was no, he would just not acknowledge that it was wrong. And so I said, “Hey, you need to be going to class anyway.” (And he said) “Oh, no, I’ve still got five minutes, blah blah blah.” So then he comes in and he drops his backpack, and he sits right in that seat, he drops his backpack and he’s still got his hat on, which we’ve... been in conflict with kids about since September, and he says, “Oh my GOD” and then he’s turning away. And I say, “Omar, what’s wrong?” And he turns back to say, “You.” And you know, other kids are around... I... I felt like it was *bullying*, really... ‘cause I don’t get to say the smart remark to put him in his place. And it was just... yuck. So that’s conflict.

Clearly, Ella’s perspective about the discourse and interaction of schooling, and where such discourses and interactions belong, differed from the perspectives of some of her students. First, Omar’s language was not acceptable to Ella. She critiqued his tone of voice (“it was really loud”) and his lexical choice (“come on, you need to watch your language”). From Omar’s actions in the classroom during the *Dangerous Minds* lesson, it seemed evident that he understood the expected behavior for class. Second, the interaction occurred in the hallway before school started. Despite his protests that “I’ve still got five minutes,” Ella did not find the argument valid (“blah, blah, blah”). He enters

the class angrily, dropping his backpack and keeping his hat on, although a new rule from Principal Lunsford that took effect that school year mandated that students could not wear headgear. Next, we see that despite his language and interaction clearly expressing his displeasure with her regulation of his behavior prior to the start of class, from Ella's perspective, Omar was taking his anger out on her without warrant. She stated that teachers like her "don't get to say the smart remark to put him in his place", yet after hearing her words, Omar *was* put into his place in the hallway; he had to report to class five minutes early.

Although student perspectives on teacher discourse and interaction are outside of the scope of this case study and larger research project, it is useful to look across all four stories that Ella shared with the group and me in order to ascertain probable causes for conflict in her teaching practice. In her conversation with the A student, Ella was unfamiliar with the "fist bump" gesture that he offered her, offering him a handshake instead. After the Tupac Shakur movie, Ella's expectation that the two main characters marry was ridiculed by her students. When Ella gave a troubled young female student an invitation to confide in her, she was rejected, with the girl telling her "Your life is nothing like mine." Finally, when Ella reprimanded Omar for cursing in the hall, and requested that he come to class early, he let her know that she was his problem. Later in the semester, Omar was still reluctant to speak up in class, as seen in the *Dangerous Minds* lesson.

What could be a possible source for the frame clashes that Ella was constantly experiencing with her students? As stated previously, the racial and ethnic diversity at Pinnacle High school had significantly increased over the past decade. Teachers like Ella

who had previously taught students from racial, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds much like their own were now teaching students from many kinds of backgrounds. However, the ethos of what Ella labeled “middle-class, White happy endings” still prevailed as the assumed norm around the school, a default assumption that was quite invisible for most of the teachers in the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group. Students whose lifeworlds, perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences deviated from that norm were Othered in teacher discourse, as well as in regulation, as we have seen with Omar. Given this context, the constant imploring of Ella’s colleague Anthony that teachers “make the students see how this is relevant to *their life*” referenced the central ideological dilemma that Pinnacle High School faced during the semester of the study -- how to close the racial achievement gap and engage teens from diverse backgrounds.

In an unequal society, racial and ethnic differences in schooling and society create an asymmetry of power relationships. In the seminal article “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack” (McIntosh, 1992), women’s studies scholar Peggy McIntosh deems white privilege as “an invisible package of unearned assets... about which I was meant to remain oblivious. (It) is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools, and blank checks.” In other words, in a schooling context where students’ racial and ethnic identities and social subjectivities mattered, Ella *always already* had access to an invisible knapsack that some of her students may not have known existed. The student who expected her to share their celebratory fist bump, as well as the class who laughed at her wedding plans for a deceased gangsta rapper, did not express awareness that their teacher’s discourse and interaction was derived from supposedly normative White middle class ideologies.

Others, more fully aware of White privilege, may have known more about the contents of Ella's invisible knapsack, and managed their discourse and interaction accordingly. When Ella's troubled student told her, sadly, "Your life is nothing like mine," she was expressing awareness of the differences between her identities and social subjectivities, and her teacher's. Omar learned early in the semester that his ideas about space and time differed from Ella's. As we have seen in the *Dangerous Minds* lesson, later in the school year, he learned to police his behavior accordingly. Although Ella told him that "you need to think about it a little more," it seems from his actions that Omar *had* put quite a bit of thought into what should be said in Ella's English class, and what should not be. Therefore, he chose to be silent.

Here, we can make claims about the utility of discourse analysis to shed light on how inservice teachers might work to better reach *and* teach all learners (Draper, 2000). Ella Daniel is an example of an experienced teacher who was eager to improve her practice and close the achievement gap in her classroom. She was an alumna of the National Writing Project, a member of the National Council of Teachers of English, and has written for professional journals. She was specifically interested in issues around race, becoming one of the teachers who joined the Courageous Conversations that followed the Glenn Singleton visit, as well as becoming a founding member of the Pinnacle High School equity team. She genuinely enjoyed learning about new cultures and working with diverse learners, which is why she was so perplexed by the troubles she was having with her regular English classes. It was only through close analysis of Ella's discourse and interaction across contexts that we could unpack her invisible knapsack.

*Ella as Colleague: Once and Future Conflict*⁵⁵

I have spent the majority of this case study exploring moments of tension and uncertainty in Ella Daniel's teaching, choice of teaching materials, and relationships with a student population that was becoming increasingly different from her. These represent isolated incidents that were dilemmatic for Ella and thus stood out from a repertoire of many years of successful teaching, as well as respect from students and colleagues from many different backgrounds. In the excerpt below, Ella talks about what she has learned over the years when dealing with student conflict.

Excerpt 5.5 Transcript, PCDSG #2 (36:05 – 37:09)

Teachers silently read a brief section, "Reframing to Re-see Possibilities", from Rex & Schiller, Speak to Me (2007: 7-8). (33:22 -35:52).

1. Ebony: So what are your thoughts on that? English teachers read fast because we're checking papers all the time. *(laughter)*

2. Ella: Well it made me think of working with many more special ed students this year than I had in the past, and also with the special ed teacher. And I used to, when confronting students, you know, it needs to be "Put that away *now!*" Or, you know, "Stop what you're doing! Get that pencil out, *now!*" and then "Wait", sometimes with a steely stare as I'm looking at them. Not quite tapping my foot, but definitely okay, this is a power struggle, and "You have to do what I'm telling you to do *now.*" And I have found *(gestures with hand)* that, be willing to tell them what to do, and assume that they're going to do it, to turn and walk away, to give them the moment to make it their idea, or whatever they do. Just works so much better, so many more times do they actually do it. *(nods)*

Through the stories Ella shared during the PCDSG workshops, we can learn how one experienced teacher took up specific concepts from discourse studies in order to

⁵⁵ Some elements of this section previously appeared in the approved prospectus for this dissertation study (Thomas, 2008).

make sense of the ideological dilemmas in her own practice, and how she was supported and affirmed by other teachers in the PCDSG. Although Ella was not conducting formal analyses of her talk during these three instances, she did recognize the utility of this work for thinking about her teaching, and the cultural differences between herself and the students that she works with this year. Like the other late-career teachers, she came to the third workshop with her binder of PCDSG readings highlighted and tabbed, and expressed the value of what she was learning to the consultant and to me. However, there is much that can be learned about the ways that Ella learned how to deal with an aspect of classroom interaction that she was uncomfortable with -- conflict – over time. A general analysis of the structure of her monologue reveals quite a bit about how Ella has come to terms with the dilemmas of teaching.

Figure 5.1 Analysis, PCDSG #2 (36:05 – 37:09)

it needs to be
 “Put that away *now!*”
 Or, you know,
 “Stop what you’re doing!
 Get that pencil out, now!”
 and then
 “Wait”,
 sometimes with a steely stare as I’m looking at them.
 Not quite tapping my foot,
 but definitely,
 “okay, this is a power struggle,”
 and “You have to do what I’m telling you to do now.”

Ella’s monologue correlated external and internal articulations of conflict with the linguistic shifts she makes between the past and present. In the first half of her response to the question, Ella used strong directives to describe how she dealt with students in

potentially conflict-laden situations in the past. The directives (or commands) given to students are shaded in gray, while the underlined statement -- “definitely, okay, this is a power struggle” -- indicated strong heteroglossic modality when speaking about the power in the discourse that she used with students in the past. The circumstances (coded using the Comic Sans font) gave context for Ella’s strong statements – “sometimes with a steely stare as I’m looking at them”, and “not quite tapping my foot”. The body language that she recounted using with students is as strong as the directives that she gave. She recounted looking at her students with a “steely stare”, and is *almost* but not quite tapping her foot. In invoking her “steely stare”, Ella employed ideational metaphor (a kind of grammatical metaphor, cf. Martin & Rose, 2003), which “involves a transference of meaning from one kind of element to another kind” (2003: 104). Ella’s stare had the quality of steel, and so did her words to her students.

Ella’s language and gestures next indicated a shift to her philosophy of action towards potential conflict in the present:

And I have found (*gestures with hand*) that,
 be willing to tell them what to do,
 and assume that
 they’re going to do it,
 to turn and walk away,
 to give them the moment to make it their idea,
 or whatever they do.
 Just works so much better,
 so many more times do they actually do it. (*nods*)

Both the shift to the present perfect, and the expressive hand gesture, signaled a movement forward in time. Gone were the external directives of the past. In their place, there were internalized processes – a willingness to tell (not command) students “what to do”, an assumption of compliance, and turning to walk away, indicating a level of trust in

students to comply. After given a moment “to make it their idea”, Ella’s opinion was that “they’re going to do it.” She concluded her response by contrasting her approaches to conflict in the past and the present. Her verbal evaluation indicated that the latter method “just works so much better, so many more times do they actually do it”, and she nodded to add more emphasis. Ella shifted from acting on conflict to reflecting on it, engaging in praxis, and changing her approach. It is also interesting to note that while she personalized her past approaches to conflicts with students (“I used to”; “not quite tapping my foot”), after the shift, she narrated the present in the third person. “I have found” is a referent to the experience that this late-career teacher had earned in practice. Thus, Ella illustrates how one might talk about evolving views about conflict in the classroom, when the very notion of conflict is personally unsettling. For, as she assured us in the beginning of this case study, “Conflict is a reality.” Even with her peace-loving nature, Ella faces the reality of conflict in her classroom and in the life of Pinnacle as a matter of course. In addition, here and at other times during the workshop, by her willingness to share her experiences and her emotions with her colleagues, Ella created safe space for other teachers to engage more fully in the workshop.

Discussion: How Ella Negotiated Solidarity

We have seen the challenges that Pinnacle High School English teacher Ella Daniel faced as Pinnacle High School became increasingly diverse. Yet Ella’s discomfort with conflict in her new twenty-first century teaching-learning context led to creative tension that strengthened her practice and contributed to her sense of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Through lesson planning and curricular selection based upon

many years of experience, and deep engagement with professional development activities like the equity team and the PCDSG, Ella remained a relevant and effective teacher for secondary English students from all backgrounds. The ways that Ella worked toward negotiating solidarity in and through her classroom practice, and in the discourse study group, looked very different from Anthony's methods, but were also derived from her lived and learned ideologies.

With her students, Ella carefully regulated the use of the word *nigger*, negatively judging the use of it through appeals to external authorities. Ella used the constraints of pedagogical discourse to limit conversation about the n-word only to the book under discussion, *Dangerous Minds*. Unlike Anthony, Ella did not disrupt traditional I-R-E/F structures of classroom discourse, but instead utilized this convention to remain in control of the discussion. In order to warrant her claims, she introduced the voices of African American leaders from the NAACP, telling students that there was a funeral for the "n-word". Although one student muttered a challenge about the shared ethical position that the class is coming to around that particular "bad word", in the end, Ella told her students that if they are not sure about what to write, they should write down "what we've ended up agreeing to" – that the word *nigger* is forbidden and inappropriate in the classroom. Therefore, it is clear that part of the framework of shared purposes that contributed to solidarity building in Ella's classroom is the regulation of particular words and phrases that are socially sanctioned in the larger culture, and unavailable for use by outside groups.

As a curriculum designer, Ella had to balance bringing provocative and culturally relevant material into the classroom with the need to regulate instruction and maintain a

framework of shared purposes in order to build solidarity. Analysis of the page that Ella and her class were discussing revealed six different lexical strings: *race, rules, regulative discourses and actions, student responses to being regulated, the teacher's external processes, and the teacher's internal processes*. Based on this, we have seen that there were many different kinds of approaches that Ella could have taken as she planned her lesson. However, she chose to foreground and restrict the use of the “n-word” right at the beginning of the literature unit. In doing so, it can be inferred that Ella made both strategic and tactical choices about what to talk about on the page. The choices that Ella made while engaging in lesson planning anticipated the subsequent conversation with her students for the social consensus building around the “n-word”, which in turn reinforced solidarity around their Judgment of it.

Within the context of the PCDSG, Ella articulated her progressive value systems, and some of the challenges that she faced while teaching diverse learners. During the PCDSG workshops, she connected to the discourse analysis concepts that were being presented, and spoke frequently, and contributed to the group from her past teaching experiences. On the one hand, Ella valued safe space and consensus in her classroom, as well the use of nonpresentation and silence in order to discourage points of view that might harm others. However, she also valued connections with her students, and was frustrated by the frame clashes she faced with them that were primarily caused by differences in culture, race, socioeconomic status, and generation. Reading across the stories that Ella told to the group and privately to me revealed an asymmetry of power between Ella's frames and those of the students with whom she was clashing. Unpacking

the invisible knapsack of privilege inherent in Ella's ideologies was only possible through close analysis of the discourse and interaction across contexts and over time.

Ella's case study, like Anthony's, has manifold implications for a profession that is whitening just as the student populations that it serves become more diverse. For instance, how might Ella's case speak to the ideological dilemmas that English teachers face? What roles do not only race and culture, but gender, social class and even generation play in the kinds of conflicts that English teachers identify in their teaching and professional life? Is skilled avoidance of these conflicts an effective means of dealing with conflict? Can learning discourse analysis help teachers wrestle with questions like these? The next chapter will examine the last question as we turn from individual cases to the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group.

Chapter 6

Dilemmas of Negotiation and Solidarity: The Case of the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group

In the past two chapters, I have described, analyzed, and discussed the discourse practices of two English teachers who were participants in the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group. Using the framework of ideological dilemma analysis, I have analyzed some of the ways that Anthony Bell and Ella Daniel talked with their students and with their colleagues. Additionally, I have examined the ways that Anthony interacted with a struggling preservice teacher, and how Ella used a socially challenging text during disparate moments of potential conflict. These case studies provided a representative cross-section of different kinds of teacher talk across disparate contexts at Pinnacle High School during the PCDSG semester.

From the Anthony and Ella cases, I discovered that surfacing ideological dilemmas in individual teacher practice requires many hours of participant observation, and investing time in building relationships with teachers. My positioning within the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group (PCDSG) resulted in the development of different kinds of relationships with each participant. From my perspective, each member was a friendly colleague in my former department, and a valued member of the professional learning community that I facilitated. Anthony and Ella in particular not

only opened up their classrooms to me, but also provided me with access to their internal ideological dilemmas during informal conversations. This was not the case for every participant. Members of the PCDSG were free to choose their own individual level of involvement in the group, of analysis of their classroom interaction, and of reporting their findings to colleagues.

The original goals for the group were to examine the discourse events that high school English teachers identified as conflicts during the course of their classroom discussions. My initial intention was to analyze the ways that teachers discussed those conflicts with colleagues within the context of a professional learning community (PLC). Furthermore, my ultimate intention for this work was to contribute to the limited qualitative research literature on effective teacher professional development and professional learning communities. I acted on that intention when I proposed these objectives to the teachers at the start of the study:

- To **document** what inservice high school English teachers identify as conflicts during classroom discussions.
- To **describe** the nature of these conflicts using the tools of classroom discourse analysis, taking into consideration the curriculum under study as well as contexts where such conflicts might arise.
- To **extend** the literature on inservice teacher professional development and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).
- To **develop** a conceptual framework for teachers, administrators, teacher educators, and researchers interested in the implementation of a classroom discourse study group model.

These objectives were aligned with the original stated purpose of this research study, as articulated in Chapters 1 and 2. At the onset of this project, I posited that the unique convergence between identity, schooling, and society in secondary English teaching leads to conflicts that are inevitable in classroom discourse and interaction. Furthermore, the complex identities and social subjectivities of twenty-first century English teachers generate different lived and learned ideologies that are at times multiple, competing, and even contradictory. This causes internal conflict inside of us and external conflict as we interact with diverse others, which in turn inhibits the attainment of a framework of shared purposes.

Since analysis of my own teacher talk helped me identify moments of disconnect and disarticulation in my interactions with students, I assumed that providing similar experiences for the PCDSG teachers in identifying, describing, and analyzing their discourse conflicts could potentially improve their interaction with students and ultimately their practice. In this chapter, I present what occurred in response to the following questions: How did the group engage during the individual workshops? What kinds of tasks did the group take up, and what kinds did they defer or struggle with? What sorts of activities did the group find immediately applicable to the kinds of interactive challenges that they faced in their teaching contexts, and what sorts of activities did they believe might be useful in the future? What types of activities did the group *not* find useful? How did the entire group talk about conflict in their classrooms and in the school?

In the introduction (Chapter 1), I suggested that the local and societal historical context of the PCDSG encouraged the negotiation of solidarity, based on the ethnographic context of the social milieu of Pinnacle. This proved to be the case. Teachers in the PCDSG privileged the negotiation of social relationships in each of the workshops. Just as the teachers were experts at negotiating solidarity in their classrooms, they were experts at negotiating it with each other. As we saw in the Anthony Bell chapter, they valued obtaining group consensus even above and beyond their own strongly held individual opinions. In order to do so, they used a variety of tactics for talking with each other and with me in the group.

As stated in the theoretical framework chapter (Chapter 2), social solidarities can be formed through the tactical and strategic use of language. As we have seen in the cases of Anthony Bell and Ella Daniel, teachers participated in, enforced, and reified these social solidarities through the strategic and tactical use of language. Since language constructs and mediates our social relations, then the deconstruction and problematization of the language used to construct these relationships is crucial for understanding how and why group members talked about conflict. The PCDSG data set consisted of talk between adults from the same social groups within the school environment. The social ecology of such interactions is often quite complex. For instance, as we have seen, Anthony Bell and Ella Daniel shared the same group membership as teachers of “regular” tenth graders in the Pinnacle English department. However, other factors such as gender, race, ethnicity, religious belief, career stage, marital status, and/or parenthood made teachers’ tactics and strategies for language use quite different. This was also true of the other teachers in the PCDSG. Each teacher was an individual at different life and career

stages, in the midst of different life circumstances, living in disparate lifeworlds. Thus, I approached the workshop data with the question: **How then did the Pinnacle High School English teachers participating in a discourse study group wrestle with the ideological dilemmas inherent in negotiating and *constructing* group solidarity through language?**

Data Selection and Ideological Dilemma Analysis

Table 6.1 Research Subquestions, Data Selection, and Ideological Dilemmas

<i>Research Questions</i>	<i>Data Selection</i>	<i>Dilemma</i>
<i>How does the group negotiate solidarity around a common definition of conflict in the English classroom?</i>	PCDSG #1 (12:39 – 21:21)	How does this group talk about conflict, when what is perceived as conflict is generated from individual perspectives?
<i>How does the group negotiate solidarity around approaches to conflict?</i>	PCDSG #2 (1:07:18 – 1:12:21)	How does this group talk about approaches to conflict over time, when these approaches are generated from individual experiences?
<i>How does the group negotiate solidarity around the efficacy of a member's teaching as they analyze his discourse?</i>	PCDSG #4 (34:54 – 38:50)	How does this group talk about the value of negotiating solidarity when a group member is not present?

