

**Understanding Language to Support Equitable Teaching:
How Beginning English Teachers Engage Complexity,
Negotiate Dilemmas, and Avoid Deficit Ideologies**

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(English and Education)
in the University of Michigan
2011

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Dedication

To my inspiration:
Teachers and students
who maintain the vision that
“the classroom, with all its limitations,
is a location of possibility.”
—bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress*

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to countless people who have supported and contributed to this project in some way; these acknowledgements cannot do justice to the many contributions to my growth as a scholar and researcher. To riff on a familiar village metaphor, perhaps it takes a strong forest to produce a dissertation. As my brother who is a horticulturist described to me, planting a successful forest takes consideration of the specific micro-climates and diverse trees to avoid a mono-cultural forest that can be wiped out by devastating forces. I must acknowledge that this project survived and thrived due to the diverse, multi-faceted forest of support—both intellectual and personal—that sustained this project.

The work was supported by a generous Spencer Mini-Grant for Student-Initiated Research from the University of Michigan's School of Education as well as grants and fellowships from the Rackham Graduate School. I also extend my appreciation and gratitude to the many students, student teachers, faculty, and colleagues who have shaped and supported this work.

First, I thank my co-chairs, Lesley Rex and Donald Freeman. Lesley mentored me throughout graduate school, and I am grateful for her generous gifts of time and feedback. Not only did she ask open-ended, deep questions that forced me to constantly stretch my thinking and take ownership of my work, but she also provided discourse analytic frameworks for thinking about classroom interaction. I thank Donald for offering perspectives about teacher learning and helping me communicate my theoretical positions through my word choice. His insights shaped my theorization of language in relation to learning, for which I am grateful.

The other members of my committee also enriched this work. Anne Ruggles Gere offered early guidance in my initial graduate course in literacy that provided crucial underpinnings for this project. She provided opportunities to work with NCTE's Squire Office of Policy research, and this work attuned me to conversations in English education and concerns of practitioners. I am grateful for her collegial approach as a program chair and the ways she has shaped JPEE as a community of scholars.

I have Anne Curzan to thank for igniting my passion for language study and equity, which ultimately led me to this project. Her course on the History of English enabled me to articulate what I had experienced about language as a teacher and led me down this path of focusing on language in English education. I share Anne's dedication to creating bridges between linguistics and education, and I have been inspired by her commitments in her own pedagogy. And I will never forget the moments when she reminded me to stop and appreciate the latest milestone.

I thank JPEE's invigorating interdisciplinary and collegial community: my work was sustained in multiple spaces from writing groups to farmer's markets to water aerobics classes. I am especially grateful for my cohort members, Beth Davila, Laura Aull, Randall Pinder, and Hannah Dickinson, and for generative evenings of conviviality

and good conversation. I also thank mentors in English education who have stretched my own work by sharing their time, scholarship, and resources with me, including Jennifer Buehler, Ebony Elizabeth Thomas, Amy Carpenter Ford, Danielle Lillge, and Steve Engel. I also thank Kathryn Young in the Teacher Education Program for guiding me as a new teacher educator, JPEE program assistant Jeanie Laubenthal for facilitating phases of the graduate study process, and Staci Shultz for providing graduate student mentoring.

My scholarship and research has been shaped by countless scholars with insightful ways of thinking about teaching, knowledge, subjectivity, language and power. I thank Ivy George, Jan Lindholm, the faculty at the Oregon Extension, and countless scholars in feminist and sociological studies. I also thank many scholars at the University of Michigan, including Diane Larsen-Freeman, Mary Schleppegrell, Robin Queen, June Howard, and scholars in the Second Language Acquisition Group.

I also thank the many excellent teachers and mentors who shaped this work through understandings of equitable practice: Deborah Mellicker taught me how positioning long-term suspended students in affirmative ways can make all the difference; Linda Nathan, Abdi Ali, and other teachers at the Boston Arts Academy taught me much about meaningful and rigorous urban education; students at CICS Northtown Academy and Chicago-area educators, including Ashley Riggio, David Adamji, Jim Klise, and Rachael Wenz, taught me much about supporting students' literacies in meaningful and equitable ways.

I am grateful for my privilege of having familial roots in Ann Arbor; otherwise, the seed for graduate study at University of Michigan might never have flourished. I pay tribute to the memory of my grandmother, a UM alumna who was a lifelong learner. She sent me lovingly inscribed books for the first twenty years of my life and shaped my scholarly path by showing me a cousin's dissertation manuscript. During his UM studies, my grandfather planted trees and peonies in the "Arb," and this space ended up providing much needed rejuvenation during my studies. I also express my gratitude to other family members, including my parents and brothers, for listening to me at multiple stages of dissertation writing and offering words of encouragement. I thank Marian Orzulak for reminding me to laugh and enjoy life.

To Dixie and Malu, who spent the most time near me during data collection, dissertation writing, and analysis, I express gratitude for curious looks, giggle-producing behavior, and occasional research contributions. They continue to remind me how deficit narratives, especially about those without voices, require careful consideration and exploration with a critical lens.

I extend my deepest gratitude to Francis McBee Orzulak. As the person who has been the primary cheerleader for my graduate studies and teaching over the last decade, I cannot thank Francis enough for his support through conversation, sustenance, and technical means. He provided much-needed perspective in difficult moments and had a knack of showing up with tea and snacks when the writing got hard. And, for his willingness to read and discuss my writing when I needed a fresh view, I will be forever grateful.

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Chapter One

Introduction

“Central to the task of English educators is the preparation and support of teachers who, in turn, prepare learners to be creative, literate individuals; contributors to the cultural, social, and economic health of their communities; and fully participating and critically aware citizens of our democracy in a complex, diverse, and increasingly globalized world” (“A beliefs statement,” 2005) from the Conference on English Education (CEE).

I. Overview

English educators, linguists, and teacher educators know very little about how preservice English teachers engage with linguistically informed principles in teaching philosophy and practice.¹ However, research has shown that teachers struggle with how to enact these principles in practice and grapple with them in relation to existing folk beliefs about language. The ways teachers understand language also have implications for how they perceive and interact with students, which means that linguistically informed principles have ramifications for issues of equity. Therefore, we need more research on how preservice teachers understand linguistically informed principles in relation to folk beliefs about language, particularly as they make practical teaching decisions. This research can provide insight into how to prepare teachers, as CEE states above, to support all students as critical, literate participants in an increasingly diverse world.

In this introductory chapter, I describe the problem sites related to language in English education that I address with this dissertation. I explore the nature of these problem areas related to the focus of my project on preservice teacher education. I will introduce a brief overview of how I framed, designed, and conducted my study as well as

¹ By “linguistically informed,” I mean core principles of how language works rooted in research and agreed upon by most linguists, particularly sociolinguists.

the original and narrowing questions for the study. The chapter ends with a brief description of the study's contributions.

This dissertation investigates how preservice English teachers negotiate conflicts among folk beliefs about language (FBL) and three categories of linguistically informed principles (LIP). At the heart of this study is the quest to promote equitable teaching for all students and to address ways that teacher educators can help future English teachers grow into effective teachers in relation to understanding and enacting LIP. English teachers, in particular, struggle with multiple problem sites related to language, such as anxieties about grammar instruction, technology-based writing, and the needs of English language learners and bidialectal students. My work investigates the nature of this struggle—by describing the landscape of language-related dilemmas—in order to understand how to best support preservice teachers in enacting productive, linguistically informed principles that counter unproductive folk beliefs.