These data selections and analyses provide windows into the ways that the members of the group negotiated their social relationships and their professional learnings over time. First, group members' initial talk about conflict provides a glimpse into the kinds of interactions that occurred during the first meeting. Interaction during subsequent meetings was far more varied, as the group built upon shared readings and experiences. The PCDSG teachers talked about the development of their strategies for

engaging with conflict over time, about how the discourse analysis concepts they were learning related to what they had seen in their teaching and in their lives, and how they analyzed a valued colleague's classroom interaction when he was absent from the workshop. In the end, they talked about what they enjoyed about the PCDSG, and what they needed to see change in order to participate further.

All of these data points and analyses provide information about how this particular discourse study group worked at this school, during this time, for teachers who valued their professional relationships with one another and me. What we learn from this is that discourse analysis had some utility for these teachers. They became more aware of their language use in the classroom, and related the discourse analysis concepts they read about to their teaching experiences. However, in order to be independent analysts of classroom talk and interaction, they needed far more time and access to technology training than was possible during a single semester.

Findings

Negotiating Solidarity Around Definitions of Conflict: PCDSG Workshop #1

At the first two meetings of the PCDSG, participants signed their IRB consent forms and discussed the coursepack readings on discourse analysis.⁵⁶ Plans were made for the PCDSG teachers to engage in a number of preliminary activities based upon the readings, but the limited time allotted for meetings prevented the group from going beyond the first two or three agenda items.⁵⁷ During these early workshops, participants

⁵⁶ Please refer to Appendix E, "Coursepack Table of Contents for the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group".

⁵⁷ Please refer to Appendices B and C, which contain the agenda and PowerPoint slides for PCDSG Workshops 1 and 2.

talked about their current and forthcoming units, and about issues in classroom management they faced in the past and present. Initially, I asked participants to be prepared to record their own classrooms, but as stated in the description of research methods (Chapter 3), participants signed up for me to come into their classrooms in order to observe/participate, videorecord, audiotape, and take ethnographic fieldnotes.

The first PCDSG workshop was held on Wednesday, March 19, 2008. The primary goal of the workshop was to extend teacher knowledge of discourse conflicts through readings and discussion of what conflicts in the high school English classroom look like. My purpose was to obtain a shared group consensus on the definition of conflict. Before the session, the teachers had been provided with several readings about conflict, which I had asked them to be prepared to discuss.

Anthony and Ella's cases demonstrated ways in which the beginning of a literature unit is a critical point for negotiating solidarity in secondary English classrooms. The beginning of the first PCDSG workshop can be described as undergoing a similar dynamic as the teachers immediately initiated negotiation of solidarity around the concept of conflict. Since the meaning of conflict for this conflict-laden topic was to be ultimately derived from the teachers' experiences, it was important to analyze the discourse at the beginning of the workshop.

James began the discussion about conflict during the first meeting of the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group by volunteering to read the first paragraph from an article he and the other teachers had read before the workshop. In the article, a veteran high school English teacher opines about what she has learned about conflict in the

secondary English classroom through many years of teaching and professional development experience.

Excerpt 6.1 Excerpt from Mary Ellen Dakin’s “The Case for Conflict in Our Classrooms” *English Journal*, 97 (3)

*In the Elizabethan theatre at the Folger Shakespeare Library in 1994, a discussion about the power of Shakespeare’s words somehow became a dispute about the N-word, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, and censorship. I was one of thirty-five English teachers from around the country participating in the Teaching Shakespeare Institute, and a scholar’s morning lecture had cut through the flesh of text to the bone of experience. Azalie Hightower, a teacher in a local Washington, DC public school, proclaimed softly that she no longer welcomed Huck into her classroom. I said then with thoughtless ease what I say now with tempered deliberation: “Huck Finn isn’t racist; it’s about racists and race in America.” Not as a Black woman to a White woman, but as one English teacher to another, Azalie said to me, “Think of the most hateful word a man can call a woman.” I did. “Would you like to read a book that had that word on almost every page?” She paused. “And would you like to read it,” she asked, “when you were sixteen and in a classroom filled with boys?” (Dakin, 2008)*

Before turning to the subsequent conversation in the PCDSG, as seen in the case study on Ella Daniel, it is very important to examine the text under discussion to determine which of the topics that the teachers and I chose to take up, and which were not discussed. The following are the themes identified in the text above.

Table 6.2 Topics Identified in the *English Journal* Excerpt Read in PCDSG #1

	Topic	Text
Content	<i>Teaching Shakespeare</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the Elizabethan theater of the Folger Shakespeare Library • A discussion about the power of Shakespeare's words • One of 35 English teachers from around the country participating in the Teaching Shakespeare institute
	<i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Censorship • She no longer welcomed Huck into her classroom. • Huck Finn isn't racist; it's about racists and race in America. • Would you like to read a book that had that word on almost every page? • And would you like to read it when you were sixteen and in a classroom filled with boys?
	<i>The N-word</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A discussion about the power of Shakespeare's words somehow became a dispute about the N-word • Think of the most hateful word a man can call a woman
Pedagogical Approaches	<i>The author's position on teaching Huck Finn</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Huck Finn isn't racist; it's about racists and race in America.
	<i>Azalie Hightower's position on teaching Huck Finn</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She no longer welcomed Huck into her classroom. • Would you like to read a book that had that word on almost every page? • And would you like to read it when you were sixteen and in a classroom filled with boys?

	<i>The author's position on the scholar's morning lecture</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A scholar's morning lecture had cut through the flesh of text to the bone of experience.
	<i>Azalie Hightower's position on the scholar's morning lecture</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She no longer welcomed Huck into her classroom.
Interpersonal Relationships	<i>The author's interaction with Azalie Hightower</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I said then with thoughtless ease what I say now with tempered deliberation
	<i>Azalie Hightower's interaction with the author</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proclaimed softly • Not as a Black woman to a White woman, but as one English teacher to another

Three topics illuminate what was next discussed. The first points to the **content** of the conversation. The occasion for the conversation was the well-known Folger Library workshop on teaching Shakespeare that many English teachers from around the country participate in every year. The impetus for conflict was the introduction of Mark Twain's novel *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, a text that has often been censored in American classrooms for its judicious use of the word *nigger*. As we saw in Ella Daniel's classroom, the taboo of the "n-word" is a central theme of the conversation, but participants do not use it directly.

The second group of topics focuses on discussion of **pedagogical approaches**, that is, what teachers choose to teach, how, and/or why. The author of the article chose to teach *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, because it "isn't racist; it's about racists and race in America." She implied that her rationale has shifted from thoughtless ease to tempered deliberation because of Azalie Hightower's responses to her. It is also implied Azalie no longer taught *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* because of its use of "the most hateful word" that a person of African descent can be called. In order to explain

and clarify her position on the word, Azalie appealed to the fact that both she and the author were English teachers, and talks about the implications of teaching *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* for classroom management.

The third kind of topic references the **interpersonal relationships** between the two main participants in the first paragraph. The author critiqued her own statement to Azalie in retrospect -- *I said then with thoughtless ease* – and shows how the conversation with Azalie changed her mind: *I say (it) now with tempered deliberation*. In turn, Azalie’s tone of voice was recounted – *proclaimed softly* – and the manner of her interaction with the author during their disagreement was described as *not as a Black woman to a White woman, but as one English teacher to another*.

I have identified these topics in the passage from the *English Journal* article that the PCDSG teachers read because there are parallels between the topics generated from the interaction in the article, and the topics generated during the interaction in the first PCDSG workshop. In both cases, as in most teacher professional development groups, teachers were negotiating solidarity with each other by attempting to articulate their points of view to colleagues with differing lived experiences and learned ideologies. As Azalie Hightower negotiated solidarity with the author of the *English Journal* article by asking her to put herself in the position of a female student forced to read a word degrading to women in a classroom filled with boys, in the talk about the article, the PCDSG teachers strived to get their colleagues to view a conflict-laden from their point of view. By doing this, not only were the teachers addressing interpersonal conflicts, they were forming initial social solidarities within the group through the establishment of a framework of shared purposes through talk.

The following is a transcript of the conversation “from one English teacher to another” that followed James’ reading of the article, along with a participant tracking analysis of the transcript and the passage above that examines the interactants’ roles, how the topic shifted from those raised by Dakin to those derived from the teachers’ own experiences, and how the group achieved alignment. My intent for including this transcript and analysis is to characterize teacher talk early in the PCDSG, to demonstrate how that talk construed the content generated by the study group in particular ways, and to show how the talk constructed particular kinds of relationships among the participants.

Excerpt 6.2 Transcript, PCDSG #1 (12:39 – 21:21)

1. **Ebony:** Okay. Are there any responses to that first part of the article? I mean, does anybody want to respond to that? Like, having a situation where conflict is inherent in the very material that we teach as English teachers? So feel free to share. Let me close the door.
2. **Erin:** I remember feeling exactly those same feelings about *Huck Finn*. I mean, making that assumption that this is, you know, the greatest text in American literature and having that conversation with someone. Not that they... *awakened... you know*, or changed my awareness based on... you know, sharing exactly how it was for them to, I mean, I didn’t *get it*. This text states it so clearly. I mean, I get it now. Through reading this. But in the conversation I had with a peer, I didn’t get it the same way. I was still coming from my, you know, White middle class, you know, “wow, what a great piece of literature, this is breakthrough. How can a Black man and a White man on a raft together, you know, and you can even read it as queer literature... how can this not be the greatest thing since sliced bread?”
3. **Ebony:** I think that’s a really provocative and interesting response. I... I’ve had similar reactions to canonical pieces, coming at it from an opposite lens. So I can totally relate to that. Like, how does a Black girl from Detroit relate to Shakespeare? Or you know, making the case and selling it to kids. Anybody else? What are your thoughts? I’m gathering your expertise, so...
4. **Jane:** I think the questions that were posed made it a little bit easier to open it up for consideration at least.
5. **Ebony:** Can you say more about that?
6. **Jane:** Um, it wasn’t done in a very forceful way. It was done in a sincere questioning way that the first person could relate to.
7. **Ebony:** I definitely think that’s true. I mean, I thought about, you know, what she says later on, on the same page... “Perhaps we are too good at policing ourselves.” I pulled out some key

points for discussion. Are we really good at policing ourselves? “How do we apply the forty-five words of the First Amendment when free speech degenerates to hate speech?” On page 13, when she recounts teaching Holocaust literature, I believe it was, and one of her students tried to rhetorically argue, you know, that the “Final Solution” was a good thing, and that the Third Reich had it right. What do you do when a kid says something like that in your class? And “if conflict in our classrooms remains little more than a literary term for the plot that moves the plot forward, we have sidestepped the mission of public education.” So let’s just kind of get organic responses to the article. Like, what do you think about all this?

8. Marilyn: I agree with you. I think we are sidestepping. It’s so much *easier* to sidestep it!

(Entire group laughs.)

9. Marilyn: Yeah! And I... um... my *first* intuition when this kid says that um, “the Final Solution is a good thing, etcetera” is to just play ‘em off as a kook. You know, come on! But then I suppose we have to, the ideal would be to address his arguments in a reasonable manner.

(A couple seconds of group sidetalk)

10. Ebony: Well, what would you consider a reasonable manner? Any of you... either Marilyn or any of you. What is a reasonable manner when you have this explosive moment? You see the conflict coming, and you have this kid say something outrageous, you know, how do you sort of, head that off at the pass? Or do you let it go, and how do you make that decision? To either let it... to stop the conflict, or let it play out?

11. Anthony: If the kid were to say something like that in my class, I would try to figure out, “Is this kid looking for attention?”, number one. Are they serious? Do they have a history of hate? Maybe... try to look at the foundation at their home setup? It’s a lot that goes into a student making a statement like that. It might not be just as simple as... are you looking for... I like to call it “looking for a rush out of the teacher”. What’s the *purpose* of that statement, you know? Or do they truly believe that? And I guess I feel like, if a student truly believes that, they probably wouldn’t be stupid enough to say it in class.

12. James: That’s true.

13. Ebony: “What is the purpose of the student saying that?” I think that’s a really... *(crosstalk and nodding)*... that’s something we should talk about a little bit more.

14. Anthony: Because would they want to face the ridicule? I mean, would they be willing to go through the daily... because, I mean, especially at *this school*.

(Several seconds of silence.)

15. Ella: My first reaction would be to just *squash* that idea. To just say, “Okay, well look. When we’re discussing whatever it is we’re going to be discussing... it’s never going to be okay to advocate the wiping out of some ethnicity or race. That’s not anything reasonable. All right? And that’s... everybody needs to feel safe in these discussions. And so, we’re just, this is not a place to talk about something that’s *that far out of the mainstream*, and... so.

16. Ebony: Yeah.

(Several teachers talk at once, and laugh.)

17. Erin: Well, that was funny for me when you said “squash”. Because I work in German, too, and I hang out in Germany a lot, and in Germany it’s against the law to deny the Holocaust. It’s against the law to draw swastikas. It’s against the law to have, you know, any Nazi trappings whatsoever. They get them all from the United States. Of course. So... a kid isn’t allowed. Free speech is not protected, and a kid is not allowed to deny the Holocaust, or to say any of that stuff. In this country, we have to allow the expression of the idea, but you can’t allow hateful speech. But... but... a kid somehow to me has to be allowed to express their opinion. How are you going to ever educate it, change it, you know, modify it if a kid isn’t allowed to bring in their *error*, whatever, condition? The whole forum that we try to create where they feel safe to express... and it gets *really* hard when you’re dealing with gender situations. You know, when you’ve got trans kids, you’ve got, you know, all kinds of kids with sexual issues, you know, that are so *scary* to most of the kids in the room. Um... but... you know, that Holocaust thing for sure, you definitely want to work with... and there are many kids who carry that.

18. Ella: Well, although...

19. Erin: Many at Pinnacle, even.

20. Ella: The idea that *Hitler* had the right idea...

21. Erin: Oh, yeah.

22. Ella: That was such an extreme, that to work with people who talk about controversy about the Holocaust, and what caused it, and what happened... yeah. That I think we can talk about. But...

23. Erin: Haven’t you gotten it in journals? Kids writing that? That opinion?

24. Ella: That Hitler was right?

25. Erin: Yeah!

26. Ella: No.

27. James: I haven’t either.

28. Natalie: Well, I have.

29. Ella: Well, anyway, that kid would need.... (group laughter)... that kid... we’re not going to help that kid very much, because he’s so far from what the general feeling would be, I think. Because very few people would say Hitler was right.

30. Erin: Right. Well, Palestinian kids nine times out of ten feel that way. And what’s happened since 9/11 is that they’re not writing it anymore. They used to write it. I used to get it all the time, you know, especially because they knew I was Jewish, and they wanted to, like, try it out on me, I think. But what’s happened since 9/11 is people have been so persecuted that they are not expressing that opinion.

(The entire group is silent for approximately five seconds.)

31. Erin: Sad in a way. You know, it's sad that kids don't feel free to bring their stuff. Yeah.

32. Ebony: Well, that brings us to the very next reading...

Just as in the *English Journal* article, the PCDSG discussants reference **content**, **pedagogical approaches**, and **interpersonal relationships**. The structure of the paragraph from the article moves between these three kinds of topics, and roughly in order. The occasion for Dakin's conversation with Azalie Hightower was a professional development workshop about curricular **content**. The two teachers in the article talked about their **pedagogical approaches** to *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* in light of its controversial use of the "n-word". As they talk about their different approaches to text selection, they negotiate their **interpersonal relationships** with one another. The conversation between the PCDSG teachers echoes this structure.

Table 6.3 Topics Identified in PCDSG #1 Conversation (12:39 – 21:21)

	Topics	Participants' Responses
Content	<i>English Journal</i> article excerpt read by James (Figure 6.4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erin (2) – “I remember feeling exactly those feelings about Huck Finn.” • Ebony (3) – “I’ve had similar reactions to canonical pieces, coming at it from an opposite lens.” • Jane (4, 6) – “It was done in a sincere questioning way that the first person could relate to.”
	<i>English Journal</i> article excerpts read by Ebony (7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marilyn (8) – “I think we are sidestepping. It’s so much easier to sidestep it!” • Marilyn (9) – “My first intuition... is to just play ‘em off as a kook.” • Marilyn (9) – “The ideal

		<p>would be to address his arguments in a reasonable manner.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ebony (10) – “What is a reasonable manner when you have this explosive moment?”
Pedagogical Approaches to Conflict	<i>Marilyn</i> (9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “My first intuition... is to just play ‘em off as a kook.” • “The ideal would be to address his arguments in a reasonable manner.”
	<i>Anthony</i> (11)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I would try to figure out, ‘Is this kid looking for attention?’ Are they serious? Do they have a history of hate?” • “Maybe try to look at the foundation at their home setup.” • “What’s the purpose of that statement? Or do they truly believe that?”
	<i>Ella</i> (15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “My first reaction would be to just <i>squash</i> that idea.” • “Everybody needs to feel safe in these discussions.” • “This is not a place to talk about something that’s <i>that far out of the mainstream.</i>”
	<i>Erin</i> (17)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “We have to allow the expression of the idea, but you can’t allow hateful speech.” • “A kid somehow to me has to be allowed to express their opinion. How are you ever going to educate it, change it... modify it if a kid isn’t allowed to bring in their <i>error</i>... condition?”

Interpersonal Relationships	<i>Erin and Ella disagree</i> (18-22)	<p>Ella: Well, although...</p> <p>Erin: Many at Pinnacle, even.</p> <p>Ella: The idea that <i>Hitler</i> had the right idea...</p> <p>Erin: Oh, yeah.</p> <p>Ella: That was such an extreme...</p>
	<i>Erin negotiating solidarity with Anthony</i> (14, 19)	<p>Anthony: “I mean, would they be willing to go through the daily... because, I mean, especially at <i>this school</i>.”</p> <p>Erin: “Many at <i>Pinnacle</i>, even.”</p>
	<i>Erin and Ella disagree again</i> (23-26)	<p>Erin: Haven’t you gotten it in journals? Kids writing that? That opinion?</p> <p>Ella: That Hitler was right?</p> <p>Erin: Yeah!</p> <p>Ella: No.</p>
	<i>James negotiating solidarity with Ella</i> (26-27)	<p>Ella: No.</p> <p>James: I haven’t either.</p>
	<i>Natalie negotiating solidarity with Erin</i> (23, 28)	<p>Erin: Haven’t you gotten it in journals? Kids writing that? That opinion?</p> <p>Natalie: Well, I have.</p>
	<i>Ella and Erin negotiating solidarity with each other</i> (29-31)	<p>Ella: Well, anyway, that kid would need.... (group laughter)... that kid... we’re not going to help that kid very much,,,,, Because very few people would say Hitler was right.</p> <p>Erin: Right. Well, Palestinian kids nine times out of ten feel that way.... But what’s happened since 9/11 is people have been so persecuted that they are not expressing that opinion.</p> <p><i>(The entire group is silent for approximately five seconds.)</i></p> <p>Erin: Sad in a way. You know, it’s sad that kids don’t</p>

		feel free to bring their stuff. Yeah.
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This chart illustrates the ways that the PCDSG teachers and I negotiated solidarity around the topics presented in the *English Journal* article, our own pedagogical approaches to conflict in the classroom, and in our working relationships with each other. The first part of the discussion was concerned with our immediate reactions to the **content** of the article. Erin, Jane, and I offered responses. It is interesting that Erin and Jane related their experiences to those of the author of the article. Erin stated that she remembers “feeling exactly *those feelings* about Huck Finn” (line 2), and from the context of her entire statement, we can infer that at one point she believed that the novel was not inherently racist. Jane appreciated the way that Azalie Hightower responded to the article author’s feelings about *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*: “It was done in a sincere questioning way that the first person could relate to.” On the other hand, I shared with the group that “I’ve had similar reactions to canonical pieces, coming at it from an opposite lens... like, how does a Black girl from Detroit relate to Shakespeare?” (line 3) In my statement, I aligned myself with the perspective of Azalie Hightower, while questioning some of the assumptions about the setting for the article.

The discussion then turned away from talking about the experiences of Mary Ellen Dakin and Azalie Hightower, and moved towards talk about the interactants’ own **pedagogical approaches** to conflict. I read the group another quote from the Dakin article: “If conflict in our classrooms remains little more than a literary term for the plot that moves the plot forward, we have sidestepped the mission of public education.” Department head Marilyn responded, “I agree with you. I think we are sidestepping. It’s

so much *easier* to sidestep it!” (8) Marilyn’s two uses of the pronoun “it” obscured and conflated meaning. Was it Dakin she agreed with, or me? Considering further, did “it” refer to the mission of public education, or conflict? The ambiguity here marked a transition from the content of the article to the pedagogical approaches group members took towards conflict in their practice.

Four different PCDSG teachers responded to my question extending our conversation about the article, “One of (Dakin’s) students tried to rhetorically argue... that the Final Solution was a good thing, and that the Third Reich had it right. What do you do when a kid says something like that in your class?” (line 7) Marilyn’s opinion was that a teacher should either not take the student very seriously, or to address their arguments in a reasonable manner. Anthony, as we have seen in Chapter 4, spoke from his perspective as a critical pedagogue, asking the teacher-participants to take the student point of view: “If the kid were to say something like that in my class, I would try to figure out, ‘Is this kid looking for attention?’, number one. ‘Are they serious? Do they have a history of hate?’ (line 11)” He then observed, “Because would they want to face the ridicule? I mean, would they be willing to go through the daily... because, I mean, especially at *this school*.” (line 14) In contrast, Ella said that she would “squash” the pro-Nazi rhetoric in question (line 15), while Erin believed that “we have to allow the expression of the idea, but you can’t allow hateful speech” (line 17). Although all of the teachers’ approaches to the hypothetical classroom conflict were different, they expressed strong opinions about how they would handle it. These differing strong opinions had the potential to lead to interpersonal conflict within the discourse study group at its onset.

The teachers also negotiated **interpersonal relationships** with each other during this conversation. First, they negotiated differing ideologies about conflict. We have seen here and in other settings that Ella was highly invested in negotiating solidarity in her classroom and with her colleagues. Language that disturbed the peace was “not anything reasonable” because “everybody needs to feel safe in these discussions” (line 15). For Ella, the classroom was “not a place to talk about something that’s *that far out of the mainstream*” (15). Here and throughout the workshop, the teachers acknowledged a tacit, socially understood norm that was appropriate for, as Erin noted later in this workshop, “white, middle-class, liberal settings such as Pinnacle Township”. Erin also pointed out that Ella’s position of “squashing” conflict-laden discussions about forbidden topics is the law in postwar Germany, where it is illegal to discuss or depict far-Right ideas (line 17). Ella took exception to Erin’s position, and the subsequent exchange showed that different teachers in the group had different experiences when it came to students with racist and anti-Semitic views, or as Anthony said, students who were “looking for a rush out of the teacher” (line 11). Thus, the PCDSG teachers drew their own life experiences, such as Erin’s travels overseas, into the discussion about conflict. Since teachers’ lived experiences and ideologies were so very personal, this early conversation could have potentially impeded the PCDSG from establishing and developing a framework of shared purposes around the study of discourse conflicts.

The PCDSG teachers negotiated solidarity around conflict in spite of their racial and ethnic differences. Erin, who is Jewish, told the group that before 9/11, her Palestinian students used to write in their journals that Hitler was right. In her opinion, it was “because they knew I was Jewish, and they wanted to... try it out on me, I think”

(line 30). When Ella and James, who are both White, assured Erin that they have never “gotten it in journals,” Natalie, who is African American, said “Well, I have” (line 28). This brief conversation alluded to differences in the kinds of conflicts that secondary English teachers might experience in their classrooms due to variations in identities and social subjectivities. Before this conversation, Ella and James might not have been aware that some students were expressing anti-Jewish sentiment through their writing. Yet Erin and Natalie, both of whom were members of minority groups, had experienced this. It was interesting that after Erin told the group about anti-Semitic language in her students’ journals and that “since 9/11... people have been so persecuted that they are not expressing that opinion” (30), the group was noticeably silent. None of the other members chose to interject a different opinion, not even Ella, who had earlier insisted that the conflict in question was “far out of the mainstream.” Thus, Erin’s opinions, which earlier had been contested by a group member were allowed to go uncontested.

What was evident from analyzing discourse in this workshop, and the text that they read as a group, were the particular ways of talking about their content area and curriculum, and the pedagogical approaches to that content that this group of English teachers held in common.⁵⁸ While recounting their experiences with content and

⁵⁸ My facilitation of the discussion contributed to the answers that I received from the teachers. Although I was positioned as the expert, I had also been the junior teacher in this department only a few years before. Even though I had several years of K-12 classroom teaching experience, I had spent less time in the profession than everyone in the PCDSG except for Natalie. Therefore, as I led the conversation, I first solicited workshop members’ contributions, and provided them with knowledge and information from personal and professional experiences to assure the group of my expertise. Once the teachers began to talk among themselves, I stopped soliciting and providing knowledge, and started to take notes. Due to limited time, I was unable to pursue Erin’s provocative statement that “kids don’t feel free to bring us their stuff” (line 31), or to ask the group to come to a consensus about what counted as conflict. The limited time of the workshop, and my status as a novice researcher and facilitator meant that my choices to steer the first half of the conversation in a specific direction, while refraining from speaking during the second half, yielded different results than if I had asked a series of leading questions targeted towards generating group consensus about the central issue we would be studying through our discourse analyses.

pedagogy , they were also constantly negotiating their interpersonal relationships with each other and with me. The PCDSG teachers' ideologies were drawn from their varied lived and intellectual experiences, but ideological clashes were always uncomfortable, especially those involving race and ethnicity. Pinnacle was a multicultural high school where colorblindness is a virtue and colormuteness is a cultural norm (Pollock, 2004; Sassi & Thomas, 2008). Solidarity was central in the negotiation of their interpersonal relations. To negotiate solidarity was not only a desired option for these teachers and their students, in this department and at this school, it was a moral and ethical imperative. In the Pinnacle English department, the importance of arriving at shared ethical positions around literature and life was critical.

Thus, despite the implied critique of the state of classroom interaction at Pinnacle in Erin's final words – "It's sad that kids don't feel free to bring their stuff" -- no one disagreed with her verbally. If there was any lingering dissent, the group members already had enough of a stake in the project and in the harmony of the English department to remain silent. So on this occasion, interpersonal solidarity around the topic of conflict was negotiated, although there was no group consensus on its definition.

*Negotiating Solidarity Around Approaches to Conflict: PCDSG Workshop #2*⁵⁹

By the time of the second PCDSG workshop, the teachers had identified focal classes, distributed IRB permission forms to their students and parents, and read an excerpt from an unpublished draft of *Using Discourse Analysis To Improve Classroom Interaction* (Rex & Schiller, 2009) entitled *Speak to Me*. The goals of the second workshop were to review definitions of conflict in the high school English classroom, introduce the group to sociolinguistic discourse analysis methods as one tool for understanding how these conflicts arise, progress, and are resolved, and to guide teachers through the concepts of framing, positioning, and interdiscursivity as methods of analyzing classroom discourse. There were five teachers present during this workshop: Marilyn, Natalie, Erin, Ella, and Jane.

Before the PCDSG teachers began to analyze their classroom talk, I wanted them to think through key concepts to characterize social interaction. The reading discussed in the transcript below focused on several concepts from discourse analysis, including **reframing**. The Rex and Schiller text presents these terms by providing examples from their work with classroom teachers. As we began to talk about the reading, the PCDSG teachers began to relate the experiences of the teachers in the book to their own experiences over time. In the last case study (Chapter 5), Ella's shifts in dealing with conflict over the course of her teaching career were described and analyzed. The transcript below provides broader context for her monologue, which can be usefully compared and contrasted with the responses of her colleagues.

⁵⁹ Some elements of this section previously appeared in the approved prospectus for this dissertation study (Thomas, 2008).

Excerpt 6.3 Transcript, PCDSG #2 (33:22-40:22)

NOTE: Nonverbal utterances and gestures are indicated by parentheses (_). Unintelligible passages are indicated with (*unint*).

Teachers silently re-read a brief section, "Reframing to Re-see Possibilities", from Rex & Schiller, Speak to Me (2007: 7-8). (33:22 -35:52).

1. **Ebony:** So what are your thoughts on that? English teachers read fast because we're checking papers all the time. (*laughter*)
2. **Ella:** Well it made me think of working with many more special ed students this year than I had in the past, and also with the special ed teacher. And I used to, when confronting students, you know, it needs to be "Put that away *now!*" Or, you know, "Stop what you're doing! Get that pencil out, now!" and then "Wait", sometimes with a steely stare as I'm looking at them. Not quite tapping my foot, but definitely okay, this is a power struggle, and "You have to do what I'm telling you to do now." And I have found (*gestures with hand*) that, be willing to tell them what to do, and assume that they're going to do it, to turn and walk away, to give them the moment to make it their idea, or whatever they do. Just works so much better, so many more times do they actually do it. (*nods*)
3. **Ebony:** Anyone else? I mean have you, you know, ever had to reframe a conversation? Where you had to switch into the kid's mind, or had a completely different frame?
4. **Jane:** When I worked at (*alternative school name omitted*), they made a big issue of saying "We do not want you to approach students with a question instead of directions, in other words 'Would you like to move over to this seat now?' 'Would you like to turn these things in now?'" , but rather a direct statement. "It's time to sit over there." (*unint.*)
5. **Marilyn:** It's hard to come up with a time now, when I think back. I mean, I'm sure I've done it, but it's hard for me to think of one right now.
6. **Ebony:** Hmmm. Or right off the top of your head? You'd really have to sit and think...
7. **Marilyn:** Yeah.
8. **Ebony:** I understand.
9. **Marilyn:** And I agree with Ella that when I was a younger teacher (*shakes her head*) 50 years ago (*laughter*)... you know...
10. **Ebony:** It wasn't that long ago!
11. **Marilyn:** Well when I first started in 1970!
12. **Ebony:** You started in '70, too?
13. **Marilyn:** 1972. Started in 1972. (*unint*)
14. **Ebony:** Wow.

15. Marilyn: Then you could issue orders! And back at that time, you could lift a kid up by his ear (*makes a gesture; the group all laughs*). (*unint*) So I guess over the years actually I, when I left teaching for ten years to raise children and then I came back, there was a noticeable difference. There was a much more, much more egalitarian aspect to it. Which was fine with me. Because the kids that I work with seem to be able to handle that approach. And I think that works better. But I'm trying to think of a specific conversation that we had in which I turned it to a different perspective.

16. Ebony: You know, but Marilyn, because you're a veteran teacher, and probably when we look at your discourse, a master teacher, you're doing it, but you're probably doing it unconsciously. It's so internalized and automated until you're not thinking about it. I'm thinking about what you said when I was in your room yesterday for orientation, the way you turned the quiz thing back on kids. (*Marilyn smiles quietly.*) You had an interaction with a kid: "Ms. Bacall, is there a quiz today?" And it was like, "I'm not telling you." And you saw the wheels in that kid's head turning. (*Marilyn grins wider.*) There are different moves, you know. I left the classroom when I was still, I was just over my beginning hump. It was 7 years, and then I went to grad school. (*Marilyn nods.*) Now, I would have given them a yes-no answer. Or I would have given them a sarcastic remark. I wouldn't have thought to turn it back...

17. Marilyn: On the kid, yeah.

18. Ebony: On the kid. So you *do* reframe. (*laughter*)

19. Marilyn: Yeah, I guess I do. You're right. I guess it does kind of happen naturally after that, after a while. Yeah.

20. Ebony: Natalie, do you have any thoughts?

21. Natalie: Some are the same as the thoughts that Marilyn was just saying, or the example you just gave.

In this conversation, the PCDSG teachers negotiate solidarity around approaches to conflict. Themes present within this conversation included:

- Teachers' external and internal processes when dealing with conflict.
- Teachers' shifts between past and present approaches to conflict.
- Teachers' positioning of students through language choices.
- Teachers' positioning of themselves and each other within the group setting according to perceived social status.

In Ella's case, we have already seen how her interactive strategies with her students shifted over time. She learned over the course of her teaching career to allow her students "a moment to make it their idea" so that they were aligned and instruction can continue. Another late career teacher, Jane, took the same approach by first talking about the past when answering my question. However, instead of talking about past statements that she made to her students, she responded by recounting administrative directives about how to talk to students in a specialized setting.

Jane aligned her discourse with Ella's by also choosing to structure her talk about approaches to conflict during past teaching experiences. She first referred to both an alternative school in the district, and that school's administration -- "they" (line 4). By identifying this school as a discourse participant, the PCDSG group members had access to localized intertexts that gave the rest of the statement meaning beyond the immediate context of the workshop. The alternative school she was referring to had a high number of students who have had difficulty in traditional academic settings. Some of the students had emotional or behavioral special needs. Most came from cultures and/or socioeconomic groups that have historically been challenged in traditional school settings. The administration at the alternative high school was known throughout the Pinnacle Township school district for adhering to culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2000) that was suited for the needs of the population it served. Jane's recount that the administration "made a big issue of saying" that their students responded best to directions, and told teachers that they were not to approach students with questions, was reflective of class-based differences in coding orientations (Bernstein, 1990). She contrasted two hypothetical questions to a direct statement: "It's time to sit over there."

Although she aligned her experiences with Ella's by also using her professional history, instead of moving from directives to "giving them a moment to make it their idea" (line 2), her recount of experience shifted from questions that permitted a degree of student agency to "direct statements" that were congruent with the culture of the alternative school.

As the department head and the most senior teacher in the group, Marilyn commanded a great deal of authority. Yet like Ella and Jane, Marilyn referred to her time in the profession to talk about her approaches to conflict. The shift in her response from her teaching past to the present was similar to the shifts made by Ella and Jane. Whereas Ella recounted the "direct statements" that Jane alludes to, Marilyn deployed a rather violent nonverbal gesture – "you could lift a kid up by his ear" (line 15) – in addition to stating that "you could issue orders". Despite the mutual laughter about the methods of the past, Marilyn's evaluation of the "much more egalitarian" approach to conflict in the present was that it "works better", and that "the kids... seem to be able to handle that." Although she ended her statement with self-critique for not remembering a specific incident related to the discourse exercise under question, I was able to provide a recent example from my initial observation of her classroom. In return, Marilyn was visibly pleased by my recognition of her expertise in the classroom.

Although all three of the late career, White female teachers who spoke during this segment chose to talk about changes in approaches to conflict over time, it was clear that these shifts differed in impetus. Ella's was an *agentive shift*. She alluded to classroom experience being the reason for her change in approach, but did not cite any external influence that led to this change. That the shift was agentive was further evidenced by

Ella's change from personalized language that recounted experience to a third person expository tone that conveyed expertise. Jane's shift, in contrast, was caused by administrative directive at a school with a specialized population of students with specific academic needs. This *imposed shift* was one that Jane did not go into detail about; instead, she trailed off. Marilyn referred to specific years and amounts of time when talking about her *historical shift*. Her response indicated that while in the past, there were certain ways that were acceptable in dealing with conflicts with students, in the present those approaches were no longer acceptable -- and she had changed with the times.

It is also notable that the three late career teachers positioned students through their language in ways related to their problematic conduct. Ella began her response by telling the group that she is "working with many more special ed students this year than... in the past." Jane began by referring back to a time when she taught at an alternative school. Marilyn referred to giving orders and imposing physical discipline on students who were problematic. However, the brief passage from Rex & Schiller that the group had read did not refer specifically to students, but to teachers talking with their colleagues. Here is the exercise that concluded the section we read together, "Reframing to Re-see Possibilities".

Excerpt 6.4 Exercise from *Using Discourse Analysis to Improve Classroom Interaction*

Try it out: Reframe a Conversation

The next time you engage in a difficult conversation [*with colleagues*] related to teaching, ask yourself, "Is there a way to reframe a difficult conversation?" Think about who is doing the action. Could you turn the conversation inside out by asking who else could be an actor? Try starting with, 'What if...' and see if new possibilities become available.

(Rex & Schiller, 2009: 8)

All three veteran teachers chose to respond to this exercise by speaking about conflicts involving student behavior. They immediately began to share their approaches to modifying undesirable student actions. The teachers' conversation did not focus on any particular text or curriculum activity, but on student actions. The concept of "reframing to re-see possibilities" led to talk about student actions that were in implicit conflict with teachers' desires. The teachers recounted past conversations with students; however, they did not do what the exercise called for. They did not "turn the conversation inside out by asking who else could be an actor" (Rex & Schiller, 2007). Instead, Ella advised "give them the moment to make it their idea," reinforcing a conventional, asymmetrical power dynamic -- the assumption that the teacher was *giving* the student "the moment," and the student was not *taking* it. Marilyn saw a "more egalitarian aspect" to classroom interaction because "the kids that I work with seem to be able to handle that approach." However, her egalitarianism was effective with a select group, as the students she works with are in the honors sections. Implicit in the difference in Ella's and Marilyn's later comments was the idea that *not all kids might be able to handle such an approach*. English classes at Pinnacle were rigidly tracked, and Marilyn's response drew upon departmental metadiscourse about the kinds of students in honors sections, and the kinds typically tracked into "regular" English. The late career teachers were drawing from and reifying a metadiscourse that foregrounds student misbehavior by a particular set of kids as the impetus for conflict.

In all of the workshops, the late career teachers participated the most verbally, while the early and mid career teachers usually waited until they are prompted to speak. Natalie did not speak in the workshop until I asked her a direct question. In her response,

she began by positioning herself as aligned with the most senior member of the group, Marilyn, and with me, the facilitator. Since she had less time in the profession, she was not able to talk about the shifts she had made over time in her approaches to conflict. While Natalie deferred to more senior members in study group meetings, from my participant observations and videotaping of her classroom, I knew her to be a dynamic and innovative young teacher who interacted well with her honors students. Natalie also communicated with me on a regular basis via email, interviews, and in informal conversations. She had much to potentially contribute to the group discussions about conflict and about discourse analysis, yet I was unable to encourage her to participate more. In this particular case, Natalie faced a dilemma of silenced dialogues in the PCDSG that was perhaps due more to her status as a novice than to her racial identity. She chose to resolve this dilemma by deferring to more senior members of the group, taking notes, and providing nonverbal assent.

During the second meeting of the PCDSG, the teachers established solidarity around their approaches to conflict over time. The late career teachers aligned their recounts of professional practice with one another, narrating their experiences with classroom conflict by describing their external and internal processes as they shifted between past and present approaches to conflict. Their language choices drew distinctions among groups of students -- “special ed”, “alternative”, “honors” – and differentiated between the kinds of the approaches one might take toward conflict when dealing with one group of students instead of another. While Marilyn engaged in negotiation with her honors students, Ella decided that her regular English students

needed “a moment to make it their idea.” Questions of agency and determinism among students on different tracks at Pinnacle High School are raised by these distinctions.