This study focuses on three categories of LIP relevant to English teaching, which some preservice teachers learn about in teacher preparation: principles of 1) language equity, 2) descriptive grammar, and 3) consequential language choices in classroom interactions. These categories of LIP can be contrasted with known categories of common FBL, which have been studied as language ideologies and as common misconceptions about language acquisition. FBL will be described in more depth later in this chapter; Chapter 2 frames my project within the history of English education and provides a more in-depth overview of these three categories of LIP and related FBL. Here is a brief outline of the three categories of LIP:

- 1) *language equity*: awareness and appreciation of language variation—the inevitable nature of language variation, the links between identity and variation, and student language as competence rather than deficit. This includes critical understandings of standard English as one variety among many.
- 2) *descriptive approaches to grammar*: understandings of “grammar” beyond prescriptive grammar, including functional approaches—descriptive approaches as necessary to supporting language development, including understanding the relationships between oral and written language/registers and alternative views of

what it means to teach “grammar” (in order to teach writing rather than simply assigning writing)

3) *consequential language choices in classroom interactions*:² the ways discourse in interactions can shut down or open up opportunities for student learning; teachers can choose how they use language and their choices have implications for what students can do or how they are positioned as literate, critical individuals

Based on the literature and findings from a pilot study, I initiated this study based on my hypothesis that preservice teachers have to negotiate conflicts between these three categories of LIP and related FBL. Therefore, my work looks at the nature of this struggle in order to understand better why preservice teachers are often unable to enact productive, linguistically informed principles that counter unproductive folk beliefs.

Research questions:

Based on this conceptualization of the problems related to language in English language arts, my long-term program of study reflects my focus on beginning teachers’ negotiation of FBL and LIP: *How do beginning English teachers negotiate conflicts between folk beliefs about language and linguistically informed principles of equitable language use?*

To begin answering this overarching question, this dissertation focused on preservice teachers’ experiences during student teaching, using their learning from an English methods course as a backdrop:

- How do student teachers negotiate conflicts between FBL and LIP as they make practical teaching decisions in student teaching and as they talk about their teaching goals and philosophies?
- As student teachers make practical teaching decisions, how do competing interests (cooperating teachers, curricular demands, and other site-based pressures) work to reify, perpetuate, or dispel their FBL and LIP?

Using a variety of qualitative, ethnographic, and discourse analytic methods to inform case studies, this dissertation describes the experiences of four preservice teachers as they

² I use “consequential” to highlight the importance or significance of these choices rather than to imply causality.

moved from coursework to student teaching. In so doing, the dissertation demonstrates ways that ideologies about race and language can support or stymie preservice teachers' desires for equitable teaching, providing a detailed description of participants' experiences across three semesters of teacher education. This description shows how participants negotiated conflicts, which I conceptualize as dilemmas, related to LIP and FBL in multiple ways. First, it exemplifies how participants' engagement with LIP enabled them to move beyond, or resist, deficit ideologies in their interactions and ways of talking with/about students. Second, the description shows how participants responded to unexpected moments of language complexity, or potential language-related dilemmas that they had not anticipated. Lastly, the description exemplifies how participants negotiated language-related dilemmas, engaging with standard language ideologies and obstacles to discussing language.

II. Framing the Problem

This section introduces different problem sites that interact around language in English education. I explore these problem sites using my own experiences that sensitized me to this project in addition to literature that framed the problem. First, language and “grammar” in English education are contested terms, depending on who is teaching, who is being taught, what is being taught, and how teaching/learning takes place. This means that it is perhaps unsurprising that many beginning English teachers bring with them anxieties about grammar and language instruction. Secondly, while researchers have added to literature on grammar, language variety/change, and talk in classrooms, there is still an enactment problem for most practitioners. Third, English teacher identities are shifting due to 21st-century literacy approaches and incorporation of technology into classroom reading and writing, which creates dilemmas about teaching approaches. The ways the field sometimes resists these shifts can cause further struggles for new teachers who are attempting to take on new English teacher identities and encounter resistant teaching sites. Lastly, these teachers are confronted by concerns about meeting the needs of English language learners and linguistically diverse students. These problem sites led to my conceptualization of LIP and FBL as potentially triggering dilemmas for English teachers.

My view of language in English education: Who am I in this project?

Despite the multiple ways current English teachers encounter language, some scholarly conversations about language in teacher education—and adding more explicit linguistic content into teacher education curricula—elicit a wistful tone: “It would be *nice* if we had time in teacher education to address language issues, but there are so many *practical* things new teachers need.” This perspective assumes that language is somehow peripheral to a teacher’s practice. Yet, I argue that language is central, particularly for English teachers.

As a teacher with multiple years of experience at the secondary level, I am aware of the many ways in which crucial language-related domains interact with the complexities of school culture, student identity, teacher identity, curricular goals, and public policy. My experience is varied—I’ve worked in three major cities in six different public schools, including alternative, charter, pilot, and neighborhood schools, with varied student and teacher populations. In each of these high-need schools, I engaged with on-going teacher conversations about teaching grammar and writing to a significant population of English language learners and speakers of African American English or other stigmatized varieties of English.

These teaching experiences pointed to a gap left by sidelining language issues in culturally relevant or multicultural pedagogy. This gap became clearer during my graduate studies as I learned more about what linguists were saying about language. These linguistic perspectives provided me with lenses for thinking about teaching English that I had been missing. I began to wonder why these lenses had not been part of my teacher education experiences as well as the preparation of many other English teachers. In my role as Humanities department chair at my last school, I encountered the challenges of supervising many young, white (mostly middle class and female) teachers who were often under-prepared for teaching English—specifically grammar and writing—to diverse student populations. Moreover, the cultural gaps between teachers and students became clear as I responded to high rates of teacher turnover and encountered the lack of diversity in the hiring pool.

Before entering English teaching, most teachers probably do encounter multicultural training that helps mediate cultural awareness between teachers and

students. After reading *The Real Ebonics Debate* (Perry & Delpit, 1998) during my teacher education coursework, I remember thinking about how to respect and utilize my students' languages in a diverse classroom. I also remember the forces that actually tended to inform my practice "on the ground": testing, other teachers, available literature and grammar texts, and students' and parents' goals. My training taught me much about culturally responsive curricula and practice, except when it came to teaching about how to write an essay or access standard³ English; and essays and standard English would become central to the curricula at most of the schools where I taught. Due to my coursework, I did not hold an overtly deficit model of student language and never corrected students' oral language. Yet, I rarely engaged in overt conversations about the connections between language, culture, and power.

Later in my career I did engage in these conversations as I realized the importance of addressing issues of power and language within the context of a linguistically diverse classroom. Unfortunately, I lacked knowledge about language that would have helped me respond to varied attitudes and mediate passionate discussions among my students from many linguistic backgrounds. I puzzled over why some bilingual/bidialectal students reveled in opportunities to code-switch while they vehemently supported English-only legislation. Other students expressed negative attitudes about their own language abilities, paralyzing themselves in classroom contexts, while they performed articulately and creatively in others. They had internalized a mishmash of beliefs that often contradicted their lived experiences. These beliefs, which I refer to now as FBL, manifested as deference, deficit thinking, colorblindness,⁴ and uncritical acceptance of language authorities.

Based on these teaching experiences and engagement with conversations in research, I saw great potential for increasing the role of language in English education. Current teachers and teacher educators live in a time well suited for addressing language. Language plays a critical role in current discussions about teaching English language

³ My choice to use "standard English" instead of "Standard English" represents how even my capitalization choices represent ideological positions.

⁴ An ideology of invisibility, often promoted by a false sense of equity attributed to colorblindness (the idea that race is and/or should be unseen), serves to limit effective conversations about language and pedagogy.

learners, engaging multiple twenty-first century literacies, and narrowing the achievement gap.

As I explored in the literature for what it would mean to make understandings of language more central to teacher education, I encountered myriad ways that identities, beliefs, power, and disciplinary histories have led to the current state of affairs in English education. This state of affairs often leads to teacher ambivalence and difficulties for enactment of linguistically informed principles. This literature also points to the ways that learning about language is not a neutral activity even though it may offer ways for dealing with difficult issues, such as language instruction, deficit thinking, and effective classroom interaction. Furthermore, it points to the ways that deficit beliefs about language in the United States are often racialized. Many key issues facing secondary English teachers can be approached through linguistic understandings that provide a means for tackling issues of race, inequity, and authority.⁵ However, the complicated relationships between beliefs about language and linguistic understandings (what I refer to in this study as FBL and LIP) also mean that approaching these issues can be complicated and dilemmatic.