The teachers also further positioned themselves and each other within the group setting according to their perceived social status in the situation. As seen above, Marilyn contributed the most substantively, while Ella and Jane share anecdotes from their own experiences. In contrast, Natalie began her contribution by aligning herself with more senior teachers in the department, validating the value of their experiences much as I did with Marilyn. The fact that neither of the mid-career male teachers -- Anthony and James -- were in attendance that afternoon may have changed the nature of group interaction, as they were not there to mediate the real and/or perceived social distance between Natalie and the veteran teachers. Instead of turning the conversation inside out, interaction in the workshop that day reified the social order of the group.

***Negotiating Solidarity About an Absent Group Member's Teaching Practices:
PCDSG Workshop #4***

“What we’re going to do today is really simple,” I told the PCDSG teachers at the beginning of the fourth workshop. “We’re going to watch a video from one of our colleagues’ classrooms, because he’s given us permission to do that in here. We have a transcript of the video. And then, we’re going to do a little analysis, and then, you’re going to go to your English department meeting.”

This was our agenda for the afternoon. The goal for the meeting was to establish a different protocol for analyses than I had imagined at the beginning. The group would use a simplified transcript of a lesson with the corresponding video and a

pre-prepared worksheet to guide the teachers through thinking about the meaning that the teachers' use of language might be making for their students.⁶⁰ Each of the other teachers would be guided through a similar analysis of their own talk using this process. Instead of grade-level group meetings and final interviews, my intention was to sit with the teachers as we viewed video of their practice during moments they identified for me as conflict-laden, read over transcripts from a video segment that I found particularly interesting, and conducted analysis of the same.⁶¹

At this point, each of the PCDSG teachers had been concentrating on conflicts in their focal classes for a month. Although they were attending the workshops and welcomed me into their classrooms, the idea of conducting discourse analysis on these recordings was palpably uncomfortable for them. My concern was that while my familiarity with the school helped me to recruit group members, it might have been deterring my former colleagues from wrestling with discourse analysis for the first time. Therefore, I asked a second consultant to help lead the initial whole group analysis. The consultant's suggestion was that I choose a transcript for the workshop that showed one of the teachers during a moment of effective teaching. In hopes that James would join us, I chose one of his videos. In the video, James' class had just transitioned to a vocabulary lesson. The words were derived from the literature unit under study, *A Separate Peace*. James began by talking about why he felt it was important for students to learn unfamiliar words, then told his students that there were several words on the list that he did not

⁶⁰ Please refer to Appendix B, which contains the agenda for PCDSG Workshop 4.

⁶¹ The two teachers whom I was unable to arrange individual meeting times with at this stage were James, who was on leave and in very sporadic contact with me, and Natalie, who was six months pregnant and frequently absent from school. At her behest, Natalie and I had an informal chat about discourse conflicts over coffee instead.

know. During the course of the three minute video, two of his students begin arguing over one of the words.

Excerpt 6.5 Excerpt from James Douglas' Vocabulary Lesson Video, PCDSG #4

James: Capacious. Now what could the word possibly mean? Well, in the book, it's talking about these big old houses, and that they're like Greek Revival temples, so I'm thinking the word means something along the lines of big. What does it mean?

(Many students all speak at the same time.)

Girl: Containing... or capable...

James: It means what? Meaning...

Boy: Wide and roomy.

James: Wide and roomy?

Girl: No, no! Doesn't it mean containing or capable of containing...

(Students all speak at the same time.)

James: Stop! *(holds out hand in a "stop" gesture; students all stop talking)*. Victoria, capable of containing what?

Girl: A great deal.

James: Yeah. That's the same thing. "Capable of containing a great deal" and "roomy" is the same thing. So "roomy", "large", "capable of containing big stuff or lots of stuff"... capacious. So again, guys, it's not a word I use, but I got it! Right? I'm no genius...

Boy: *(muttered)* Right...

James: I'm just looking at the way the word is used. I bet you guys should be able to do it too.

As soon as I stopped the video, I asked the teachers about their reactions to the video of their colleague's lesson. In contrast to the second and third workshops, as seen above and in the Anthony and Ella cases, instead of turning to authoritative texts or expert guest consultants for the content to be discussed, the PCDSG teachers were being asked to consider the teaching practices of one of their colleagues in a classroom setting

much like their own. The stakes were high, as they were asked to analyze an absent colleague's teacher talk. An Appraisal analysis of this conversation illuminates how the discussants construed interpersonal relationships with each other after three months of working together.

Excerpt 6.6 Transcript and Appraisal Analysis, PCDSG #4 (34:54 – 38:50)

Line #	Speaker	Talk	Gestures and Visual Cues	Analyst's Notes
1	<i>Ebony</i>	Can we just get some initial reactions to that?		
2		So (.2) here is		
3		>>>James on stage.<<<		
4			Ella laughs loudly.	
5	<i>Ebony</i>	And we've picked a really		
6		I picked a powerful moment where he was		
7		really expressing his ideology as a teacher		
8		Because again		
9		the series is about discourse conflicts.		
10		So let's just get some general reactions before we		
		get into analysis.		
11	<i>Marilyn</i>	I like that he (.2)		
12		Said that there are two words on this list that I don't know		Judgment (social esteem, capacity)
13		I mean		
14		Sometimes teachers think that we have to know it all.	Marilyn waves her hand.	
15	<i>Ebony</i>	Mm-hmm.		
16	<i>Marilyn</i>	So I was glad I saw him say that. (.3) Um	Hand in chin, looks down at transcript.	
17		And I		
18		I'm glad that he used himself as the example.		Judgment (social esteem, capacity)
19		>Like, how would I figure it out?<		
20		If I		
21		If I didn't know >what< the word meant.		
22	<i>Ebony</i>	What does that do?		
23		>In your experience< what does that do for kids		
24		when you use yourself as the example?		
25	<i>Marilyn</i>	That (.3) <<uh>>		
26		Sometimes they see us as all knowing and omniscient		Judgment (social esteem,

			capacity)
27		And it (.1)	
28		I guess it sense	
29		No, it wouldn't desensitize them (.5)	Said as a quiet aside, looking to the left.
30		Let them see that we <i>don't</i> know everything	
31		That we're human.	
32		And that (.2) <<<uh>>>	
33		We're willing to show our weaknesses	
34		So (.3)	Marilyn makes circling gestures with her hands.
35		You should show <i>your</i> weaknesses too.	
36		With me.	
37	Erin	So it takes that level	Erin uses her two hands to show the different levels.
38		with that	
39		with that kind of thing.	
40		So that really puts you on a <i>par</i> with your students.	Puts hand in chin. Appreciation (reaction: impact)
41		You're making them feel like (.2)	
42		Okay. (.3)	Nods.
43		You know	
44		You're not talking down to them	
45		You're speaking with them.	Opens her hands up.
46	Natalie	I like the fact that he even used the word	
47		<i>Stuff</i> .	Appreciation (reaction: impact)
48			The group laughs.
49		You're already dealing with words <<that you don't <i>know</i> >>	
50	???		(offcamera, "Uh-huh")
51		So you hear him using it	
52		You hear the teacher saying >>stuff like that<<	
53		It's like he wanted to bring it to their level	
54		And I thought that was nice	
55		because I do that to my students all the time.	
56		I try to tell them	
57		"Let's try to learn it in context. What do you think that means?"	Projection [Natalie]
58		I try to break things down	
59		>>>Step by step<<< you know	

60		And encourage them	
61		especially when the two students were going back and forth	
62		“No, it means this. No, it means that.”	Projection (students)
63		“Well, isn’t that the same thing?”	Projection (James)
64		And they’d be like	The group all laughs. Several say, “Yeah!”
65		“Oh, yeah! <i>We are</i> saying the same thing!”	Projection (students)
66		So I like that as well.	
67	Ebony	Speaking of those two students	
68		you have James expressing his ideology about vocab	
69		Then sort of walking the kids through it	
70		personalizing areas that he doesn’t know.	
71		But then you saw that <<<conflict>>>	
72		That little conflict at the end.	
73		And I just wanted to get your reaction to that	
74		Because I feel like these mini-conflicts are just a part of discourse in our subject.	
75		So what do you want to say about that?	
76		>>>How the kids went back and forth<<<	
77		And how James negotiated that?	
78	Ella	I heard him say “STOP!”	
79		And I wasn’t sure exactly what	
80		I mean, they were talking at the same time he was talking	
81		or (.2) what it was	
82		but he	
83		“Let’s get some peace and quiet here so we can hear what both of you are saying.”	Projection (James)
84		And then to say	
85		“Aren’t you both saying the same thing?”	Projection (teacher)
86		And I just have to say that I (.1) I feel like it’s a privilege to be able to be in his classroom	
87		because I mean	Appreciation (reaction: quality)
88		I’ve known him and enjoyed his company	
89		But I’ve never seen him teach (.1)	
90		<and> <so> it’s kind of funny to hear this person	
91		I enjoy this person	
92		I enjoy talking to him	
93		and I can hear that same kind of attitude in dealing with kids.	
94		So >>anyway<<	
95		basically he stopped everything so that clarity could be figured out	
96		And it <<really>> wasn’t an argument there	

97		They both had the right idea.	
98	<i>Ebony</i>	Right.	
99		Just different ways of expressing it.	
100		I thought that was a good example of conflict	
101		and James uses language and the things he says	
		to negotiate (.2) that conflict out.	
102		And the lesson goes on.	
103		Is there anything else?	
104		Not really?	(Silence from the group.)
105		Well, how do we analyze this?	
106		Here's a worksheet that shows us one kind of discourse analysis.	

Recall that within interpersonal discourse, the language of Appraisal invites listeners and readers to share feelings with a speaker or writer, and thus is a key resource for negotiating solidarity. In the theoretical framework (Chapter 2), my stated assumption was that skilled language users draw upon both text and context to align themselves with their audiences and negotiate solidarity through the strategic use of Appraisal resources. James' colleagues used the same kind of tactics in order to discuss the video of his teaching. In the subsequent general talk that followed the video and before the discourse analysis worksheets were passed out, the PCDSG teachers aligned themselves with their absent colleagues through Judgment and Appreciation of his teaching choices, as well as animating sources from their own teaching and the video that introduce other voices into discourse via projection.

Marilyn negotiated solidarity with James through the use of Judgment. Her interpretation of the video was that of a supervisor evaluating teacher capability, and she described specific teaching practices that she observed to warrant her claims: “**I like** the fact he said there are two words on this list that I don't know” (line 12), and “**I'm glad** he used himself as the example” (line 18). Marilyn then favorably compared James'

willingness to show vulnerability with other teachers who think they have to “know it all” (line 14) or have a teaching persona that is “all-knowing and omniscient” (line 26). I have coded the Appraisal lexis in Marilyn’s response as Judgment because Marilyn has chosen to give a global evaluation of James’ stance in the lesson. She was making judgments about his ideologies as teacher, not commenting on the specifics of his interactions with students. When I pressed her to clarify her remarks, she restated them (lines 25-36).

Erin, Natalie, and Ella’s remarks drew on resources from the attitudinal domain of Appreciation. They were also evaluating James’ performance, but they did not have the same stakes as Marilyn, who was judging his ability as a teacher. Instead, they talked about what they appreciate about elements of his practice. Implicit in Erin’s comment was that she appreciated the way that James made his students “**feel okay**” (line 41-42), and that his actions put him “**on a par**” (line 40) with them. Natalie and Ella, on the other hand, were specific about the way that James diffused conflict, pointing out specific lexical choices. Natalie noted that he used the word “stuff”, as she did with her students. Ella noted that he yelled “STOP!” to diffuse the conflict, and much of his teaching discourse reminded her of his persona outside of school.

What is significant is that they both projected James’ comment that the two arguing students were saying the same thing. Here is the original statement from the video of James’ lesson:

James: Yeah. That’s the same thing. “Capable of containing a great deal” and “roomy” is the same thing. (Excerpt 6.5)

And here are Natalie and Ella's projected versions of what James said to his students.

Natalie: "Well, isn't that the same thing? Oh, yeah! We *are* saying the same thing." (Excerpt 6.6; line 65)

Ella: "Aren't you both saying the same thing?" (Excerpt 6.6, line 85)

It is obvious that these teachers regarded "saying the same thing" highly as a solution for conflict. This admission was a significant moment during the workshop series. According to Frederick Erickson, the language practices of social groups are influenced from the "bottom up" as well as from the "top down" (Erickson, 2004). As interactants change their footing alignments with each other. Within any local group of interactants, there are social identities and footings held by both individuals and smaller subgroups. Some of these identities and footings are different; others are shared. Both individual and subgroup identity is performed and situated within the larger group in a way that usually does not subvert the participation framework, although "mutterings, snickerings, and bricolage" (Erickson 2004: 196) may be used as a way of registering discontent. Yet in certain moments of time (*kairos*) when the footing of an individual or subgroup changes, the entire participation framework adjusts to respond to the change – to accommodate it or resist it. Individuals and subgroups engaging in such work are engaging in structurally transformative agency (Hays, 1994), exactly the kind of "bottom up" discourse indicative of social change. In order to deal with the new, hyperdiverse context of Pinnacle High School at the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, teachers were encouraging their students and each other to "say the same thing."

"Saying the same thing" was evident throughout the ecologies of talk inside of

the group and in group members' classrooms. Anthony Bell told student teacher Denise Taylor that he wanted his students to understand that, "I'm just trying to get to know you better. Because if I get to know you better, then I can understand where you're coming from, and we can bond. We can work as a team, rather than as opponents." Ella told her students towards the end of a lesson about racially incendiary language, "If you don't know the answers to these questions, then it's a good idea to jot down what we end up agreeing to." Now, during the last substantive workshop, two group members made the same observation about James' teaching. They ventriloquate what he is saying to his students – they were "saying the same thing." Saying the same thing was one way that these teachers negotiated solidarity with each other, and avoided conflict in group discourse and interaction.

The teachers remained aligned with their absent colleague while talking about James' work for the rest of the workshop, even while going through the discourse analysis worksheet. All of the talk focused on what was powerful about James' teaching, not what he might have changed or done differently. The frameworks used for the teachers' analyses were derived from systemic functional linguistics, and were only focused on the specific words used by James and his students. Perhaps a critical discourse analytic lens would have led his colleagues to interrogate James' choice of texts and privileging of the Western canon in his multiethnic classroom, the use of teaching methods that emphasized the learning of vocabulary prior to the start of a unit, or whether James' positioning of himself as not knowing the definitions of words on a worksheet that he created strained credulity or was disingenuous. However, using a critical discourse analytic lens in this way may have undermined trust in the group,

especially since James was not present. Focusing on general features of curriculum macrogenres commonly found in English classrooms afforded the teachers the opportunity to begin reflecting on features of their own language during the individual discourse analysis sessions.

Discussion

Over the course of the second semester of the 2007-2008, the teachers of the PCDSG built a community where it was safe to talk about issues and challenges in classroom talk and interaction. They negotiated solidarity around each other's definitions of conflict without coming to consensus. Furthermore, they negotiated solidarity around the ways that teachers' approaches to conflict have changed over time. They supported one colleague relating personal and professional experiences to her understandings of discourse analysis concepts, and supported another colleague's teaching efficacy who was not present at most of the workshops. Finally, they negotiated solidarity with me, privileging my past role as their colleague over my current university role.

In this chapter, we have moved from the individual case studies of Anthony Bell and Ella Daniel to consider how the group's dilemmas around negotiating solidarity affected the content and the relationships constructed through the talk in the workshop series. The PCDSG teachers negotiated solidarity through letting strongly argued points of view go uncontested (PCDSG #1), aligning their talk about approaches to conflict over time according to status within the group (PCDSG #2), and establishing consensus around the value of "saying the same thing" in order to forestall conflict (PCDSG #4). Some teachers negotiated their solidarity through silence, such as when Ella stopped

disagreeing with Erin and the conversation moved on. Other teachers like Natalie negotiated solidarity by aligning themselves with high status group members. At other times, the group negotiated it through nonverbal communication. The talk and laughter that diffused the tension of talking about an absent group member's teaching in PCDSG #4 were a case in point.

The quality of teachers' engagement around ideas in the workshop was subordinated to teachers' immediate concerns from their classrooms. Talk in the first workshop (PCDSG #1) quickly turned away from the anecdote from the *English Journal* article, to specific events that were occurring at Pinnacle High School and teachers' lived experiences. In the second workshop (PCDSG #2), the teachers chose to use the text they were reading as an opportunity to reflect on past and present approaches to conflict. The PCDSG teachers talked about what they *used to do* and what they *did*, but did not talk about what they *might do* despite the prompt inviting them to "re-frame to re-see possibilities." Before the heavily guided discourse analysis exercise in the fourth workshop (PCDSG #4), the group chose not to focus on the "powerful moment" where James referenced his ideologies about the explicit teaching of vocabulary.⁶² Instead, they focused on the way that he diffused conflict between two students.

Indeed, even more than the learning of discourse analysis, the quality of the social relationships were fundamental to the ways that ideas were taken up by the teachers, and

⁶² The "powerful moment" I referred to can be found in Appendix A. In the first part of the video of James' teaching screened during PCDSG #4, he tells his students: "*I'm going to show you guys something about this, what vocab should evolve into for you... you should be able to start drawing conclusions about these words before you ever touch a dictionary. That's the skill. All right, the skill is to be able to read stuff where you have words that you don't recognize and be able to figure them out. So at least get a rough idea of what they mean from the context. Same as when you were learning to read, right? When you came across words you didn't know, you learned to sound them out. It's the same kind of thing, only now it's about meaning instead of sound.*" In this section, James is expressing his ideologies about secondary English teaching.

the content of the workshops was co-constructed. Individuals bring their identities, social subjectivities, and ideologies with them as interactants in a group setting in order to form social solidarities. Erin's experiences as a Jewish woman teaching in Germany influenced her impassioned argument about conflict-laden talk being allowed in stateside secondary English classrooms. Because groups consist of individuals from different lived and intellectual ideological positionings, social solidarities are constantly being negotiated and re-negotiated in ways that create and cause conflict. This was the case in the first workshop when Erin and Ella disagreed about what kinds of talk should be allowable in Pinnacle English classes, and between James' students in the video. Teachers in this particular group resolved these conflicts by either "saying the same thing" and encouraging their students to do so, or saying nothing at all. The end of the workshop series provided even more questions about this teaching and learning context – were the teachers actually *wrestling* with the ideological dilemmas inherent in negotiating solidarity through language? Or were they *avoiding* them at all costs?

Thus far, this study has described and analyzed the conflicts English teachers at Pinnacle High School experienced across learning contexts. It has explored the ways that these teachers described and analyzed the nature of these conflicts through classroom discourse analytic methods from two traditions (sociolinguistics and systemic functional linguistics), taking into consideration the curriculum under study as well as contexts where such conflicts might arise. The final chapter will explore the implications of this work for the literature on teacher discourse analysis and inservice teacher professional development and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), as well as suggest directions for future research.

Chapter 7

Implications and Directions for Future Research

In this study, we have seen how the seven teachers of the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group talked about conflict as they engaged in professional learning about discourse conflicts for a semester. This professional learning community was embedded in a diverse schooling and societal context where discussions about race were often the impetus for conflict. Through qualitative analysis of the study data, I found that these conflicts often occurred at moments that were ideologically dilemmatic for teachers and their students. The conflicts were usually resolved by negotiating solidarity through the temporary alignment of actions and discourses. Similar patterns of talk and interaction about conflicts were observed across contexts: in the discourse analysis study group, in teachers' classroom interaction with students, with other adults who worked at Pinnacle High School (e.g., student teacher Denise Taylor), and with each other.