Language in classroom interactions: Acknowledging the mismatches

My experiences teaching in diverse school environments led me to explore the ways language functions in classroom interactions. These experiences sensitized me to thinking about the ways English language arts classrooms are spaces in which our identities interact with who we are as teachers and language users, how we interact with students, and how beliefs mediate these interactions.

For instance, language use emerged as salient in multiple spaces during my urban teaching experiences, whether I was intervening in hallway conflicts, explaining instructions, scaffolding writing assignments, teaching about grammar and writing, responding to reading, exploring genres of reading and writing, negotiating testing discourses, or encountering other teachers' and students' beliefs about language use. What surfaced was that English language arts teachers, including me, sometimes

⁵ According to linguist and discourse analyst Barbara Johnstone (2007), in *Discourse Analysis*, certain issues may be approached more effectively by looking at ideology rather than race. I argue that ideologies about language may provide possibilities for approaching racialized issues salient in classrooms.

missed—or couldn't see—students' strengths and ways to support them in areas of reading, writing, and speaking.

Classroom interaction was a site where the intersections between language use and beliefs fascinated me as a teacher. As described by many teachers and researchers, (see Delpit, 1995; Fecho, 2004; Hyland, 2005), language-related misunderstandings took place in my English language arts classrooms as I worked with students who came from multiple cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The schools where I taught often struggled with mismatches between student and teacher populations. Underlying issues of class dominated the conversation at schools with a mismatch between middle class white and African American teachers and non-middle class African American students. Other schools struggled with the mismatches between their largely young, white, middle class teacher populations and more diverse student populations.⁶

My intrigue with the mismatch between teachers and students came to the forefront when I began working with new teachers as a department chair and observing classroom interactions in English, writing, social science, and Spanish classrooms. Not only did some teachers struggle with teaching diverse student populations, but also the English/writing teachers struggled specifically with grammar and writing (and in ways that were different than struggles in the Spanish classrooms). Teachers who taught sections of Writing often expressed panic about how to engage meaningfully with students. Overall, assumptions about students and language ability were revealed in the ways teachers talked to and about their students, something that became increasingly obvious in a three-tiered ability grouping system where students were supposed to receive instruction in the same subject matter but at varied levels. Under pressures to achieve ACT gains, skill and drill versions of “grammar” emerged as a particularly common method for working with students at the “basic” Writing/English level; these classes were also sites where students were positioned as not progressing and critical discussion about language disappeared (although there was little critical discussion of language in any of the classes). Yet, students used language in extremely creative (and sometimes disruptive) ways to sidetrack teachers and engage with each other.

⁶ The population of teachers has become increasingly white, monolingual, female and middle class, and these teachers will teach an increasingly linguistically, culturally, and economically diverse group of students (Hollins & Torres Guzman, 2006; Melnick & Zeichner, 1998).

These observations contributed to my awareness of the role of belief in language use and how views of language can also inform equitable teaching practices. Some new teachers appeared to “get it” and find ways to communicate effectively with students. At the time, I had few ways to articulate the differences that I saw and to support teachers who struggled with effective interactions. I could see that the outcomes of many interactions were interlinked with aspects of English teacher identity, ways of working within the English subject matter, and understandings of student abilities. I became aware that language use always interacted with the complexities of school culture, student identity, teacher identity, curricular goals, and public policy.

These experiences frame my conceptualization of language in English education and initiated my investigation of the literature for deeper understanding of mismatches between teachers and students, especially around issues of language. It also led to exploration of questions of how beginning English teachers engage with linguistic principles in teacher education and enact these principles in practice in order to provide equitable instruction.

Teacher learning of LIP: Beyond information

Even though some teacher education programs have introduced linguistically informed principles during teacher preparation, there is only limited understanding of how preservice English teachers engage with LIP in teaching philosophy and practice.⁷ Overall, we have few studies of teacher preparation for linguistically diverse classrooms (Rickford, Sweetland, & Rickford, 2004). So far, most work has focused on what teachers need to know about language. According to Paola Uccelli and Catherine Snow (2008, p. 631), this has helped us generate a long list of “need to knows” about language, including a wide range of “declarative knowledge” (from understandings of variation to

⁷ My conceptualization of professional learning is reflected in my use of the verb “engage.” I conceptualize teacher learning as a socially situated process in which learning takes place in the constantly shifting relationship between people and the environment, in the ongoing process of interacting in a particular situation and time. The situated, contextualized nature of learning in this conceptualization counters views of teacher learning simply as individual cognitive development or a lock-step developmental model. The situated nature of this conceptualization rejects views of learning as that of linear movement from novice to expert teacher. I do acknowledge that teacher learning takes place in both formal and informal ways. As a caveat to the literature reviewed, it is important to note that in teacher education, theories of teacher learning vary, meaning that the discussion of “learning” in one study may vary from another.

oral and written language relationships) as well as an even wider range of “enacted knowledge” (such as productive questioning techniques and responses to student writing). Yet, even though many linguistically informed principles have been identified as key to equitable teaching practice, the question remains: “How can this knowledge be made accessible and permanent without having folk language theories reemerge and replace educated theories?” (Uccelli & Snow, 2008, p. 631).

Studies do show that preservice teachers do not necessarily accept or incorporate concepts and strategies from methods courses. Findings suggest that field experiences can be a powerful source for understanding new concepts and ideas, but knowledge learned in methods courses can conflict with field experiences, sending competing messages (Clift & Brady, 2006). Student teachers can encounter the dilemma of being “caught in the middle between what the university is encouraging them to think and do and what the school-based teachers they work with advocate” (Cochran-Smith, 1995, p. 520). This means that one of the research gaps in teacher education is how teacher candidates’ attitudes and coursework interrelate with their classroom practice (Hollins & Torres Guzman, 2006).

While the literature says little about how preservice teachers engage with LIP in practice, studies of inservice teachers reveal that learning related to language variation is not simply a matter of providing teachers with linguistic information. The results of professional development interventions after the Ann Arbor Black English Case showed that even with increased information about language, teachers’ attitudes and practices were not always positively influenced (Ball & Lardner, 1997).⁸ Furthermore, we know that requiring linguistics courses may not actually influence teacher attitudes about language variety. In Renee Blake and Cecilia Cutler’s (2003) study of language attitudes, the small percentage of inservice teachers who had taken any linguistic course showed no change in attitudes compared to the average; instead positive attitudes towards language variation were more likely to be influenced by whether or not the teacher’s school had proactive language policies. On the other hand, even an institutionalized focus on LIP can

⁸ This finding aligns with other studies of teacher education that found that growth in knowledge does not always reduce teacher prejudice (Hollins & Torres Guzman, 2006). In fact, some multicultural teaching has been shown to exacerbate stereotypes (Zeichner, 1992), so it is no surprise that language study can lead to similar results.

be met with resistance due to prevailing beliefs about language. David Crystal (2006) described how even though language awareness and descriptive grammar concepts have been institutionalized in the UK's National Curriculum for English, these approaches to variation and systematic teaching of language still were re-interpreted by veteran teachers and parents through pre-existing lenses of prescriptivism⁹ and other language beliefs.

Pairing instruction in linguistics with focused attention to language attitudes has been shown to influence inservice teacher practice. As a case in point, Julie Sweetland (2006) demonstrated how sociolinguistic professional development, acknowledging both teachers' attitudes and linguistic knowledge, enabled inservice English teachers to develop more positive attitudes about student language practices and to use strategies of affirming linguistic diversity. The result was that these teachers taught students about language variation and dialect awareness in ways that improved students' writing and sense of self-efficacy (Sweetland, 2006). However, this study responded to site-based needs of inservice teachers and was not focused on preservice teacher preparation for multiple contexts.