The work of the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group and the experiences of individual teachers in the study were represented by three case studies: two focused on the talk of PCDSG participants (Anthony Bell; Ella Daniel), and one that examined the talk and interaction in the discourse study group (PCDSG). As stated in Chapter 3, I chose to represent my findings as case studies in order to address the complexity of the

discourse conflicts, and the applicability of results to specific theoretical propositions in secondary English education, multicultural education, and discourse analysis in education. Each case study detailed different perspectives, illustrated varying ideological dilemmas derived from individual and group experiences, and raised a range of questions. The ways that the PCDSG teachers talked about conflict and resolved ideological dilemmas were derived from their lived experiences. Yet despite these variations, as seen in Chapter 6, they ascribed value to occasions when they were “all saying the same thing” as their students and their colleagues, resolving conflict by establishing a discursive framework of shared purposes.

This chapter will first describe some of the general findings derived from reading across the two individual case study chapters. Next, the ways that teachers in the PCDSG talked about conflict will be articulated, with a focus on how they negotiated pedagogical (classroom) and andragogical (professional development) content as well as relationships with their students and each other through discourse, and where this negotiation was located in teachers’ language. The affordances and constraints of the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group will be rearticulated, and will lead into a discussion that will revisit my initial assumptions about conflict, shared ethical positions, ideological dilemmas, alignment, and solidarity, describing how my positions on these concepts have shifted because of this research. Finally, I will conclude this chapter by suggesting some of the implications of this study for inservice teacher education and professional development, as well as for discourse analysis in education.

Findings of the Study

Anthony and Ella: Reading Across Individual Cases

Anthony Bell and Ella Daniel were both experienced and respected teachers within the English department at Pinnacle High School. Both teachers had been assigned “regular” tenth grade classes during the semester of the discourse study group, and both chose a tenth grade regular English class as their focal group to study. While “tenth regular” was Anthony’s usual beat, as we have seen, Ella was not as used to teaching students who were culturally and linguistically diverse, or had special learning needs. Yet both teachers managed to negotiate solidarity through discourse with similar groups of students in different ways. Anthony drew from his lived experiences as an African American male English teacher, and his beliefs as a critically conscious educator, while Ella drew from her lived experiences as a liberal white English teacher who came of age in the 1960s as well as her progressive ideologies. Although the social solidarities formed in each classroom context ranged from Ella and her students’ negative sanction of the “n-word” to Anthony and his students’ democratic process for making choices about curriculum, they were formed through the articulation of a framework of shared purposes that was influenced by the ideologies of each teacher.

The case studies centered on Anthony Bell and Ella Daniel reified my assumption that conflict across English learning contexts at Pinnacle High School was often located within ideological dilemmas evident in teachers’ and students’ actions and discourses that impeded the negotiation of shared ethical positions. These ideological dilemmas often provided obstacles during the process of forming social solidarities. Anthony faced an ideological dilemma while trying to articulate his critical beliefs about teaching and

learning to progressive colleagues. While he disagreed with the other teachers, he wished to remain polite and save face. He found a way to speak out on behalf of students who are marginalized within schooling and society, but chose to remain silent until after the workshop. Ella faced an ideological dilemma when she chose to teach the novel *Dangerous Minds* to her students, and the first questions about the book were about the liberal use of the word *nigger*. While Ella believed that the book was an important one to include in the curriculum, she attempted to provide clarity to her students about the social sanctions that policed that word, who could say it, and under what circumstances. In these and other instances described previously, Anthony and Ella actively looked for ways to negotiate solidarity through the strategic alignment of actions and discourses, even if that alignment was temporary.

To illustrate and compare the similarities and the differences between their cases, I have charted the results from each case study.

Table 7.1 *How Anthony and Ella Negotiated Solidarity Across Contexts*

<i>Context</i>	<i>How Anthony Negotiated Solidarity</i>	<i>How Ella Negotiated Solidarity</i>
<i>Teaching of literature when race is a factor</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anthony disrupted traditional I-R-E discourse structures to share power and authority with students. • Anthony skillfully intertwined instruction and regulation to align marginalized groups in the class with powerful figures, thus building classroom community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ella affirmed traditional Curriculum Initiation discussion conventions; her class engaged in literary analysis (Appreciation) instead of feelings (Affect). • When the conversation turned towards the social significance of the word <i>nigger</i>, Ella frequently appealed

		<p>to authority to underscore the social sanction underpinning the use of the word in the academic world.</p>
<p><i>Choosing literature when race is a factor</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing carefully for her lesson, Ella chose not to say the word <i>nigger</i>; she used <i>n-word</i> instead. Her students followed her lead. • As soon as a student mentioned “some bad words in there”, Ella suggested that the students refer to “page 28” in their books and “question 11” on their worksheets. • Ella, like LouAnne Johnson in the novel, balance the ever-present ideological dilemma of equality (“we’re doing this together”) and expertise (“You need to think about it a little bit”).
<p><i>Mentoring a struggling student teacher</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anthony deployed the lexical features, rhetorical structure, and intonation of African American English when critiquing his ST. • Anthony used ideational metaphor in order to teach ST his ideological and philosophical stances towards teaching and learning. 	

<p><i>Talking about lived and intellectual ideologies about teaching and learning within the PCDSG</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anthony used indigenous ways of analyzing discourse derived from his life experiences and critical epistemologies. • Anthony skillfully used conjunctions to construct logical arguments that supported marginalized learners during a moment of tension. • At the conclusion of the study group, Anthony offered essential metacritiques of the PCDSG itself. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ella articulated her progressive ideologies about safe space and consensus in her classroom and in the study group. • Ella’s stories about her past and present teaching moved from action to reflection on her practice. • Ella believed that the PCDSG gave her a language to describe what was going on in her classroom.
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It is evident that while Anthony and Ella both engaged in teaching the same kinds of students and both participated in the study group, the features of their talk differed in telling ways. Although both taught literature units that foregrounded race, the ways that they structured class discussion during the Curriculum Initiation phase differed from one another. Whereas Ella relied on her students’ socialization into curriculum macrogenres and prior knowledge about what was appropriate to talk about in English class, Anthony disrupted traditional Initiation-Response-Evaluation/Feedback as his students discussed a number of potential literature units. While Anthony aligned a marginalized subgroup of students in his talk with an award-winning author and a man who would be President, Ella appealed to the authority of the NAACP and the 2007 symbolic funeral that the legendary civil rights group held for the “n-word” to reinforce her point that no one should be saying the word, which is an even stronger social sanction than the author/heroic teacher’s assertion that “not in this classroom, they can’t.” What a successful literature lesson looked like varied across classroom contexts drawn from the

same population of students, but both teachers used language that strategically hailed and interpellated authority figures from outside the school (James McBride, Barack Obama, the NAACP) to regulate the social implications of teaching novels about race and to negotiate solidarity with their students.

Anthony and Ella's lived and intellectual ideologies were most saliently represented in their talk during the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group workshops. Anthony was a critical pedagogue who believed that all positions ought to be subjected to scrutiny and critique. He used contextually indigenous ways of analyzing discourse derived from his life experiences and critical epistemologies, constructed logical arguments that supported the marginalized learners that he valued but that confounded his colleagues, and offered important metacritiques of the PCDSG ("Interdiscursivity? Why did they have to make up a word for that when the kids can do it naturally?") and the field itself ("We teach our subject matter, but we don't teach character"). On the other hand, Ella was a progressive educator who articulated her ideologies about safe space and consensus in her classroom ("It's a good idea to jot down what we end up agreeing to") and in the study group ("Give them the moment to make it their idea"). Ella believed that the PCDSG gave her a language to describe what was going on in her classroom. Stories about her past and present teaching moved from action to reflection on her practice, which was congruent with work she was doing in other professional learning communities, such as the Pinnacle Equity Team.

Comparing these results across cases brings to light several new understandings. Both Anthony's and Ella's discourses indexed specific, non-educational authority figures and metadiscourses from outside of the school, especially when their classroom talk was

trying to encourage students to develop a shared position about certain aspects of a literature unit. Anthony indexed the social subjectivity of being biracial by mentioning multiracial kids within his class alongside author James McBride and then-Senator Barack Obama. By making this particular decision, he warranted his claim that the novel *The Color of Water* was “kind of a different spin.” Ella indexed the negative history of the word *nigger* by talking about the NAACP, the “funeral for the n-word”, and “grownups”. This decision helped to maintain the forbidden status of *nigger* within the classroom context, although at least one student pointed out the situated nature of this status (“some grownups”). Additionally, their talk and even their decisions continued to index their lived and intellectual ideologies outside of the classroom. This is evident in Anthony’s conversation with his student teacher, in Ella’s choice to design a literature unit around a progressive White teacher of marginalized students of color in *Dangerous Minds*, and in both teachers’ talk during the workshops of the discourse study group.

It is also clear that Anthony and Ella leveraged different resources of identity, ideology, and social subjectivity in order to negotiate solidarity. They aligned their actions and discourses with those of their students and colleagues in ways that differed. Anthony drew upon his identities as *African American, male, urban educator*, and *educator of alternative and at-risk students*, his ideologies as *critical pedagogue* and *critical race theorist*, and his social subjectivities as *Black man, outsider*, and *teacher of “those kids”* as he navigated his students through the themes of a wide variety of texts, talked to his student teacher about the ideological and philosophical underpinnings of his teaching, and talked to his colleagues about the kinds of kids he has taught for his entire career. Ella drew upon her identities as *White, female, child of the sixties*, and *veteran*

English teacher, her ideologies as *progressive* and *peacemaker*, and her social subjectivities as *White woman*, *insider*, and *equity team member* as she navigated her students through the strata of the semantic minefield represented by the word *nigger*, used the ideological and philosophical underpinnings of her teaching to select a text that would foreground uncomfortable issues about race, and talked to her colleagues about moving from action to reflection in the classroom in order to avoid and mitigate conflict. These strategies of selfhood (Friedman, 1991; Matthews, Limb, & Taylor, 2000) show how different kinds of teachers might reach *and* teach similar populations, building classroom discourse communities that operate very differently, yet in ways that are found in the space between the identities, ideologies, and social subjectivities of the teacher *and* that of his or her students.

As was stated in the introductory chapter, Anthony and Ella's ideological dilemmas, and the ways that they negotiated solidarity with students and colleagues in the face of them, were so compelling that each warranted their own case study. While Ella affirmed the utility of the study group for her own professional development, Anthony provided useful critiques that will be incorporated into future iterations of this program of research. Other than Marilyn, Anthony and Ella were two of the teachers in the English department with whom I interacted most during my teaching year at Pinnacle. Anthony and I shared a past as educators in the same large urban district, and a passionate commitment to critical and critical race ideologies. Ella had been a sounding board for me as my teaching was being researched, and shared my passionate commitments to conflict resolution and peace. Due to many prior conversations with Anthony and Ella that continued during and after the study, and the short duration of the Pinnacle

Classroom Discourse Study Group, I felt that I was best able to represent them with integrity and reflexivity.

The PCDSG: Contextualizing Group Interaction

The final case study (Chapter 6) described how English teachers at Pinnacle built the PCDSG over time, how they negotiated solidarity around each other's definitions of conflict, how they negotiated solidarity around the ways that teachers' approaches to conflict have changed over time, how they negotiated solidarity around an absent colleague's teaching efficacy, and how they negotiated solidarity with me. Their talk and interaction was influenced by contextual conditions that determined *who can say or do what to and with whom, when and where, under what conditions, in relation to what actions or artifacts, for what purposes, and with what outcomes* (Castanheira, et al., 2001; Green & Dixon, 1994; Rex, 2006b). As with Anthony Bell and Ella Daniel individually, these conditions were derived from each teacher's identities, social subjectivities, and ideologies, which in turn influenced teachers' power and positioning within the PCDSG.

As stated in the methodology chapter, early in the analytic process, I constructed a **theoretical comparison matrix** that detailed the discourse metathemes in each participating teacher's talk. The goal was to identify each teacher's primary self-identified ideological dilemma as revealed in discourse metathemes. My initial content analysis revealed specific discursive preoccupations for each participating teacher. These metathemes were salient in their contributions during the PCDSG workshops, in their

initial interviews and videotaped self-discourse analysis sessions, and in their classroom discourse.

Table 7.2 Contexts of PCDSG Participant Conflicts and Discourse Metathemes

Teacher	Context	Teacher Discourse Metathemes
Marilyn Bacall	Intensive English classes	<i>Negotiating solidarity with honors students who have strong opinions and ideas about instruction</i>
Anthony Bell	Interactions with student teacher	<i>Negotiating solidarity with students, a student teacher, and colleagues who do not share his critical and critical race perspectives</i>
Jane Bradshaw	Intensive English classes	<i>Negotiating solidarity with honors students who wish to stretch the boundaries of what counts as plagiarism and academic dishonesty</i>
Ella Daniel	Regular English classes	<i>Negotiating solidarity with diverse students when racialized texts and contexts are foregrounded</i>
James Douglas	Personal life	<i>Negotiating solidarity with diverse students when one is a new father about to go on paternity leave for the remainder of the semester</i>
Erin Gray	Intensive English classes	<i>Negotiating solidarity with diverse students when texts and contexts with gender and sexuality as a factor are foregrounded</i>
Natalie Osborne	Personal life	<i>Negotiating solidarity with honors students when one is pregnant, part-time, and racially Othered within the context of Pinnacle High School</i>

We have seen above the complex ways that Anthony and Ella negotiated solidarity with their students and colleagues. Other teachers deployed different interactive resources of language and action to facilitate temporary alignment. Marilyn's primary dilemma during the semester of the study was negotiating solidarity with honors students and teachers who had their own strong ideas about the classroom and teacher meetings. The interactive resource that she often deployed was humor. At a tense

moment, a quick wisecrack or joke from Marilyn often diffused the tension. By doing this, Marilyn shifted conversations with her students and the colleagues she supervised away from conflict. Her use of humor had the additional effect of mitigating her authority as a respected classroom teacher and the well-liked department head. In contrast, Jane's dilemma during her participation in the study group was negotiating solidarity with honors students from a generation who chose to define ethics, originality, and plagiarism very differently from their teachers. Jane responded to this by remaining firm about her values and convictions about ethics in the English classroom, and was discouraged that even after a conversation surfacing her concerns, students continued to justify their behavior.

While Marilyn's and Jane's challenges in negotiating solidarity were generated from the classroom context, extrascholastic and personal matters also surfaced in the study data. During the PCDSG semester, James became a father, and had chosen to take paternity leave after spring break. Before he left for the school year, he believed that it was important for him to reach a group of African American and Latina girls who were extremely disruptive in class. He tried different ways of interacting with them, including being very firm about his expectations for them, providing them with extra attention during guided practice, and talking this challenge out with his colleagues. He was hopeful that the PCDSG would provide him with tools to understand his interactions with the girls. However, when he chose to write them up to document their misbehavior, as described in Chapter 1, Principal Martin Lunsford intervened directly during their classroom period, threatening their very matriculation at Pinnacle High School if they continued the misbehavior. Although the girls did not disrupt the class any more before

James' leave, the fact that James had not been able to figure out the problematic interaction on his own was disempowering. Another challenge that James faced was that the PCDSG workshop meeting times interfered with his seventh-hour class. Therefore, he was only able to attend the first and last meeting. Although I sent regular email messages, delivered materials to his classroom, and mailed transcripts and a DVD of his teaching to his home, it was unclear from his postmortem responses whether he had engaged in learning how to conduct discourse analysis on his own.

Natalie also worked on negotiating solidarity with her students. Most of the PCDSG fell during her second trimester of pregnancy, so she had chosen to work part-time. Although Natalie seemed far more eager to participate in the workshops, the recording of her classroom teaching, and in learning how to analyze her classroom discourse, her physical condition prevented her from attending one of the workshops. At other times, she was unable to stay for the duration due to illness or doctor's appointments. Under other circumstances, the story of Natalie's negotiation of solidarity with her honors students through othermothering and Sistertalk may have become a compelling case study about the ways that race, gender, and class intersect as teachers and students interact in classrooms. The amount of data collected in her classroom, along with the lack of opportunity to work with Natalie on discourse analysis due to time conflicts, prevented me from drawing any conclusions about her discourse practices that are not speculative in nature. This was also the case for Erin, where a number of holidays and absences limited the amount of data and participant observation in her classroom.

Each of the teachers' individual discourse metathemes influenced their interaction in the group. In Chapter 6, we saw the ideological dilemma that occurred when Erin and

Ella disagreed about whether all student perspectives should be welcomed into the classroom. Ella's progressivism and value of safe space conflicted with Erin's belief that all students should "feel free to bring their stuff". Both teachers' perspectives were derived from their lived and learned ideologies. Erin shared at length about her experiences working in Germany and being a Jewish woman teaching Palestinian students. However, as stated in her case study, Ella is uncomfortable with conflict and prefers consensus. Another conflict occurred two workshops later, between Anthony and his colleagues. Anthony's experiences as an African American man and a critical pedagogue gave him a different perspective from the other group members. Despite these conflicts, all group members worked towards finding common ground. In the first workshop, it can be argued that after labeling the situation under discussion "an extreme case", Ella conceded Erin's point. After venting to me about his frustrations as a teacher and colleague at Pinnacle, Anthony agreed to continue as a member of the study group.

The PCDSG teachers themselves provided a window into why negotiating solidarity was so important to them during the fourth workshop. After viewing a brief video of James' teaching, two teachers openly complimented James' resolution of a potential conflict by telling students that they were both saying the same thing. Since I have defined negotiating solidarity as *conflict-mitigating moves constructed through temporary alignment of actions and discourses that facilitate achievement of shared ethical positions*, we can see that one preferred conflict-mitigating move is, in the words of the teachers, to all say the same thing. To extend the point further, if teachers and students are all saying the same thing, then conflicts can be usefully derailed. The

implication is that if teachers and students are *not* all saying the same thing, then talk and action need to be targeted towards that occurring.

Returning to the theoretical framework of the study (Chapter 2), I proposed that establishing a framework of shared purposes through discourse could be especially problematic in secondary English education. The stakes for the seven English teachers of the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group, as well as secondary English teachers in general, are high. If students are learning a shared societal metanarrative learned through instruction in language, literature, and history, and it is critical to develop horizontal solidarity through the transmission of certain discourses, then this study reveals that “saying the same thing” is critical for success in secondary English teaching and learning. Although the group read Mary Ellen Dakin’s case for conflict in *English Journal*, as department head Marilyn said during the first meeting, “it’s so much easier to sidestep it”. My analyses reveal that despite valuing common ground, the teachers in this study did *not* sidestep conflicts. The three case studies reveal ecologies of talk across school contexts that complicate their self-reported ideologies about what conflict looked like at Pinnacle High School, and how they approached it.

The PCDSG: Revisiting Affordances and Constraints

In the description of research methods (Chapter 3), I delineated the affordances and constraints of the study. Affordances included my status as a community insider, the enthusiasm of the participants for engaging in professional development that was not directly about curriculum or teaching, a new school administrative team, and a district-wide goal of closing the racial achievement gap. On the other hand, the PCDSG was

constrained by a lack of time, technological challenges, and limited personnel. Teachers reported that there was not enough time allotted for the individual workshop sessions, to record and analyze their classroom interaction, or to reflect on readings. Hence, the PCDSG teachers did not develop independent proficiency in discourse analysis, and plans to continue the study group did not come into fruition due to changing circumstances at Pinnacle and within the district. Because of this lack of time, the teachers were unable to learn the digital technology necessary to audiorecord and upload their focal classes during the semester of the study.

Despite these challenges, the findings of the PCDSG are useful towards the development of a conceptual framework for teachers, administrators, teacher educators, and researchers seeking to implement classroom discourse study groups in local school contexts. The study participants themselves believed the project to be worthwhile. During the postmortem of the study in June 2008, several of the PCDSG teachers told me that they found the project to be transformative. All five of the teachers who attended most of the workshops (Marilyn, Jane, Anthony, Ella, and Erin) reported being much more aware of discourse conflicts and language choice in their teaching after participating in the group. Marilyn, Ella, and Jane said that they found what they were learning in the PCDSG to be more immediately relevant to the work of teaching than their other professional development contexts. As a result of these findings, my next planned research study, the Discourse in Schools and Society (DSS) Project, will explore how English language arts and literacy teachers' functional and metapragmatic awareness about the features of classroom discourse and interaction shifts their ways of talking about their teaching practices over time.

My future research into these areas will guide teachers and eventually students through analysis of conflict in discourse and interaction. Potentially, it will add to our knowledge base about the impact of learning about language, discourse, and interaction on instruction and teacher efficacy, as well as student agency and power in discourse. The planned setting for the project is both diverse and urban. Thus, it will provide empirical data from a longitudinal study about conflict in discourse and interaction, and the findings will be relevant for multicultural education and discourse analysis in school settings.

The PCDSG: Revisiting Theoretical Frameworks

In Chapter 2, “Theoretical Frameworks”, I discussed a series of constructs that aided me in designing my study and the professional development workshops for the PCDSG teachers. Since my initial purpose was to analyze how conflicts in classroom discourse and interaction in English teaching and learning contexts at Pinnacle were resolved (or not) in order to understand more about how social solidarities are formed through talk and interaction, I drew upon some of the literature on ***conflict, shared ethical position, ideological dilemmas, solidarity, and alignment***. I also introduced another term to describe the moment that an ideological dilemma occurs in the classroom – ***décalage***. As I described, analyzed, and discussed my data and findings, I learned that although my formulations from the theoretical framework were useful for design and data collection, analysis and discussion of the PCDSG data have encouraged me to revisit some of my initial ideas about ***solidarity, alignment, and ideological dilemmas***.

The central finding of this study was the importance that the PCDSG teachers ascribed to the formation of **solidarity** with one another and their students. As stated previously, solidarity is the formation of a framework of shared purposes for productive interaction. The process of negotiating solidarity is socially situated and unfolded over time. Social solidarities can be formed through the tactical and strategic use of language, as we have seen in each of the case studies. Initially, I theorized that if interactants were from the same social group, there would be a vested interest in keeping wayward group members from using language that undermines their collective social identity. Hence, I assumed I would observe considerable policing of undesirable discourse moves. However, I observed few and infrequent occasions where such intervention might have been considered necessary. In the English classrooms I observed, teachers and students were vested in avoiding the possibility of undermining social solidarity through language, even when interactants had personal stakes in the interaction, and could potentially lose face in the formation of solidarities.

Often, teachers and students at Pinnacle with ideologies and subjectivities that could potentially undermine the process of negotiating solidarity chose to remain silent. When faced with conflict-laden, dilemmatic situations, the teachers in the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group and their students chose not to speak about certain things. There were numerous examples of this in the data and analyses. For instance, Ella and her students did not read from a certain page from *Dangerous Minds* when they noticed that it contained a racial slur. Omar did not speak in Ella's class after their confrontation earlier in the semester. Anthony chose to stop speaking when he disagreed with a perspective that was being shared during one of the meetings. The early and mid-

career teachers did not speak as often during the meetings as the veterans, who dominated conversation. The male teachers did not speak as often as the female teachers. The African-American teachers did not speak as often as the White teachers. None of the teachers were willing to pin down a specific definition for conflict, even when they labeled an incident a conflict, or when pressed to do so. When I asked questions specifically about conflict, often an extended silence hung in the air before one of the teachers volunteered a response.

Although beyond the scope of my orienting research questions, the use of silence during the process of negotiating solidarity was also analytically significant within the context of the PCDSG meetings.⁶³ Politeness conventions for this particular department appeared to be rigidly observed, even though this was a self-selected group of teachers. The interactive patterns in the study group privileged some participants and in effect “silenced” others. Furthermore, it was not always clear whether participant silence was indicative of group dynamics, or the result of personal situations revealed in the ethnographic data (i.e., workshops were held at the end of the school day, teachers were tired, hungry, pregnant, preoccupied with other matters outside of the group or the school, etc).

The concept of silence to preserve negotiated social solidarities also has implications for transcription and analysis. My choice of transcription method does not fully capture silence in a way that is equivalent to the way that I have attempted to capture speech. Yet how does a discourse analyst represent silence in a conversation

⁶³ Further investigation into the role of silence in negotiating social solidarities will be informed by the literature on silence in linguistics (Jaworski, 1993; Kurzon, 1998), in school contexts (Delpit, 1988; Scott, Straker, & Katz, 2009; Walkerdine, 1985), in politics (Aminzade, et al., 2001; Noelle-Neumann, 1993) and culture and society (Lorde, 2001).

with many participants? Most transcripts in classroom interaction represent what is being said, but not all analyses take what is *not* being said into account. This may be because interpretation of what a participant is not saying may be difficult without interviewing them immediately after the conversation. An analyst may have access to video records, which might provide gestures and facial expressions, but without sustained observation or other ethnographic data, the meaning being made by a silent yet gesturing or face-making participant might be nearly impossible to ascertain. In order to understand when teachers are silent and why, my future research will utilize more extensive interviewing, and teachers will be asked to journal about their experiences. This may aid in understanding *when*, *how*, and *why* participants choose to remain silent during the process of negotiating solidarity.

At this point, it may be useful to distinguish between the process of **negotiating solidarity** (also referred to throughout the dissertation as the **negotiation of solidarity**) and **social solidarities** that are in the process of, have been, and will be negotiated. The process of negotiating solidarity was observed when interactants used certain kinds of talk and action in order to reach alignment with each other. In the context of Pinnacle High School, discursive and interactive **alignment** was achieved by teachers and students either “saying the same thing” (consensus) or not saying anything at all (silence). Encouraging other participants to “say the same thing” involved the use of interpersonal language resources of engagement and involvement, which I used the Appraisal discourse system of functional linguistics to surface. Through this process of discursive and interactive alignment, social solidarities were formed. However, these solidarities were

not fixed, but were fundamentally unstable due to the social nature of classroom interaction and professional development.

In the three case studies, we have seen the ways that social solidarities in schooling and society were negotiated and renegotiated *in situ*, across different individuals, groups, and contexts within a single department at one school. We have also seen ideological dilemmas that are represented through the talk and action in the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group are not unique to this group, but index metadiscourses/Discourses from outside of the immediate context. In Chapter 2, I suggested an irreconcilability between imagined teacher identities, subjectivities, ideologies, and philosophies that are assumed to be authentic, unitary, and atemporal, and the lived reality of fragmented teacher identities, subjectivities, ideologies, and philosophies that have been irrevocably created by and reified through experiences that are both personal and collective, both embodied and observed, and both lived and intellectual. This distinction between the imagined and the lived reality as irreconcilable seemed not to be the case.

The data from the PCDSG seems to suggest that differences in identity, ideology, and social subjectivity among these teachers and their students were either becoming irreconcilable, or were reconciled differently. During a conversation with his students, Anthony critically examined the ascent of Barack Obama, questioning both his identity and social subjectivities, and wondered aloud how these might compare to the lived experiences of the biracial students in that class. Earlier that morning, Ella and her class read about a contentious, conflict-laden moment in a multiracial class led by a White teacher, yet Ella's own class, which was multiracial and led by a White teacher,

negatively evaluated the word *nigger* and its use in the story and society without the class challenging her or erupting into discord. Later that afternoon, Natalie used African-American Vernacular English liberally with her White and Asian, middle-class honors English class without a loss of social prestige, yet some of these students judged their peers for the use of the same. Down the hall, Jane was bewildered by what she perceived as her honors students' lack of academic honesty (and personal integrity) compared to students in the past. Meanwhile, her digitally literate students viewed their access to information and their own literacies in ways that were different from Jane's students of even ten years before. If, as presupposed earlier, conflict in the Pinnacle High School English department was found in *ideological dilemmas evident in teachers' and students' actions and discourses that impeded the negotiation of ethical positions in the secondary English classroom*, it seems clear that the irreconcilability of these dilemmas led to more complex and challenging classroom interaction at Pinnacle High School. Teachers and students responded to this complexity through discursive and interactive alignment ("saying the same thing") and silence.

Initially, I presupposed that **ideological dilemmas** occurred when an individual experienced disconnects between his or her lived and intellectual ideologies. Social psychologist Michael Billig observed that because ideological dilemmas persist beneath the surface of social interaction, they are never fully resolved, but continue to reconstitute themselves in varying forms. In the PCDSG, the dilemmas reconstituted themselves across contexts, and across diverse identities, social subjectivities, and ideologies. The teachers brought the conflicts, challenges, and dilemmas of their classroom teaching into their narrations of practice in the discourse study group. They also brought dilemmas

from their personal lives into their practice, from Erin's passion for social justice to Anthony's critical perspective. The demands of the profession require a myriad number of ways to resolve dilemmas of self and personhood in order to be effective in the classroom. What seems clear from the three Pinnacle case studies is that if the ideological dilemmas of the Pinnacle High School teachers were generated from their identities and social subjectivities, the teachers drew on language resources *of* identity and social subjectivity in order to facilitate discursive and interactive alignment. In doing so, temporary social solidarities were formed in classes, during mentoring sessions, and in the discourse study group.

Implications

Inservice Teacher Education and Professional Development

Towards the end of the fourth workshop, I finally shared with the teachers about my own experiences analyzing my teacher discourse, and what I learned from them:

Ebony: When I studied my discourse this way, my discourse didn't look like James'. I was wondering why my students would get confused, especially when I was talking about really complex ideas in literature. I found that I was using a lot of pronouns, a lot of "this"-es and "that"s. There was never the first referent, how James sets it up, or what vocab should evolve and unfold in the text. So my students didn't have a lot to hold on to. Therefore, now when I teach, I foreground the topic and *then* I can use all my pronouns. That's a habit that I have, using a lot of pronouns. (PCDSG #4)

In the introduction, I mentioned that this project was inspired by analysis of my

own teacher talk from my Pinnacle classroom. During that school year, I experienced many of the same ideological dilemmas while negotiating solidarity with my students and colleagues that the teachers of the PCDSG did. Neither the English teachers of the PCDSG, nor I, are alone among educators in experiencing these difficulties. We know that there are numerous “societal, institutional, and political contextual conditions influencing what teachers can say and do, even in their own classrooms” (Rex & Schiller, 2009: 152). We know less about why some teachers are more effective at classroom interaction than others. The seven teachers of the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group engaged in learning more about their classroom talk and the meanings that teacher language and actions may make for students and others. In addition to engaging in initial interviews and individual workshops with me, they recorded a focal class for four to six weeks, read hundreds of pages of research in discourse analysis, and participated in a series of five whole-group workshops. For this work, they were provided with only a nominal stipend. They were primarily motivated by a sincere desire to improve their teaching and to address the racial achievement gap at Pinnacle High School. They were also curious about what their former colleague was learning about teacher talk in her doctoral studies, and each expressed a wish to help me with my research.

It is beneficial for teachers of secondary English to learn more about language, discourse, and interaction. However, most teacher training in English education does not provide formal instruction or informal opportunities to consider the role that language plays in the classroom. Although students are learning advanced proficiency in a language, learning *about* a language, and learning *through* a language, this process is rarely made explicit. An apt metaphor to describe the role of language in secondary

English education is to think of it as air. It is essential for learning and teaching, it surrounds teachers and students, and it is the building material for all literacy instruction. Yet in many secondary English classrooms, language is rarely considered apart from the mechanics of writing, or the consideration of the literary devices in a text.

We know that somewhere between the secondary and tertiary levels of education, the literacy achievement of students from diverse language and cultural backgrounds levels off (Schleppegrell, 2006). These students often struggle with the linguistic demands of the specialized academic genres across the disciplines. More often than not, they are confronted with educators who sometimes do not value and often do not understand the ways that they use language. Specifically within the African American community, Kunjufu and others have observed that African American boys are engaged in school when they first enter in kindergarten, but around fourth grade, they begin to experience alienation from the academic and social culture of school (Kunjufu, 1982). By middle school, the alienation from academic language and literacy is complete for far too many. I posit that it is not coincidental that this alienation coincides almost precisely with the point where the specialized academic genres are introduced -- where students are not only learning to read and write in a more formal linguistic register, but also learning to read and write within specific academic fields and disciplines.

Over the past generation, there have been calls to honor underserved students' right to their own language (Scott, et al., 2008), but we must do more. At the beginning of the second decade of the twenty-first century, it is not only safe for English educators to validate students' home and community codes, languages, and cultures, it is expected by the profession. However, along with honoring students' languages, we would do well

to provide them with the knowledge of the ways that meanings are made within specialized academic registers in schooling and society. As Schleppegrell (2004) points out, “having gained control of (academic) registers, students can then manipulate them and use them to construct the diversity of meanings that reflect their own cultural contexts and goals... new kinds of meanings will emerge as students make academic registers their own” (2004: 162-163). Teachers who are knowledgeable about language and have the ability to analyze their own discourse are well positioned to reveal to their students linguistic codes of power that matter in academic contexts and in an unequal society. To that end, a growing number of researchers and teacher educators in literacy and English education are providing professional development materials for teachers interested in language and discourse (D. W. Brown, 2009; Rex & Schiller, 2009; Rymes, 2009). This study supplements and extends these and other resources that provide teachers with tools to conduct discourse analysis towards classroom interaction by describing how one group of teachers began to take up this kind of learning.

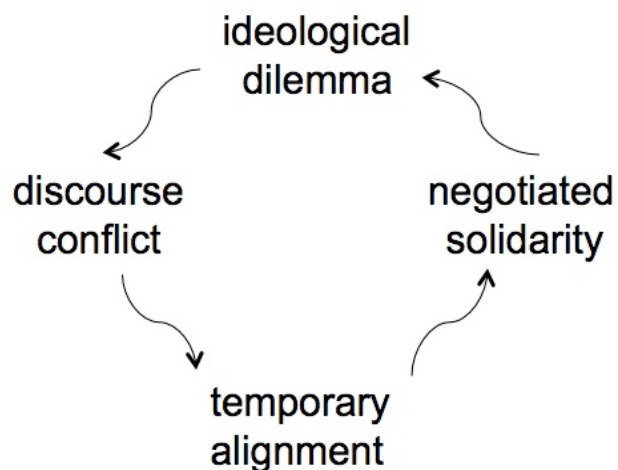
The findings from this study trouble notions that the teacher is the central figure and the powerbroker in classroom interaction. Further work in this area might consider the ways that teachers’ social subjectivities mediate their power and positioning, and how that mediation might affect classroom discourse and interaction. Engaging our youth in language and discourse analytic activities alongside their teachers is another intriguing possibility. Providing access to language and discourse pedagogy for secondary English students will not only help reveal codes of power, but may provide students with tools to leverage the resources of home, community, and school languages in novel ways,

creating new genres and futures out of the *décalage* that characterizes contemporary schooling and society (Kirkland & Jackson, 2008; Martin, 1999b).

Discourse Analysis and Classroom Interaction

From my findings, I have begun to tentatively diagram a cycle of conflict and negotiating solidarity that I observed in PCDSG teachers' classrooms and the discourse study group. First, a discourse conflict surfaces and reveals underlying ideological dilemmas. The conflict is resolved through the temporary alignment of discourses and actions to repair the interaction (Rex & Schiller, 2009). On the surface, solidarity is negotiated, but the ideological dilemmas of individuals and subgroups within the context remain. These ideological dilemmas inevitably surface once more as conflict.

Figure 7.1 PCDSG Interactive Cycle of Conflict and Negotiating Solidarity



Language features in systemic functional linguistics that signal discourse conflicts are found in the **Appraisal** register. The aspects of Appraisal that were found most often

were **Judgment**, **Appreciation**, and **Graduation**. Interactants Judged positions, words, and behaviors both positively and negatively, Appreciated the value of literary works and teaching practices, and Graduated their language with heightened *force* and *focus* during moments of *décalage* in the classroom, in the PCDSG workshops, and in other contexts (e.g., Anthony's mentoring of Denise Taylor). When conflicts arose around the interpretation of printed texts, such as in Ella's classroom and in PCDSG #1, I found it useful to conduct **Identification** and **Ideation** analyses to illustrate how interactants chose to take up what they read, tracking how themes moved from the written word into verbal conversations. Although all of these systems were useful for analyzing interaction around conflict, future research into the ways that participants use Judgment and Graduation linguistic resources may provide insight into the development of the Negotiation system (Martin & Rose, 2007).

My goal is to continue my investigation into the kind of language and interaction that is characteristic of discourse conflicts in secondary English classrooms, and schooling and society more broadly construed. Here, I turn again to Brent Edwards' assertion about *décalage* first articulated in the theoretical framework: that it is only through examining forms of *disarticulation* – that is, “points of misunderstanding, bad faith, (and) unhappy translation” – that we can properly understand a paradigm (in Edwards' work, the African Diaspora; in this study, secondary English classroom interaction) that has long been viewed as a totalizing construct (B. Edwards, 2009). It is clear that *décalage* (or disarticulation, or disconnect) was always present on the horns of the ideological dilemmas faced by the teachers of the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group.

We seem to be arriving at a *kairos* moment in schooling and society (Erickson, 2004), that Homi Bhabha has previously theorized as **liminal** or “in-between” space. These spaces “provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood—singular or communal—that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation, in the act of defining the idea of society itself” (Bhabha, 1994). This study began as I explored new terrain at Pinnacle High School, navigating unfamiliar liminal spaces in a hyperdiverse high school English classroom. Discourse analysis provided a compass that helped me navigate the interactive space of my classroom, and it was a compass that began to provide some direction for the teachers of the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group to make sense of their practice. Given the myriad liminal spaces of today’s schooling contexts, pointing new and experienced teachers towards discovering more about how the landscapes of classrooms are shaped through classroom talk and interaction may very well ultimately improve teaching and learning during this era of conflict, social change, and redefinition.

APPENDIX A

SELECTED TEACHER DISCOURSE ANALYSIS WORKSHEETS

Anthony Bell
Self-Discourse Analysis
 Thursday, May 15, 2008

Part A. Mentoring a struggling student teacher

First, let's view the video of the conversation with Denise Taylor from 16:29-25:13. What are your general impressions of how the conversation went?

Here are the excerpts of the conversation I'd like us to analyze.

Excerpt #1.

That's the nature of the beast. You see what I'm saying? They're going to complain. If you gave them chocolate cake, they're going to complain because somebody wanted vanilla, or somebody wanted strawberry cake. It doesn't matter. You could have a party and bring pizza... "well, I wanted hamburger." It's just the way that kids are. But the thing that *you* want to do is, you know, if you deliver that concise lesson with a clear objective, you know, and they feel like they're benefitting...

What is "the nature of the beast"?

Underline all the places where a form of the word "they" is use. Who does "they" refer to in this section?

What kinds of things are "they" doing?

Food words frequently show up in this conversation. Circle all the words that refer to food. How is food being used here?