In response, my work addresses the overall lack of detailed information about what actually happens as preservice teachers engage with LIP that they learn about in teacher preparation as they begin enacting (or not) these principles in practice.

Teacher struggles to enact LIP in practice

Although prior research in this area is limited, some relevant work has suggested that teachers struggle with how to enact linguistic principles in practice and grapple with them in relation to existing folk beliefs about language. Even though teacher educators Arnetha Ball and Rashidah Muhammad (2003) concluded that teacher preparation coursework in language variation can change ingrained attitudes like "zero tolerance" in response to stigmatized language varieties, they found that other folk beliefs can be pervasive and entrenched. Folk beliefs pervasive amongst teachers in their teacher education course mirrored those of my pilot study participants: 1) "there is a uniform

⁹ Prescriptive grammars serve to prescribe instead of describe, emphasizing the view that some "correct" language forms or uses of language are better than others (and therefore should be used by all) and promoting the view that language change represents corruption. Some of first prescriptive grammars emerged in the 18th century and established new rules for correctness (e.g. Lowth, 1762).

standard English that has been reduced to a set of consistent rules”; 2) “these ‘correct’ consistent rules should be followed by all American English speakers”; and 3) “this mythical standard English must be safeguarded by everyone connected with its use, particularly classroom teachers” (Ball & Muhammad, 2003, p. 77). My pilot study that followed teachers across three semesters of teacher education confirmed that these folk beliefs can serve as filters that prevent teachers from fully understanding or taking up effective strategies for supporting student learning.

These findings echo conversations in English language arts that reveal gaps between language awareness and enactment of linguistically informed pedagogy. At NCTE’s 2008 Annual Conference, educators and linguists discussed what English teachers need to know about language (NCTE Commission on Language, 2008). While educators and linguists in the session all recognized the crucial need for more linguistic understandings in order for teachers to teach more equitably and productively, teachers expressed frustration with not being sure how to actually enact language awareness or appreciation and principles of descriptive grammar in their classrooms. Contextual constraints such as time to learn about linguistics, testing demands, and school policies emerged as potential constraints for teachers. Additionally, teachers expressed frustration with not knowing explicit strategies that would actually be effective with their specific groups of students. The existing gaps between linguistic scholarship and everyday practice mean that even English teachers with awareness of linguistic diversity and equity may not have clear ways to enact LIP in relation to their site-based concerns and/or may encounter dilemmas as they attempt enactment.

Teachers’ struggles also relate to the ways power intersects with beliefs about language use and access. Scholars have described how some experienced educators may need tools for negotiating the ways they value linguistic difference and provide access to standard English for school success (see Curzan, 2002; Lovejoy, 2003). Underlying this conflict may be the complex issue of how to enact beliefs about language and power in practice. English teachers may struggle with aligning their beliefs and practices—especially since some folk beliefs about how to support students as learners may actually conflict with linguistic principles. For instance, Amanda Godley, Brian Carpenter and Cynthia Werner (2007) described how an experienced English teacher encountered

tension between “helping her students master academic language and recognizing that her students’ different ways of speaking were valid” (p. 121). In this case, the teacher relied on folk beliefs about oral language correction in her attempt to help students master standard English. This demonstrates how even teachers with awareness of language variety still may rely on folk beliefs about language acquisition that actually counter research about strategies to utilize language variety and motivate student learning.

This work suggests that, in order to incorporate LIP, English teachers must find productive ways to manage the paradoxes of their positions in the English language arts of both affirming students’ language use and sharing the goal of giving access to standard English. Studies have shown that effective teachers of linguistically and culturally diverse students simultaneously 1) hold high expectations; 2) provide explicit language instruction; 3) show respect for students’ home languages and dialects (Dong, 2004; McDermott & Rothenberg, 1999). However, especially for new teachers, it may not be clear how to best structure explicit language instruction while also communicating respect for language variety. In order to understand how teacher preparation can scaffold new teacher learning in these areas, we need better description of how beginning teachers negotiate conflicts between the beliefs they espouse about language variation and the beliefs underlying language instruction they enact in practice.

Folk beliefs and equity

Language beliefs have critical implications for equitable classroom learning. Linguistic and educational studies have revealed that teacher attitudes are influenced by teachers’ language beliefs, and these attitudes also affect student learning (Blake & Cutler, 2003; Heath, 1983; Meacham, 2000; Sleeter, 2001). Commonsensical understandings of language can present obstacles for teachers as they interact with their students. Research has found that teachers grounded in different communities than their students may experience problems related to miscommunication based on these beliefs (Kohl, 2002). Certain beliefs can shape understandings about language acquisition or acquiring new registers or styles and can limit teachers’ abilities to support and assess language learning. For instance, unchallenged beliefs about language deficiency—and assumptions about what students can and cannot do based on those myths—can influence

teachers who will teach in high-need areas but have little experience in those communities (Bauer & Trudgill, 1998; Valencia & Solórzano, 2004). Folk beliefs about verbal deprivation have historically led to attempts to fix student's "deficits" rather than recognizing the systematicity of stigmatized varieties of English (Labov, 1967).

It is important to note that in the United States, many of the most salient folk beliefs about language have been linked to race. Past work on deficit language ideologies points to how race is more salient in the United States than class; furthermore, ideologies that pinpoint multilingualism as a threat to national identity often are linked to the perceived threats of racialized, non-native interlopers (J. Milroy & Milroy, 1999; L. Milroy, 1999). Institutional and social structures reinforce these racialized language beliefs, which can in turn perpetuate racism in education. Social constructions of whiteness (Fine, 2004) in relation to standard language use perpetuate privilege, such as assumptions that "mainstream" students are white, middle class, and standard English speaking. Ideologies of colorblindness also can reinforce the invisibility of language privilege linked to whiteness and lead to silences related to talking about race in relation to language. Yet, deficit ideologies about language often remain a domain in which people feel sanctioned to express vitriolic assessments of language users, even when these are racially-infused and linked to coded discussions of group identities (see Chapter 2 for further discussion).

These folk beliefs, or "folk linguistic" views, are based on the sense that we as language users are experts of our own and others' language. This language-user-as-expert authority can obscure the need for expert understandings of language and can reinforce racialized perceptions of language use (e.g. the Oakland Controversy, see Rickford & Rickford, 2000). Furthermore, these beliefs can obstruct teacher learning about language since "[m]uch of the popular knowledge that teachers acquire is either reinforced or is not challenged by the mainstream knowledge they acquire in their undergraduate university education and in teacher education programs" (Banks, 2006, p. 773).

As prospective teachers enter English teacher education, they bring with them folk beliefs about language and learning that circulate publicly and have been reinforced by past experiences in school and society. The typically short preparation process in

English education must engage with preservice teachers' ingrained beliefs about schooling based on their assumptions that they know *how school works*, assumptions that are built on their limited student view of classrooms or the "apprenticeship of observation" (Lortie, 1975). Further, prospective teachers bring assumptions about *how language works* based on their own experiences that may have been reinforced during their high school and college education. Folk beliefs about language may be even more entrenched for them, since future English teachers are not only language speakers but are also good at "English." These beliefs may be reinforced by practices observed in the field since students, parents, and teachers at their school sites may have internalized similar language beliefs.

Consequently, these folk beliefs may not be simply tacit beliefs about language since they have been reinforced by multiple experiences as well as cultural, social ideologies. Folk beliefs about language can be examined through what I describe in the conceptual framework as not only assumptions about oral/written language acquisition and transfer but also what past research has referred to as "language ideologies" (such as deficit thinking related to language varieties and beliefs about standard English transfer and hegemony).¹⁰

These folk beliefs about language (FBL) have implications for issues of equity since the ways teachers understand language have implications for how they perceive and interact with students. For instance, the teacher who believes that a student's stigmatized language variety represents slang, not a systematic, identity-laden way of communicating, may repeat back the student's question in standard English without any explanation or pretend s/he cannot understand the initial question. Students may interpret this response as an indication that the teacher 1) has not heard them; 2) is simply repeating the question; 3) is mocking them. In this case the teacher's belief about how language works may alienate students who speak stigmatized varieties and block effective communication. Furthermore, this type of response may show a disconnect in understanding how oral language inter-relates with written language and learning new varieties of English. This type of scenario demonstrates the stakes for providing more

¹⁰ Chapter 2 further describes my rationale for referring these beliefs as FBL rather than as language ideologies.

research on how preservice teachers understand FBL in relation to other more productive linguistically informed principles (LIP), particularly as they engage with the complexities of making practical teaching decisions.

In this dissertation I have created an approach for understanding these relationships. The methodology is a significant part of this dissertation in that I have created a methodology that provides a way of reframing this intransigent problem signaled by teachers' experiences and the literature, a recasting of the problem that required a specific and heretofore uncreated methodology. My epistemology for how to explore an understanding of these relationships between LIP and FBL within the complexity of making practical teaching decisions required a design that incorporated attention to discursive relationships, conceptualization of language, and purposeful representations of qualitative data. This design enabled me to describe the landscape of dilemmas related to engagement with LIP and FBL. The next section provides a brief outline of the dissertation based on this design.

III. Dissertation Outline

My study approaches this problem site through a study focused on three categories of linguistically informed principles (LIP) relevant to English teaching, which preservice teachers learn about in teacher preparation: principles of 1) language equity, 2) descriptive approaches to grammar, and 3) consequential language choices in classroom interactions. My approach involved looking conceptually across four cases of preservice English teachers and drew from case study as a methodology in order to produce thematically organized chapters. The results chapters include illustrations from the participants' experiences, which are constructed from descriptive transcript excerpts and *Field Sketches*—contextualized descriptions of teacher and student interactions. The purpose of these illustrations is to provide description of the phenomenon in this study in order to provide future teachers with ways to better understand and engage with LIP and FBL, particularly in relation to language-related dilemmas they may face initiated by contextual pressures, defensive student reactions, and teaching decisions, such as planning, assessment, and in-the-moment responses.

In the chapters that follow, I suggest how English educators and teacher educators can theorize and research how understanding language can support equitable teaching—even in the face of language-related dilemmas that may be particularly salient for ELA teachers. Chapter 2 focuses on how the history of language in English education shaped the nature of this phenomenon and describes the inter-related conceptual framework for understanding LIP and FBL in this study. Chapter 3 further explains the study’s methodology and design based on the conceptual framework. The three results chapters (Chapters 4-6) reveal how equity is often at stake when race is ignored in relation to language. The illustrations in the results chapters also offer concrete examples for how preservice teachers filter linguistically informed principles in relation to their experiences. These illustrations describe both the affordances and limitations of participants’ understanding of LIP and FBL in engaging with language-related dilemmas, their abilities to recognize these dilemmas in teaching situations (i.e. to address a dilemma, a teacher has to recognize that one might exist), and their need for additional tools for understanding and enacting LIP in a variety of teaching situations. The discussion in Chapter 7 describes how the illustrations provided in the results chapters point to potential language-related concepts and positions that could help beginning teachers engage with language-related dilemmas and avoid becoming stuck in colormute, colorblind, or language-indifferent stances.

By providing an in-depth description of understanding language for equitable teaching, the chapters that follow serve to inform future work that explores how to design a more effective range of assessments and experiences related to language-related dilemmas and offer ways that language could play a role in how preservice teachers are assessed as adaptable in complex situations. By describing this complex phenomenon, this dissertation provides a starting place for designing experiences and assessments that provide fruitful intersections among language-related domains, such as the teaching of writing, language study, and culturally responsive classroom interactions.

Chapter Two

Language in English Education: Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

In the introductory chapter, I articulated the problem of enacting linguistically informed principles in order to support equitable instruction. In particular, I illuminated how cultural and linguistic mismatches between teachers and students complicate discussions of language, power, and race. These problems framed this study's exploration of how linguistically informed principles and folk beliefs about language may be negotiated by teachers who are trying to teach English language arts in effective ways, especially as they grapple with multiple problem sites related to language, such as grammar instruction, technology-based writing, and the needs of English language learners and bidialectal students. Although some could argue that attention to "language" teaching is the domain of language teachers—i.e., teachers of English language learners or English as a Foreign Language—my study builds on traditions of language study in English language arts.

The first section of this chapter frames my study with a brief history of language in English education, and how this history has shaped an ongoing focus on language or grammar as right/wrong language use. The second section builds on this history by looking at ongoing challenges related to addressing language in secondary English teacher education, particularly the ways persistent ideologies and compartmentalization of language-related aspects of secondary English education contribute to the dilemmas surrounding engagement with language. The third section in the chapter describes the conceptual framework for the study in light of the literature reviewed and how my study extends previous work by conceptualizing and exploring the intersections between language-related domains in relation to preservice teacher learning. I will explain how the

history of and ideologies about language in English education are addressed in the study's conceptualization of folk beliefs about language (FBL) and linguistically informed principles (LIP) and how this study was initiated with *dilemmas* as a means for understanding the relationships between FBL and LIP.

I. A History of Language in English Education

Historical divisions and factors built over time to produce current conditions that complicate the messages about how language interrelates with English education in the United States. This history, by which I mean organizational, professional, and public events, shapes current and new teachers' understandings of language (and enactment of those understandings) in secondary English language arts (ELA). These teachers inherit current language-related tensions and challenges that have been influenced by professional divisions, cultural anxieties about correct language, and past trends in textbook use and ELA instruction. This history further contributes to current conversations about where language fits in ELA, and these conversations differ based on understandings of what is taught in ELA, who teaches ELA, who they are teaching, and how ELA should be taught. This history has brought educators to the current state of affairs in which language is both thought of as having had primacy in English education and requiring further integration in order to make English education more equitable.

As the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), the professional practitioner organization for “educators in English Studies, Literacy, and Language Arts,” reached its centennial in 2011, it is notable that English “language” arts has had a long and fractured relationship to language due to early bifurcation between English studies and linguistics. On the occasion of the centennial and 21st-century discussions of literacy and technology, English education scholars called attention to language in ways that seemed distinct but actually may not be that different. One view highlighted language as a new and important thread for reframing English education, such as a themed issue of *English Education* that called attention to language in the 21st century, titled *Teaching English in a Sea of Change: Linguistic Pluralism and the New English* (Kirkland, 2010). As he framed this journal's theme, David Kirkland advocated for a “New English Education” that acknowledges the increasingly globalized, multi-dialectal, and multi-

lingual connections to “English” study. In contrast to the “New English Education,” Kirkland decried the ways that conventional ELA still prioritizes “correct” forms, hierarchical authority, and grand textual narratives (Kirkland, 2010). As the history of bifurcation of language study in English education will suggest later in this chapter, Kirkland’s view may not be as much of a reframing as an echo of early voices in the field.

Another recent claim is that “language” may be becoming less important to ELA than in the past. On one hand, scholars point to the literacy challenges of an increasingly globalized, digitized world: This world could challenge focus on the "primacy of language" in ELA as a result of the visual and aural emphases of 21st-century literacies (Sperling & DiPardo, 2008, p. 89). Yet this view can align with Kirkland’s understanding of a New English Education, depending on how “language” is defined. For instance, Sperling and DiPardo also argued for NCTE’s centennial to mark a new call for research on complexities of practice, of "understandings about how reading and writing are constructed in real time" (Sperling & DiPardo, 2008, p. 97). These domains could be construed as inevitably languaged understandings of ELA. In this construal, language in English education can be conceptualized in ways that actually align with both views, pointing to the languaged nature of the intersections between classroom interactions, language use, and equitable support of literacy practices.