What relationship do these food words have to "they"?

Is there anything else you find interesting about this section?

Excerpt #2.

And it's like you have to make them see how it's relevant to their *life*. And if you say "write a story", you know, it's incorporating things from the culture, and yes, we do this, but what if they say "how is this going to help me get into college" or something like that? You've got to be able to respond to that question in 2.2 seconds.

You see what I'm saying? It's already got to be there, you know? Or sometimes I'll say when I do a lesson, "I'm just trying to get to know you better. Because if I get to know you better, then I can understand where you're coming from, and we can bond. We can work as a team, rather than as opponents." So as long as you can fire that off in two seconds, you're good.

The word "if" signals that you are presenting a condition. Circle the "ifs" present in the segment. What conditions are you giving Denise with these "ifs"?

After this preliminary analysis, how do you think the language in this conversation positions:

Your students?

Your student teacher, Denise?

Thinking about reframing conversations, is there a way you would want to reframe the conversation? To reframe means to offer a different or competing interpretation of events, a different angle previously not considered. Is there a frame clash present in the longer transcript?

Part B. Student Reading Choice and Group Consensus

Now, let's take a look at the video of the introduction of your excellent lesson on student reading choice, 16:29-25:13. What are your general impressions of how things went?

Here are the excerpts of the conversation I'd like us to analyze.

Excerpt #1

All right, here's what I'm doing for the last book of the year. I'm actually going to let you guys choose what you want to read.

Who is the 'doer' or actor here? _____
 What is the 'goal' of the doer? _____
 Who is the 'beneficiary'? _____

We're going to decide that as a class, all right?

Who is the 'doer' or actor here? _____
 What is the 'goal' of the doer? _____
 What does 'that' refer to? _____

So what I'm doing right now, rather than sit and try to explain the books, everybody has a book list.

Who is the 'doer' or actor here? _____
 What is the 'goal' of the doer? (Hint: it's implied!) _____

It's coming to you, and we're going to go through and figure out what we want to read as a class.

What does 'it' refer to? _____
 Who is the 'doer' or actor here? _____
 What is the 'goal' of the doer? _____

Excerpt #2.

All right, how many of you have heard of *Catcher in the Rye* before? A lot of people want to read that. I hope you're not like elementary kids, because it has a whole lot of cursing in it. Basically, this guy is trying to explore... ____, you're talking!... basically this guy is trying to explore what it's like growing up and the whole purpose of education. He's kind of coming into his manhood. He's away at school. He's trying to discover himself... um... those kinds of issues. We could read it, but I'm not going to lie to you. It's not necessarily one of my favorites.

What does the phrase "those kinds of issues" refer to? List them:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

After this preliminary analysis, how do you think the language in this conversation positions:

Your students?

“Elementary kids”?

The Catcher in the Rye?

Thinking about reframing conversations, is there a way you would want to reframe the conversation?

Thank you so much for your time! I encourage you to go back, look at the videos again, and let me know if there’s anything you’d like to talk about during the meeting on June 4th.

Ella Daniel
Self-Discourse Analysis
 Thursday, May 15, 2008

This was an excellent lesson on a very difficult topic – “courageous conversations” in action! Let’s take a closer look.

Now, let’s take a look at the video, 19:16-27:00. What are your general impressions of how things went?

Here are the excerpts of the conversation I’d like us to analyze.

Excerpt #1.

...Let’s open it up to you guys. What’s your first reaction to the book? I have to admit, this is the first time that I’ve ever taught this book. And since we were scheduled to read another book, just because of the number of books in the depository, we’re now reading *Dangerous Minds* instead. I’ve never read this book before! So we’re definitely doing this together.

...Let’s open it up to you guys.

Who is the ‘doer’ or actor here? _____
 What is the ‘goal’ of the doer? _____
 What does “open it up” refer to? _____

What’s your first reaction to the book?

Who is the ‘thinker’ here? _____
 What is the ‘goal’ of the thinker? _____

... this is the first time that I’ve ever taught this book.

Who is the ‘doer’ or actor here? _____
 What is the ‘goal’ of the doer? _____

.... we’re going to go through and figure out what we want to read as a class.

Who is the ‘doer’ or actor here? _____
 What is the ‘goal’ of the doer? _____

I've never read this book before! So we're definitely doing this together.

What does "this" refer
to? _____

After this preliminary analysis, how do you think the language in this conversation positions:

You?

Your students?

How do you think the language in this conversation frames:

The novel, *Dangerous Minds*?

Excerpt #2.

Oh yeah, right! Some "bad words in there." Which maybe means that we should jump right to number... (*looks at handout*)... eleven, because that's the first bad word at least that comes to my mind. She uses the n-word in the book, on page 28, I think is the first time. So does anybody have some comments on that? Why would she use the n-word? Should she? Should she not use the n-word? I'm just throwing it in there to spice things up...

Underline all referents to "bad words in there". What are the different ways that the "bad words" are referred to in the discourse segment?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

The word "should" indicates modality. It signals either a *recommendation*, *advice*, an *obligation*, or an *expectation*. How is the word "should" being used in the segment above?

From *Speak to Me*:

A **frame** is a theory. It is a way of categorizing and seeing the world. What sense we make of a particular situation depends upon our frame of reference. Framing allows certain interpretations and rules out others.

Positioning: Through conversation, people position themselves and others with particular rights and obligations. Speakers take up or resist positions others create for them.

How is the “n-word” initially being framed in the segment above?

How is the “n-word” initially being positioned?

Excerpt #3.

And not the first time she’s used a bad word there. So it’s a sentence enhancer, really used to accurately portray her character. Right? That these are the words that the characters would use. Any other comments? Yeah, S___?

Underline all referents to “bad words”. What are the ways that the “bad words” are referred to in this discourse segment?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

How is the “n-word” now being framed?

How is the “n-word” now being positioned?

Excerpt #4

Okay. Well, what I’m not finding is “if I said it, how would it sound to you.” Ah! Now in this edition – “Stacy shrugged her shoulders. ‘It don’t matter what you say anyway.’ About, okay, she’s going to flaunt someone who uses that word. She says... she does say that it “erases their face”.

Underline all referents to the “n-word”. What are the ways that the “n-word” is being referred to in this discourse segment?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Excerpt #5

Okay. (*nods*) You need to think about it a little bit. Let's bring up then the fact, for example, that this past summer, *that past summer*, last past summer matter of fact, the NAACP had a funeral for the n-word. And the idea was that the African American community itself, these leaders of the African American community, were trying to say that this word has no place in our vocabulary. You should just leave it out.

Now these kids are arguing that hey, we get to say it to each other, and it's just part of our vocabulary. So they're saying, hey, we get to choose what's in our vocabulary. A bunch of grownups aren't going to tell us what words we can use and not use.

Will you take a minute here... let's take two minutes... and write down in that space your thoughts on the use of the n-word? Can they say (*reading from the book*) "we can be able to do it"? She says that "black kids can say it to each other". And then we know that the grownup in the room doesn't want that to happen. We know that in larger society, grownups largely don't want that word to be used.

Underline all referents to the "n-word". What are the ways that the "n-word" is being referred to in this discourse segment?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Who are the participants in the segment above? How do they frame the "n-word"?

<i>Participants (in sequential order)</i>	<i>Framing of the n-word (use exact language from the segment, if possible)</i>
You <i>Who does this refer to in the segment?</i>	
NAACP	
The African American community itself	
Leaders of the African American community	
You <i>Who does this refer to in the segment?</i>	
These kids <i>Who does this refer to in the segment?</i>	
They('re) <i>Who does this refer to in the segment?</i>	

A bunch of grownups	
You <i>Who does this refer to in the segment?</i>	
They <i>Who does this refer to in the segment?</i>	
She <i>Who does this refer to in the segment?</i>	
The grownup in the room <i>Who does this refer to in the segment?</i>	
Grownups in larger society	

After this preliminary analysis, how do you think the language in this conversation positions:

Your students?

Dangerous Minds (as a novel)?

The kids in *Dangerous Minds*?

The teacher in *Dangerous Minds*?

The African-American community (leaders, NAACP)?

You?

Thinking about reframing conversations, is there a way you would want to reframe the conversation?

Thank you so much for your time! Again, you handled a potentially difficult conversation with expertise and courage. I encourage you to go back, look at the video again, and let me know if there's anything you'd like to talk about during the meeting on June 4th.

PCDSG Workshop #4 – Getting Into Discourse Analysis

Task #1: Participants (Teachers, Students & Content)

Using your transcript, we'd like for you to identify participants in this section of the classroom interaction. Who's saying what? What is the teacher doing? What does the teacher want his students to be able to do? What does he want his students to learn?

Please highlight in three different colors—

Phrases that tell what the teacher is doing

Phrases that tell what the teacher wants his students to be able to do

Phrases that define or describe what is to be learned

Task #2: Sequencing (Conditions, Contrast & Conclusions)

Next, we'd like for you to look at connecting words in this section, and words that deal with time. What are the conditions that the teacher is establishing? What are the contrasts? What conclusions does he want students to arrive at?

Please underline in three different colors—

Sentences that are presenting conditions (using “if”; “then”; “when”)

Sentences that are presenting contrast (“but”)

Sentences that are presenting conclusions (“so”)

Your task, should you choose to accept it...

Go back to the beginning of one of your recorded lessons. How do you talk about what you're going to do, what your students are going to do, and what the content is? What is the logic behind it?

Partial Transcript from James' Teaching Video

James: Okay, we're gonna... I'm going to show you guys something about this, what vocab should evolve into for you, and not, you know... if it's just staying the same, then you're not getting it, okay? But you should be able to start drawing conclusions about these words before you ever touch a dictionary. That's the skill. All right, the skill is to be able to read stuff where you have words that you don't recognize and be able to figure them out. So at least get a rough idea of what they mean from the context. Same as when you were learning to read, right? When you came across words you didn't know, you learned to sound them out. It's the same kind of thing, only now it's about meaning instead of sound.

So, number one... capacious... if you look at the sentence in the book, it says... it's long... "Clever modernizations of old colonial manses"... which are mansions... "extensions in Victorian wood, capacious Greek Revival temples lined the street, and as impressive and just as forbidding as ever." Now I don't know what capacious means, but I can make some conclusions from it. One thing that I notice is that it ends in -ous. So I know even before its placement in the sentence that this is an adjective, okay? Then I see that it's... it's... it's describing Greek Revival temples. So it *is* an adjective. I *know* that. Okay?

Now what could the word possibly mean? Well, it's talking about these big old houses, and that they're like Greek Revival Temples and stuff, so I'm thinking the word means something along the lines of big. What does it mean?

APPENDIX B

PCDSG #1-5 WORKSHOP AGENDAS

PCDSG Workshop Agenda

Wednesday, March 19, 2008, 2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
 Pinnacle High School, Pinnacle Township Public Schools
 Facilitator: Ebony E. Thomas
 University of Michigan

Goals for Today's Workshop:

- Building the PCDSG to be efficacious to its members in the short and long term.
- Extending teacher knowledge of discourse conflicts through readings and discussion of what conflicts in the high school English classroom look like.
- Introducing teachers to discourse analysis methods as one tool for understanding how these conflicts arise, progress, and are resolved.

Objectives of Today's Workshop:

- To obtain formal consent from all PCDSG teachers.
- To get to know group members & their goals for participating in the PCDSG.
- To formulate a working schedule for facilitator's classroom visits of the PCDSG.
- To begin our consideration of what discourse conflicts are typical in English classrooms, how they arise, progress, and are resolved.

2:30-2:45 Introductions, Overview & Consent**Procedure:**

1. Consent forms are distributed to all teachers. Teacher consent forms will be signed at the start of the workshop. One copy of student and parent consent forms will be provided for teacher perusal.
2. Also, a calendar will be distributed containing a list of dates that the facilitator is available to give a project orientation to the students in their focal class. Participants should sign up for dates.
3. While teachers are filling out consent forms, they will introduce themselves using the "crossword" method.

2:45-3:15 Important issues for high school English teachers regarding conflict**Procedure:**

1. Dakin, "The Case for Conflict"
 - An overview of the article's key points will be provided on the PowerPoint.
 - Teachers will be encouraged to share their points of view about it.
2. Lemke, "Discourses in Conflict"
 - An overview of the chapter's key points will be provided on the PowerPoint.
 - Teachers will be encouraged to share their points of view about it.
3. Schleppegrell, "Language Development in School"
 - An overview of the chapter's key points will be provided on the PowerPoint.
 - Teachers will be encouraged to share their points of view about it.

3:15-3:30 **Review and wrap-up**

Procedure:

1. Teachers will brainstorm ways that the readings and discussion are applicable for their own classroom contexts.
2. The facilitator will provide a brief overview of the next group's meeting.
3. All forms and the schedule of orientation visits will be collected.

Materials needed

Laptop and projection system
 Butcher paper
 Internet access
PCDSG readings

Goals of the PCDSG Workshop Series:

- To **document** what inservice high school English teachers identify as conflicts in the classroom.
- To examine the ways that teachers **describe** and **analyze** the nature of these conflicts using tools of classroom discourse analysis from two traditions (sociolinguistic and systemic functional linguistic), taking into consideration the curriculum under study as well as contexts where such conflicts might arise.
- To **extend** the literature on inservice teacher professional development and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).
- To **develop** a conceptual framework for teachers, administrators, teacher educators, and researchers interested in the implementation of a similar classroom discourse study group model.

Orienting Research Question

How do inservice high school English teachers learn about classroom discourse conflicts in a professional learning community?

PCDSG Workshop Agenda

Tuesday, March 25, 2008, 2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Pinnacle High School, Pinnacle Township Public Schools
Facilitator: Ebony E. Thomas
University of Michigan

Goals for Today's Workshop:

- Reviewing our definitions of conflict in the high school English classroom.
- Introducing teachers to sociolinguistic discourse analysis methods as one tool for understanding how these conflicts arise, progress, and are resolved.
- Guiding teachers through the concepts of **framing**, **positioning**, and **interdiscursivity** as methods of analyzing classroom discourse.

Objectives of Today's Workshop:

- To continue our consideration of sociolinguistic discourse analysis methods as one tool for understanding how classroom conflicts arise, progress, and are resolved.

2:30-2:45 Housekeeping

Procedure:

4. Consent forms are distributed to all teachers for students and parents in their focal class. Facilitator will reschedule Tues. 3/25 project orientations. Permission slips are due Mon. 3/31 if possible; teachers will collect and email Ebony for pickup.
5. Also, a calendar will be distributed containing a list of dates that the facilitator is available to videorecord focal classes during the month of April. Participants should sign up for dates.
6. The use of the digital voice recorder will be demonstrated. DVRs will be checked out to teachers once permission slips are collected. (All DVRs should be brought to the April 16th meeting, along with the purple PCDSG binders.)

2:45-3:00 Reviewing issues for high school English teachers regarding conflict

Procedure:

1. On index cards, teachers will write down an example of a typical conflict that could occur in a high school English classroom.
2. One by one, teachers will read their sample conflicts and explain why they chose them.
3. Teachers will generate categories of conflict.

3:00-3:30 Introducing discourse analysis for high school English teachers

Procedure:

1. Facilitator will provide a brief introduction to Speak to Me.
2. Teachers read & discuss “Reframing to Re-see Possibilities” (7-8).
3. Teachers read & discuss “Assuming & Choosing” (11-13).
4. Teachers read & discuss “Interdiscursivity” (20-24).

3:30-3:35

Review and wrap-up

1. Facilitator will:
 - Purchase DVRs and deliver them to teachers upon receipt of all focal class permission slips.
 - Schedule & visit classrooms for videotaping & observation.
 - Follow-up on consultant visits.
2. Teachers will:
 - Decide upon late April/early May dates for small group meetings.
 - Read/skim the remainder of the assigned readings before April 16th meeting.
 - After receipt of DVR, record focal class every day. (Use a separate file for each class period.) Backup files as you think about it. Bring DVRs to April 16th meeting.
 - Email Ebony about anything interesting between now and then.

Materials needed

Laptop and projection system
 Butcher paper
 Internet access
PCDSG readings

Goals of the PCDSG Workshop Series:

- To **document** what inservice high school English teachers identify as conflicts in the classroom.
- To examine the ways that teachers **describe** and **analyze** the nature of these conflicts using tools of classroom discourse analysis from two traditions (sociolinguistic and systemic functional linguistic), taking into consideration the curriculum under study as well as contexts where such conflicts might arise.
- To **extend** the literature on inservice teacher professional development and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).
- To **develop** a conceptual framework for teachers, administrators, teacher educators, and researchers interested in the implementation of a similar classroom discourse study group model.

Orienting Research Question

How do inservice high school English teachers learn about classroom discourse conflicts in a professional learning community?

PCDSG Workshop Agenda

Tuesday, April 16, 2008, 2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Pinnacle High School, Pinnacle Township Public Schools
Facilitator: Ebony E. Thomas, with Guest Consultant #1

Goals for Today's Workshop:

- Reviewing our definitions of conflict in the high school English classroom.
- Introducing teachers to sociolinguistic discourse analysis methods as a tool for understanding how these conflicts arise, progress, and are resolved.

Objectives of Today's Workshop:

- To continue our consideration of sociolinguistic discourse analysis methods as one tool for understanding how classroom conflicts arise, progress, and are resolved.

2:30-2:45 Housekeeping

Procedure:

7. **Consent forms** -- Ebony will collect any completed class sets of consent forms that teachers have available.
8. **Videography** – Thus far, 4 of you have scheduled dates for videorecording. (Thanks!) Ebony would like to visit each PCDSG teacher's focal class at least once.
9. **Teacher Discourse Example** – A volunteer is needed for the next workshop. (Details will be provided.)
10. **Mid-Project Survey** – This form will collect basic demographic and teaching experience information for the group. Please fill out and return to Ebony ASAP.
11. **DVRs** - The use of the digital voice recorder will be demonstrated, and extra batteries will be distributed. DVRs will be checked out to teachers once permission slips are collected. (All DVRs should be brought to the May 7th meeting, along with the purple PCDSG binders.)

2:45-3:00 Reviewing issues for high school English teachers regarding conflict

Procedure:

1. On index cards, teachers will write down an example of a typical conflict that could occur in a high school English classroom.
4. One by one, teachers will read their sample conflicts and explain why they chose them.
5. Teachers will generate categories of conflict.

3:00-3:55 A conversation about discourse analysis for high school English teachers

Procedure:

1. Guest consultant will present their expertise on the role of language, literacy, culture in discourse analysis.
2. Teachers will pose questions generated from the book and their own classroom contexts.

3:55-4:00 Review and wrap-up

3. Facilitator will:

- Continue to collect focal class permission slips.
 - Schedule & visit classrooms for videotaping & observation.
 - Be available to help with transcription and analysis.
4. Teachers will:
- Decide upon late April/early May dates for small group meetings.
 - After receipt of DVR, record focal class every day. (Use a separate file for each class period.) Backup files as you think about it. Bring DVRs to May 7th meeting.
 - Email Ebony about anything interesting between now and then.

Materials needed

Laptop and projection system
 Index cards
 DVRs (Digital Voice Recorders)
 Internet access
PCDSG readings

Goals of the PCDSG Workshop Series:

- To **document** what inservice high school English teachers identify as conflicts in the classroom.
- To examine the ways that teachers **describe** and **analyze** the nature of these conflicts using tools of classroom discourse analysis from two traditions (sociolinguistic and systemic functional linguistic), taking into consideration the curriculum under study as well as contexts where such conflicts might arise.
- To **extend** the literature on inservice teacher professional development and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).
- To **develop** a conceptual framework for teachers, administrators, teacher educators, and researchers interested in the implementation of a similar classroom discourse study group model.