These voices point to a current state of affairs in which language can be perceived as both having primacy in ELA and being ignored in ELA. These perceptions can be traced to the ways linguistic study was fractured from the work of English educators as understandings of language in the fields of linguistics and ELA often developed on different tracks (Dixon, 1967; Finegan, 2001; Guillory, 2002). I attribute this bifurcation of linguistic and English education to the history of language in English studies in the United States. Due to this unfortunate bifurcation, it is unsurprising that there are multiple, sometimes conflicting, conversations about language reflected in NCTE as a professional organization,¹¹ as these conversations can be traced to historical and

¹¹ NCTE currently has various position statements on language, which are often cross-listed with a “grammar” category. These policies include statements on NCTE’s stances towards English language learners, learning through language, elementary language learning, Students’ Right to their own Language

educational factors that have influenced understandings of grammar and language in both secondary and undergraduate education in English studies.

My focus here is not to provide an overall history of language in composition or English studies, but rather to foreground how language intersects with secondary ELA instruction. However, it is important to start with a more general history of how language in English studies produced compartmentalization related to language in English education, particularly how these roots solidified a right/wrong distinction in language study and sidelined linguistically informed instruction related to oral and written language use. I outline events that led to current fragmentation and mixed messages in the field, particularly events from the history of composition and secondary English teaching in the United States that have implications for preservice teachers' subject matter knowledge.

A. Early roots of a right/wrong focus on language

Understandings of correct American “English” emerged as North Americans established a national linguistic identity after the Revolutionary War (Millward, 1996; Renan, 1996). This identity developed in relationship to British English, issues of class and race in the United States, and increased prioritization of English in national policy. English “grammar” teaching in the colonial United States often was based on Latin grammars seen as disciplining the mind and reasoning (Weaver, 1996). This approach to instruction reflected the ways many early published English grammars addressed a burgeoning middle class seeking access to social status in Britain during the 18th century. Some guides reflected a belief that English was a corruption of Latin and that Latin-based rules were needed to standardize and lend authority to English as multiple languages competed for status (Finegan, 2001).

These ideological underpinnings of “grammar” study are one reason for the simultaneous focus on language study in ELA and rejection of new linguistic and composition theories for that study. As grammars and style guides were written in the 19th century to support instruction, many focused on the “propriety” or “beauty” of

(SRTOL), Ebonics, national language policy, and language study, i.e. the grammar debate (see <http://www.ncte.org/positions/language>).

English language and established links between good grammar and religiosity through description about what was “wrong” or “right” in language use (Finegan, 2001).¹² Some style guides in the United States emerged to argue for the correctness and superiority of American usage that was mocked by some British style guides (Connors, 1997). Furthermore, arguments were made about English language as being more than a corruption of German and as a language linked to Aryan superiority (Bailey, 1996). These arguments for the superiority and authority of the English language (an increasingly codified version) meant that variations or vernacular versions became cast as representing resistance to this linguistic authority (and possibly the authority of schooling mechanisms now serving to teach this knowledge). These beliefs shaped the developing field of English instruction. For instance, early grammar instruction in the United States in the latter half of the 19th century used grammars as authorities and focused on memorization and recitation with little actual language production on the part of students (Woods, 1986, in Weaver, 1996). In some cases, exercises included the correction of “bad English” although this practice had its skeptics even in the 19th century (see National Education Association, 1894).

In 19th-century United States, rapid changes in class and gender distinctions further generated discussion of language in education as colleges were seen increasingly as sites of class socialization and promotion of larger social goals. After the Civil War, higher education began including a broader population of men and women in multiple occupations, beyond a traditional focus on the education of men in professions such as law. This rapid progress reinforced codification in relation to language. Proper usage was linked to social advancement, leading the upwardly mobile to consult dictionaries and grammars as authorities (even though these had existed before), schools to provide English instruction, and universities to prioritize English language and literature study as a separate field rather than as training for other professions (Bailey, 1996). Along with broader access to higher education came measures for gatekeeping in relation to this access. For instance, a focus on proper language combined with an increasing emphasis on rhetoric emerged as Harvard University instituted an entrance exam and other colleges

¹² Finegan describes how two of the most widespread grammars in the second half of 18th century were written by a theologian and a bishop.

decried the ways secondary school grammar lessons were not sinking in (Connors, 1997).

Public cries about the state of illiteracy of college students led to what Connors calls the “Great Handbook Bloom” as texts, like the Woolley handbook (1907), ushered in the handbook era in which prescriptive texts were used on the college level, leading to an increased focus on error-based grammar at the secondary level. At every stage, there were critics who questioned these approaches, such as reports that error-based grammar in secondary education did not influence student writing (Connors, 1997; National Education Association, 1894); however, error correction became increasingly used as a primary measure of academic writing. In the 1920s, correction as sole measure for assessing writing came under further criticism by scholars, yet the draw of handbooks and the textbook market led to a scholar/teacher split: The reality of practitioners became increasingly disconnected from the language study of experts.

B. Roots of compartmentalized language study and teacher preparation

These splits between scholarship and instruction were compounded by the trajectory of university English studies’ development as a field and, later, the development of university English departments. Due to this history, English departments have been described as a “catchall,” with the subsequent disciplinary unity (or ambiguity) that has led to ongoing disintegration as well as integration of multiple disciplines (Guillory, 2002; Parker, 1967). English studies has been described as a kind of dysfunctional family, with “English” as the child of a broken home produced by a mother, “Oratory,” and a father, “philology” (Parker, 1967, p. 340). The mother’s genealogy points to how speech teachers were the first to teach “English” before specific training for English instructors began to develop in the late 19th century. In the 1870s language was the primary object of English study, so it makes sense that the English’s “father” might be philology. However, by the 1940s, this family history was largely forgotten as literature and literary studies had taken precedence over language study at the university level (Guillory, 2002).

It is worth exploring the roots of English’s broken home and how these shaped language in English education. The early disciplinary splits between philology and literary study left language as a historically fraught and ignored area at the university

level (see Graff, 1987).¹³ Philology had developed in the 18th and 19th centuries as German scholars focused on chronological, written language development and scientific study of the historical origins of modern languages (Guillory, 2002). In the 1870s, German-trained philologists in the U.S. determined the disciplinary orientations of newly formed humanities departments, yet the multi-faceted umbrella of English departments meant that scientific approaches did not gain traction in the study of literature, which left room for linguistics to emerge as its own discipline at beginning of 20th century. Literature became the main object of study of “language” departments and linguistics became more linked with psychological and other empirical studies (Guillory, 2002). As linguists abandoned search for a universal grammar and focused on the description and the purposes of using language, English studies developed on its own path.

This history meant that university-level instruction in English departments focused primarily on literary studies and criticism during the early twentieth century—the same time that more formal education related to secondary English instruction was being established and NCTE was being founded as a professional organization. Simultaneously, secondary-level English subject matter (and thus teaching demands) retained multiple intersections with both oral and written language study. I am not the first to identify this gap between secondary English subject matter and university-level preparation. In the 1960s, Parker claimed that university-level English studies still had a lot to learn about language from its mother Oratory and father Philology, especially if English departments were to prepare future secondary teachers who needed more than literary training.

C. Consequences of scholar and practitioner splits

As a further continuation of this early disciplinary bifurcation, ongoing scholar/practitioner splits contributed to increasing gaps between linguistic findings and English language arts instruction. By the onset of World War I, a small percentage of instructors had philological training and the Linguistic Society of America had contributed some early voices to NCTE who spoke out against prescriptivism, such as

¹³ Additionally, these disciplinary splits led to current English departments’ focus on literary studies and conflicts about what language-related content falls under the purview of English studies: Andrea Lunsford in *Writing Matters* (2007) describes how language, composition, and rhetoric have been partitioned at the university level, leading to current debates about where the study of new rhetorical forms (i.e. digital communication and writing) falls in disciplinary terms.

Charles Fries in the 1920s.¹⁴ In the 1930s, there was a move towards English for life skills at the secondary level, with its focus on reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Yet, this secondary English trend remained fairly disconnected from scholarship in the fields of linguistics and English studies. As Connors states, “Most English teachers continued to slumber through a long summer of lethargic acceptance of linguistic ignorance” leading scholars to cry out about the gap between researchers and the rank and file (p. 164).