Orienting Research Question

How do inservice high school English teachers talk about classroom conflicts in a discourse study group?

PCDSG Workshop Agenda

Wednesday, May 7, 2008, 2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
 Pinnacle High School, Pinnacle Township Public Schools
 Facilitator: Ebony E. Thomas, with Guest Consultant #2

Goals for Today's Workshop:

- Viewing a moment of classroom interaction to study conflict;
- Introducing teachers to functional discourse analysis methods as a tool for understanding how these conflicts arise, progress, and are resolved.

Objectives of Today's Workshop:

- To continue our consideration of discourse analysis methods as one tool for understanding how classroom conflicts arise, progress, and are resolved.

2:30-2:45 Housekeeping

Procedure:

- Schedule remaining videotaping times & final PCDSG meeting.
- Fall 2008 – looking for a teacher-in-residence for English methods course @ U-M.
- Winter 2008 – looking for a PCDSG teacher to pilot a unit on Malorie Blackman's *Noughts and Crosses* – conflict in literature.

2:45-3:25 A conversation about discourse analysis for high school English teachers

Procedure:

- Consultant will talk about our goal for the meeting – *to look at how teachers introduce the goals of their lesson, and the language that they use to do so.*
- Ebony will talk about the context.
- Show video.
- Review of the transcript
- Close viewing -- how James sets the stage for the lesson to come– what are some of the language features that we can identify?
- Discourse analysis worksheet
- What does this have to do with the study of *classroom conflict*?

3:25-3:30

Review and wrap-up

5. Facilitator will:

- Continue to collect focal class permission slips.
- Schedule & visit classrooms for videotaping & observation.
- Be available to help with transcription and analysis.

6. Teachers will:

- Decide upon May dates for:
 - i. small group meetings.
 - ii. Final PCDSG meeting; derive group definitions of conflict
- Continue to record focal class every day. (Use a separate file for each class period.) Backup files as you think about it. Bring DVRs to our final meeting.
- Email Ebony about anything interesting between now and then.

Materials needed

Laptop and projection system
 Index cards
 DVRs (Digital Voice Recorders)
 Internet access
PCDSG readings

Goals of the PCDSG Workshop Series:

- To **document** what inservice high school English teachers identify as conflicts in the classroom.
- To examine the ways that teachers **describe** and **analyze** the nature of these conflicts using tools of classroom discourse analysis from two traditions (sociolinguistic and systemic functional linguistic), taking into consideration the curriculum under study as well as contexts where such conflicts might arise.
- To **extend** the literature on inservice teacher professional development and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).
- To **develop** a conceptual framework for teachers, administrators, teacher educators, and researchers interested in the implementation of a similar classroom discourse study group model.

Orienting Research Question

How do inservice high school English teachers talk about classroom conflicts in a discourse study group?

PCDSG Workshop Agenda

Wednesday, June 4, 2008, 2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
 Pinnacle High School, Pinnacle Township Public Schools
 Facilitator: Ebony E. Thomas
 University of Michigan

I'd like to welcome each of you to the final meeting of the PCDSG. I appreciate your commitment, patience, and the time and energy that you have expended to extend our knowledge about classroom discourse.

Today, we are going to have a very informal meeting. There is no formal agenda, there are no worksheets. If we are successful in answering all of these questions, we will not have the formal individual interviews. I will send your honorarium checks in the mail. To that end, I've got a signup sheet here – please put your home address and telephone number so that I can get these sent out ASAP.

1. How does your experience in the PCDSG compare with other teacher workgroups you've participated in?
2. Have you met your goals for participating in the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group? What are some new goals that you have for yourself as a teacher after participating in PCDSG?
3. Has the way that you identify and think about conflict changed? How so?
4. What are your feelings about our group discussions on classroom conflict?
5. After participating in PCDSG, what are your feelings about teacher language in the classroom?
6. Has the way you conduct discussions in your English class changed? Have your philosophies and/or motivations?
7. Were you surprised by your use of student names and expressions/instructions/phrases? Which other aspects of the ways that you identify students and use particular expressions/instructions/phrases in conversation surprised you?
8. Talk about your focal class. Do you feel you made the right choice when focusing on this class? Why or why not?
9. Which of the readings did you find most helpful and/or interesting? Least helpful and/or interesting? Why?
10. Which of the presentations did you find most helpful and/or interesting? Least helpful and/or interesting? Why?
11. What was the greatest strength of the PCDSG? What was the PCDSG's greatest weakness?
12. Is there anything else you'd like to share with me at this point?

APPENDIX C

PCDSG #1-3 POWERPOINT SLIDES

○	PCDSG - Session #1 The Case for Conflict Wednesday, March 19, 2008
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M	

○	First things first...
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○	Crossword Introductions
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○	Dakin, "The Case for Conflict"
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○	Dakin, "The Case for Conflict"
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○	Lemke, "Discourses in Conflict"
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○	Lemke, "Discourses in Conflict"
○	• For example...
○	Discourse #1: "The freedom fighters are being kept in a concentration camp!"
○	Discourse #2: "The terrorists are being kept in a prison!"
○	The reader has to work to understand that both discourses are talking about the same thing.
○	M

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○	Lemke, "Discourses in Conflict"
○	• "The semantic relationships between prisons and terrorists and not the same as those between freedom fighters and concentration camps." (37)
○	• Every spoken or written text has a relevant set of intertexts.
○	• "Is abortion ... the murder of an unborn child or the termination of an unwanted pregnancy? Is there a <i>neutral</i> discourse here? Or would any pretense of neutrality... be seen by some discourse communities as an abdication of moral responsibility?" (38)
○	M

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○	Lemke, "Discourses in Conflict"
○	So what we have to examine here are two interdependent uses of language:
○	1. The discourse's construction of 'the way the world is' and its viewpoint toward this state of affairs.
○	2. The discourse's (and our own) construction of the relationship between it and other possible discourses.
○	M

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○	Schleppegrell, "Language Development in School"
○	• Educational linguist Mary Schleppegrell observes that "ways of making meaning vary across social groups in ways that are functional for those social groups." (152)
○	• Let's read pp. 153-154, very bottom, starting with "Classroom interactional patterns have been the focus of much research..."
○	• IRE => Initiation/Response/Evaluation – Initiation: "Who is the narrator in <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> ?" – Response: "Scout Finch." – Evaluation: "Good."
○	• Researchers have determined this is the <u>basic pattern of classroom instructional discourse.</u>
○	M

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○	In conclusion...
○	• What are the characteristics of conflict in the English classroom?
○	• Is discourse conflict inevitable in a diverse society with multicultural schools?
○	• How can examining our classroom discourse help us better understand conflict?
○	M

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○	Wrapping it Up
○	• <i>Questions/Comments/Concerns?</i>
○	• <i>Our next meeting will be 7th Hour on Tuesday, March 25 in Jane's room.</i>
○	<i>Thank you for coming!</i>
○	M

○	PCDSG - Session #2
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So What Can Discourse Analysis Do for Me?	
Tuesday, March 25, 2008	
M	

○	First things first...
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• Consent forms for...	
– <i>Your students</i>	
– <i>Their parents</i>	
• Schedule for videotaping	
– A list of dates and times is being passed around.	
– Let's chat about dates and the number of visits for video and observation.	
M	

○	How to Use Your Digital Voice Recorder
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• Think of your recorder as a Voiced Version of your trusty USB drive. It records files in WMA format, which will play on your iBook G4 under the Windows Media Player application.	
• The recorder consists of voice and music files. You want to use the voice file capability only, make sure the red light is on, and check your batteries frequently (I will provide extras at the April 16 meeting!).	
• Decide how you will organize your focal class files into folders, and a system for backing up files to your computer (i.e. daily, every other day, biweekly). Be sure to rename the files.	
• I will collect your recorders at the April 16th meeting. While Dr. Rex is presenting, I hope to upload all of your files to my MacBook.	
M	

○	Questions to consider from last session...
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• What are the characteristics of conflict in the English classroom?	
• Is discourse conflict inevitable in a diverse society with multicultural schools?	
• How can examining our classroom discourse help us better understand conflict?	
M	

○	Reviewing issues for high school English teachers regarding <i>conflict</i>
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• Think about the readings and discussion from last week. What does conflict in the high school English classroom look like? Sound like?	
• <i>Write down the conflict on an index card.</i>	
• <i>We'll share these together as a group.</i>	
M	

○	Categories of Conflict
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• <i>PCDSG says...</i>	
M	

Rex & Schiller, *Speak to Me*

- Lesley Rex is a professor of English education at the University of Michigan.
- Laura Schiller is the supervisor for literacy and language arts, Oakland Intermediate School District (MI).
- "*Speak to Me* is a book about how to freeze conversations so we can replay them in order to understand the moment-to-moment interactions that support learning and learners or derail our best teaching intentions."

Rex & Schiller, *Speak to Me*

- Please read/skim "Reframing to Re-See Possibilities", p. 7-8.

Have you ever reframed a difficult conversation? How? (We will discuss.)

Rex & Schiller, *Speak to Me*

- Please read/skim "Assuming and Choosing", p. 11-13.
- Complete the activity, "Become Aware of Assumptions", on the back of your index card.

Assumptions I have about my students:

Assumptions my students have about me:

Rex & Schiller, *Speak to Me*

- Please read/skim "Interdiscursivity", p. 20-24.

What are your experiences with consciously "being positioned"? (We will discuss.)

Wrapping it Up

- *Ebony will...*
- *I need all of you to...*
- *Our next meeting will be 7th Hour on Wednesday, April 16th in Jane's room.*

Thank you for coming!

○	PCDSG - Session #3 A Conversation with a Special Guest Consultant Wednesday, April 16, 2008
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○	First things first... <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consent forms• Schedule for videotaping• Teacher discourse example (for May 7)• Mid-Project Survey
○	
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M	

○	How to Use Your Digital Voice Recorder <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Think of your recorder as a Voiced Version of your trusty USB drive. It records files in WMA format, which will play on your iBook G4 under the Windows Media Player application.• The recorder consists of voice and music files. You want to use the voice file capability only, make sure the red light is on, and check your batteries frequently (I will provide extras at the April 16 meeting!).• Decide how you will organize your focal class files into folders, and a system for backing up files to your computer (i.e. daily, every other day, biweekly). Be sure to rename the files.• I will collect your recorders at the April 16th meeting. While the guest consultant is presenting, I hope to upload all of your files to my MacBook.
○	
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M	

○	Questions to consider from previous sessions... <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are the characteristics of conflict in the English classroom?• Is discourse conflict inevitable in a diverse society with multicultural schools?• How can examining our classroom discourse help us better understand conflict?
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○	Reviewing issues for high school English teachers regarding <i>conflict</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Think about the readings and discussion from last month. What does conflict in the high school English classroom look like? Sound like? Can you think of an example from your own practice?• <i>Write down the conflict on an index card.</i>• <i>We'll share these together as a group.</i>
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○	Categories of Conflict <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>PCDSG says...</i>
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APPENDIX D

INITIAL PCDSG IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

*Project Design & Timeframe (subject to change)**

December 2007	Recruitment of teachers -- Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group.
January 2008	Submit research design to IRB & PTPS; visit school.
February pm)*	Getting Started Meeting – Tuesday, February 19, 2008 (3:30-4:30 pm)*
March	PCDSG Session #1 - Tuesday, March 18, 2008 (3:30-5:30 pm)*
April	PCDSG Session #2 - dinner w/ small groups (TBD)*
May	PCDSG Session #3 - Tuesday, May 20, 2008 (3:30-5:30 pm)*
June	Follow-Up Interviews – individuals (TBD)
Fall 2008	Present project to Pinnacle staff.
2009	Present project locally & at one national conference.

**Please let me know as soon as you can about any conflicts with these dates and times. We need to identify and confirm three (3) dates and times when we can meet as a group, and April dinner dates.*

February 2008

In February, I will hold a **Getting Started Meeting** for all participating colleagues. The finalized study will be described and consent forms will be distributed. Also during February, I will conduct an initial visit to a class of your choice (focal class) in order to introduce myself, to share the research question, and to distribute permission slips to students. (U-M IRB wants us to have student permission slips for the one focal class you choose to tape.) With your permission, I will conduct initial observations of your chosen focal class. I'm hoping to do this prior to the first PCDSG meeting in March, where basic concepts in classroom discourse analysis will be introduced. This will help me better determine how to set an agenda for our time together. Finally, I'd like to interview each of you briefly about your views on sources of conflict within the classroom -- your classroom in particular, and in English classrooms generally.

March 2008

At the first meeting of the PCDSG, we will engage in an intensive two hour workshop where you will learn the basics of discourse analysis for teachers. (Presenters will include University of Michigan faculty.) At the end of the workshop, we will discuss your current and forthcoming units, and along with you think about moments of possible conflict that the teaching of each unit might raise, that would potentially be interesting to analyze. In the focal class, you will record the lessons that you teach before, during, and after the potential conflict in the unit, and preserve the audiotapes or audiofiles for transcription. For some of you, this may be a week's worth of lessons or less. For others, it may be several weeks. It's up to you. (Of course, I will available to help.)

April 2008

The second meeting of the PCDSG will consist of informal small group discussion over dinner. (Each of you will choose the one dinner date that you can attend, at your convenience.) This will provide opportunities to build collegial relationships among the group, to discuss how the project is going, to monitor and adjust, and to address any questions or concerns. I will also make myself available to meet with each of you before the final meeting in May to review the conflicts they have identified for the next meeting, and to work through the discourse analysis. Participant-observation in your classrooms and at the school will continue.

May 2008

During the third meeting of the PCDSG, you will “report” on your experience with identifying conflicts and analyzing their discourse contexts, sharing lesson plans, student work samples, and anecdotes from your classrooms.. After the final meeting, I would like to visit your classrooms again. (This will help me when I begin to write up the analysis.)

June 2008 (and beyond)

After some initial data analysis on my own, I will schedule a closing interview with you. Preliminary findings will be shared. At this time, I would greatly appreciate your feedback about the validity of this project for other teachers in other settings.

APPENDIX E

PCDSG COURSEPACK TABLE OF CONTENTS

Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group Curriculum**READINGS****Part 1. The Case for Analyzing Conflict**

- 1) Dakin, M.E. (2008). The case for conflict in our classrooms. *English Journal*, 97(3), 12-14.

Part 2. Conflict in the Language of Schooling

Excerpts from:

- 2) Lemke, J.L. (1995). *Textual politics: Discourse and social dynamics*. London: Taylor & Francis.
- 3) Schleppegrell, M.J. (2006). *The language of schooling: A functional linguistics perspective*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Part 3. How to Analyze Conflict in Your Classroom

- 4) Christie, F. (1999). The pedagogic device and the teaching of English. In F. Christie (Ed.), *Pedagogy and the shaping of consciousness*. London and New York: Continuum, 156-184.

Excerpts from:

- 5) Christie, F. (2002). *Classroom discourse analysis: A functional perspective*. London and New York: Continuum.
- 6) Rex, L.A. & Schiller, L. (2007). *Speak to me for teacher educators: Sustaining conversations, maintaining relationships, building new knowledge*. Unpublished book manuscript; publication pending.
- 7) PowerPoint Handouts
- 8) Other Workshop Materials
- 9) Your Classroom Observations
- 10) PCDSG Schedules and Forms

APPENDIX F

GETTING STARTED MEETING AGENDA

Getting Started Meeting Agenda
Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group (PCDSG)
Wednesday, February 6, 2008

1. Sample consent forms for teachers and students
 - *I will drop off the finalized forms for you once the IRB and PTPS Research approvals are in.*
2. Pseudonyms
 - **Pinnacle High School**
 - Teacher pseudonyms?
 - Each teacher will provide pseudonyms *at the end of the project* for any students mentioned in transcripts of focal classes
3. Scheduling
 - **Group Meetings:** 7th hour, twice per month in March & May
 - *James Douglas has a 7th hour class. I've asked Principal Lunsford for coverage for these days. He gave his consent. Thoughts?*
 - **Small Group Meetings:** each teacher-colleague will meet once with their small group in April
 - **Individual Interviews:** February & June
4. Other community norms
 - Working considerations – our “ground rules” for working together
 - Email addresses of teachers (for CTools project site)
 - Snacks/dinner?
5. Texts for PCDSG
 - “The Case for Conflict”, *English Journal* (January 2008), Mary Ellen Dakin
 - *The Language of Schooling*, Mary Schleppegrell
 - *Textual Politics*, Jay Lemke
 - *Classroom Discourse Analysis*, Frances Christie
 - *Speak to Me*, Lesley Rex & Laura Schiller
6. Framework for our work together (to keep in mind):

To identify moments of conflict in our classrooms, and analyze the contexts in which these conflicts occur.

APPENDIX G

INITIAL INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Initial Interview Protocol

1. Describe your past experiences working in a group with other teachers.
2. What are your goals for participating in the Pinnacle Classroom Discourse Study Group?
3. Why did you choose the focal class that you'll be studying?
4. What is your general definition of conflict?
5. In your opinion, what counts as classroom conflict?
6. What functions should a teacher's language in the classroom serve?
7. How do you lead discussions in English class? What is your philosophy/theory behind doing so?
8. What are your questioning techniques? Do you write questions down before a lesson, or do you improvise? Why?
9. When calling on individual students, should teachers say the student's name? Before or after soliciting feedback? What difference does this make?
10. Are there any expressions/instructions/phrases that you feel that you overuse? Are there any that you feel you don't use enough? What are they, and have you thought about why you use/don't use them?
11. Is there anything else you'd like to share with me?

APPENDIX H

MID-PROJECT SURVEY

PCDSG Mid-Project Survey

Directions: Please answer the following questions. (You may choose to answer all, some, or none of these.)

Your pseudonym:

Age & Generation (check one):

- Silent Generation (born between the World Wars)**
 Boom Generation (born post-WWII – early 1960s)
 Generation X (born early-to-mid 1960s – late 1970s)
 Millennial Generation (born after 1980)

Courses currently teaching:

List of courses not currently teaching (but that you have taught in the past):

Courses you haven't taught (but would love to):

Year that you began teaching:

of total years of teaching service:

List all schools and districts that you've taught in, and the dates of your service:

School	District	Service Dates (years)
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High School (Name & Location):

Bachelor's institution(s):

Master's institution(s):

What is your primary racial and/or ethnic identification?

What is your primary gender identification?

Is there anything you'd like to communicate to me about the project at this point?

APPENDIX I

LETTER OF SUPPORT FROM PRINCIPAL LUNSFORD

February 1, 2008

Dear Ms. Thomas:

I am pleased to write this letter in support of your project, "To Speak a True Word: Discourse Analysis in a Teacher Professional Learning Community." Your action research project, which will examine the discourse events that high school English teachers identify as conflicts during the course of their regular classroom discussions, and analyze the ways that teachers discuss those conflicts with colleagues, is both timely and relevant. It also supports the efforts and the focus of our school-based equity team, dedicated to closing the achievement gap.

Should this project be approved and funded, we would be available to support this research by providing classroom space and available technology for meetings, meeting supplies such as chalk and markers, limited duplicating services, and providing limited substitute coverage.

As the principal of Pinnacle High School, I am writing to endorse these research activities and to indicate that we will be available and supportive as you carry out this action research study. The use of Pinnacle as a research site requires approval by *<name omitted>*, Co-Director of Research Services, Pinnacle Township Public Schools.

We look forward to collaborating with you on this research.

Sincerely,

Martin Lunsford
Principal, Pinnacle High School
Pinnacle Township Public Schools

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