This disconnection between scholarly work and teaching on the ground was compounded by the developing field of linguistics’ focus on oral speech rather than writing, leading linguistic study to develop on a parallel path from composition. Despite the attempts of linguists like Charles Fries who sought to make connections between handbook grammar and structural linguistics, debates in linguistics during the 1950s and 1960s made general linguistics even less accessible to practitioners. By 1965, the Chomskian turn towards transformational-generative linguistics made the field of linguistics even more disconnected from the teaching of English: “As genuine linguistics became less accessible, ‘grammar’ in English became that strange amalgam of buzzwords, legends, handbook nostrums, half-understood transformational concepts, and decayed eighteenth century prescriptivism that we all know today” (Connors, 1997, p. 169). As a case in point, in 1945 a NCTE commission launched the publication of a curriculum series (that took twenty years to complete) and showed little to no progress over that time in conceptions of language and writing, even though new knowledge about the connections between writing and grammar were emerging in linguistics (Hunter & Wallace, 1995).

To be fair, these disciplinary and scholar/practitioner splits were not all that limited movement towards linguistic understandings in English education. Challenges were further raised by the ways these splits intersected with powerful beliefs about language. Important to this history are the ways that NCTE provided early advocacy for descriptive approaches and the ways these efforts encountered strong backlash. In the first half of the 20th century, NCTE did attempt to promote a more realistic view of

¹⁴ For instance, Fries worked with MLA, LSA, and NCTE to organize a corpus of current uses of English.

correctness based on actual use (Finegan, 2001). For instance, in the mid-20th century *The English Language Arts* (1952) was published by NCTE, which identified five foundational linguistic principles for teaching English. Yet, descriptive and linguistic approaches were marginalized for multiple reasons, including deeply rooted beliefs and the accessibility of linguistic understandings.¹⁵ For example, NCTE's efforts encountered much hostility and notoriety (including public obituaries written for "grammar") due to deep social and emotional convictions related to language and the purposes for teaching English.

The scholar/practitioner divides further thwarted movement towards descriptive approaches in classroom practice. Even as scholars called for English instruction to look at how language functions, these efforts were resisted by the "insecure rank and file and among professional language guardians" (Finegan, 2001, p. 394), and "grammar" in English instruction remained associated with prescriptive approaches. In 1965, a commission looking at high school preparation for college reported the defensiveness of teachers trained in traditional methods. The commission cited 150 years of traditional methods in approaches to language study as one of the challenges to providing what was acknowledged as crucial language study for secondary students (*Freedom*, 1965). Linguistic views of "new" grammar and the speed of (and disagreement about) these changes in linguistics (Dixon, 1967) led to further tension with traditional views. The view remained that "old" grammar was the domain of English education; "new" grammar was somehow linked to "bad" grammar. Both "new" linguistic views of grammar and ongoing views of "bad" grammar were connected to discourses of profligacy and moral decline. As Finegan points out, usages that bothered people may have changed from the 19th to 20th centuries, but these usages were still tied up with beliefs about "politics, morality, and social status" (p. 400).

Another reason why descriptive approaches remained at the margins in the 20th century may be due to the difficulty of taking on these new approaches in actual instruction, especially given the disciplinary backgrounds of existing English educators; time limits and resources for English teacher education; and the availability and

¹⁵ I am certainly not the first to describe this marginalization of descriptive approaches (see Stygall 2002 for a discussion of this history in relation to composition).

popularity of existing instructional texts. For teachers without linguistic grounding, what were perceived as tried-and-true handbooks, workbooks, or guides were published in multiple volumes (although these largely relied on nineteenth century prescriptivism) and enabled them to use texts they might have used as students in college composition courses. Even with some NCTE advocacy of other approaches, these methods were less readily available (as well as more resisted ideologically) since during the first half of the 20th century less than ten percent of teachers read *English Journal*, NCTE's journal focused on secondary education (Connors, 1997). There was further skepticism of what was perceived as "anything goes" approaches to language study in the few linguistically informed texts that were published in the 20th century, and often these texts did not create practical or explicit bridges between linguistic principles and actual teaching techniques.

Many of these challenges have extended into the 21st century. More recent scholars have attempted to introduce linguistically based conceptions of grammar, beyond traditional rule-based (i.e. prescriptive) approaches (see Weaver, 1996 or Schleppegrell, 2007). Yet, research has shown that while English teachers may teach literature collaboratively and creatively, they may associate "grammar" with traditional approaches and as something they "hate" or dread teaching in comparison to literature (Brosnahan & Neulieb, 1995, in Hunter & Wallace, 1995). Furthermore, as a result of this disciplinary history, there has been a much greater emphasis on literature and literary analysis within the larger field of preparation and in coursework required for English majors, which influences the preparation of English majors who become teachers. For preservice teachers, this means that subject matter preparation most often involves literary study, with limited emphasis on language study. What language-based study they do experience may be compartmentalized into history of English or linguistics and may not connect overtly with continuing debates about "grammar" within English language arts instruction (such as teaching grammar in context versus back-to-basics or prescriptive approaches). NCTE's position statements underscore the multiple definitions for "grammar" and the slippery nature of this term in relation to actual teaching practices. Yet, researchers promoting increased understanding of linguistic diversity cite a lack of exposure to "grammar" for English teacher candidates. Advocating for teacher preparation in educational linguistics, Filmore and Snow (2002)

note the lack of grammatical knowledge and other linguistic preparation for preservice English teachers. Studies of English teachers further suggest that content area courses often prepare them to reiterate grammar rules but that understanding of underlying concepts is often missing or misinformed and inaccurate (Floden & Meniketti, 2006).

This history of language in English education has led to multiple conversations about language in the profession and has produced different versions of teaching (about and in) language. This history also contributed to a particular view of right/wrong in language study that is affirmed by common ideologies about language that are also reinforced in handbooks and guides, which support preparation for state and national tests, and often focus on prescriptive, compartmentalized understandings of language. For instance, in the Common Core Standards, the most recent national standards, the “Language” category focuses on prescriptive rules for standard English and is partitioned from “writing” and “speaking and listening” standards.¹⁶ These institutional relationships between language, literature, and grammar have contributed to the existing ELA environment that often prioritizes prescriptive language and compartmentalizes other aspects of language study and use.

While history has led us to this point, teachers and students in English classrooms may also encounter inequities due to this history. Some scholars argue that traditional separations among aspects of ELA (i.e. writing, reading literature, grammar, and speech) have outlived their usefulness, as has one traditional aim of correcting “bad” grammar. For instance, when language in teaching English is construed as a correction of students’ bad grammar, then opportunities to support academic and 21st-century literacies—especially for a wide range of students—can be lost. Yet, the history of language in English education also implies that another “traditional” aim has been to incorporate linguistic understandings of language into English instruction; there have been a number of scholars, teachers, and curriculum designers who have grappled with how to move English instruction from this right/wrong focus on language and toward a linguistically informed approach to oral and written language in English education.

¹⁶ While NCTE leaders have reviewed and offered feedback to these standards, the current position is of “independent critic” rather than endorsing body.

II. Challenges for Equitable Engagement with Language in English Education

Challenges for working with language in English education arise in relation to these roots. The disciplinary bifurcation between English studies and linguistics has led to classic divisions in ELA of oral and written language, undermining teachers' abilities to engage with the complexities of oral and written language in ELA classrooms. Furthermore, the history of language in English education has had consequences for compartmentalizing language in subject matter (such as language study, literature study, speech, and grammar instruction) from language in teaching interactions (such as understandings of working with diverse populations). In particular, this history has resulted in certain aspects of language being sidelined or partitioned in teacher preparation, including oral language, interaction with students, and descriptive approaches to language study. This historical compartmentalization has done ELA teachers a disservice and has had consequences for how incoming preservice teachers encounter and enact current ELA curriculum and understandings of students' language resources. This compartmentalization may have also created unfair and unjust conditions, especially for students who need support with academic literacy and/or bring knowledge of multiple languages.

This history, in which oral and written language are often partitioned in bodies of scholarship and study, has produced current conditions in English language arts that obscure potentially useful and complex linguistic understandings that could support equitable instruction. This compartmentalization and right/wrong treatment of language has led to varied state and national standards for different language-related domains, which in turn has often led to secondary ELA coursework that often focuses on speech, grammar/language study, and literature as separate entities. This creates challenges for teachers who often must link lessons to particular state standards and measures. Even though messages about working with students from varied cultural and linguistic backgrounds has incorporated knowledge from descriptive approaches to grammar/language (Denham & Lobeck, 2005; Schleppegrell & Go, 2007; Wheeler & Swords, 2004), this knowledge is often partitioned from other realities such as expectations about standard English, grammar instruction, and literary texts. For preservice teachers engaged in English education study, then, it is common to partition

understandings of grammar from learning about classroom interactions, knowledge about language variation, and approaches to equitable writing instruction and assessment. This produces potentially unfair conditions in which teachers may assess student writing without explicit scaffolding in prescriptive expectations, thus marginalizing students who may not be as congruent with standard language practices. Other unfair results include the ways middle class, white students may be privileged based on home varieties of language and may feel justified in views that stigmatize others based on language use.

As another consequence of this history, the relationships between oral and written language may be sidelined in teacher candidates' English coursework, which may be partly due to conflicting views from teacher education and undergraduate coursework. From both the hidden and overt curricula of their coursework experiences at both the secondary and university level, English teacher candidates bring beliefs about the disciplinary relationships between English teaching and language with them to teacher education. For many, this means that experiences with critical exploration of "grammar" and written language may be limited and that engagement with oral language is virtually non-existent in teacher preparation. This preparation glosses over the ways that current secondary English language arts curricula involves multiple ways of engaging with oral and written language, encompassing instruction related to reading, writing, "grammar," vocabulary study, speech, and digital composition, not to mention the ways language intersects with day-to-day interactions. This subject matter is influenced by multiple, shifting, and context-specific understandings of secondary English teaching (Applebee, 1974),¹⁷ which continue to expand with more recent ways of thinking about literacy, including twenty-first century literacies and multiple literacies, as text continues to be redefined.¹⁸ These multiple knowledge structures can be value-laden and often lead to contradictory language understandings (Christie & Macken-Horarik, 2007).

¹⁷ The purposes of secondary English study have shifted historically and continue to shift—whether the focus was on providing relevance in the workplace (Inglis, Miller, Pendleton, Spaulding, & Clapp, 1926); advocating equitable social, personal growth (Hatfield, 1935); or providing preparation for college (*Freedom*, 1965). Due to the multiple, powerful disciplinary ideologies at play, scholars have argued that any version of English is deeply political and that new teachers' past experiences with English and future goals may include romanticized (and conflicting) versions of English (Kelly, 2004).

¹⁸ English language arts may be moving towards transdisciplinarity, or postdisciplinarity, where "overarching definitions of knowledge in many disciplines are decomposing and are being taken over by local practices" (Larsen-Freeman & Freeman, 2008, p. 179).

The complex relationship between oral and written texts, especially in relation to issues of power and culturally responsive pedagogy, may be further obscured due to compartmentalization of language understandings. Research about writing and language has led to increasing English education resources about writing as well as resources about language and talk in classroom interaction (see Section III). In NCTE's Beliefs about Teaching of Writing, the position statement asserts, "writing has a complex relationship to talk," but the statement does not offer strategies for teaching practices in relation to this complexity or suggestions for how to teach equitably in relation to operationalizing the connections between talk and writing. Even with linguists pointing to important distinctions between written and spoken standard Englishes (Cheshire, 1999), some English teachers tell their students to read aloud compositions in order to edit for what "sounds right." This approach can lead to unfair advantages for standard English speakers, but also may not even be effective for standard English speakers since written and oral standards follow different patterns.

Yet, this lack of ELA teachers' language knowledge is not necessarily a surprise. In the 1990s, NCTE conducted a language knowledge and awareness survey and found that one-third of the teachers they surveyed had no training focused on linguistic diversity and even those who had coursework felt the need for more preparation (CCCC Language Policy Committee, 2000).¹⁹ Furthermore, two-thirds of the teachers were not aware of NCTE/CCCC policies that support language variation and multilingualism; secondary teachers who were members of NCTE were less aware than their university counterparts, perpetuating ongoing scholar/practitioner splits (CCCC Language Policy Committee, 2000). The repercussions of this may be that preservice teachers (as discussed in Chapter 1) bring limited knowledge about language to their classroom teaching, which may never be questioned by the experienced teachers they encounter. What knowledge new teachers do bring may not explicitly address the ways reading, writing, and language use intersect in equitable ELA instruction for a diverse range of students. Furthermore, coursework

¹⁹ In NCTE's survey, one-third of the teachers (both at the secondary and undergraduate levels) had no training focused on linguistic diversity, and 95% of the teachers surveyed felt that a college course in language diversity was necessary for English language arts teachers. Yet, there may be folk beliefs at work about which courses would be necessary: although taking courses specifically focused on African American English and American dialects ranked lowest among courses that teachers felt should be mandatory, these were the types of courses that were shown to have the largest impact on teacher attitudes about language variety compared to other more general linguistic courses.

about providing equitable classroom interactions (i.e. coursework related to multi-cultural or linguistic study) often has remained disconnected from discussion of what secondary teachers need to understand about language variation in order to provide equitable assessments of student language in ELA contexts. While the NCTE survey suggested that some experienced teachers recognize the realities of linguistic diversity in their teaching contexts, this does not mean they have access to linguistic knowledge that would support their approaches to this diversity, such as understanding features of oral or written language variety and using those understandings to shape instruction.

Additionally, understandings of language in classroom interactions and ELA subject matter are related in complex ways to awareness and beliefs about language diversity. Deficit models of student language intersect with equitable classroom interactions and heighten the stakes of this gap between knowledge and practice. I am certainly not the first to suggest that this more integrated focus on language is critical to equitable classroom interactions. As mentioned in Chapter 1, previous research has shown the ways that inservice teachers who claim that they value and understand language variation still may rely on FBL that actually counter research about strategies to utilize language variety and motivate student learning (Godley, Carpenter, & Werner, 2007; Lovejoy, 2003). This relationship is often fraught with issues of power, such as beliefs about English teachers' roles to be gatekeepers of "good" language practices. These beliefs complicate how teachers perceive approaches to supporting equitable learning. Since written and spoken standard Englishes are seen as cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) these forms are often tied to larger educational priorities, especially for English teachers—as evidenced by recent Common Core Standards. Standard Englishes are seen as powerful keys to access, especially due to mainstream folk beliefs about "proper" language. These beliefs do not necessarily account for the ways written standard Englishes are easier to point to as standard due to their fixed orthographies, but oral standard English is a shifting domain. Without understanding of the relationships between written and oral language, teachers' attempts at providing access to academic language (oral or written) can be misinformed and perpetuate long-held practitioner myths in the field about providing this access.

Unfortunately, these beliefs can also link the language varieties of certain groups to chaos or social demise (L. Milroy, 1999). While beliefs about good and bad language are mostly associated with class in Britain, in the United States, these deficit ideologies focus consistently on race (J. Milroy & Milroy, 1999; L. Milroy, 1999). Wolfram (1998b) explains how African American language has been thought of as verbally deprived based on what he calls a linguistic inferiority principle. This linguistic inferiority principle uses comparisons with a white, middle-class norm to cast other socially subordinate groups (and their language) as deficient (Wolfram, 1998b). Often supported by testing data, one manifestation of this ideology is a myth that blames working class parents for a lack of nurturing. Similarly, new features or varieties (such as from digital communication) often create alarm because they are seen to disrupt the social structures that promote white, middle class norms as stable and superior (which is a repeating anxiety across the history of the field).

Race is not only linked to beliefs about stigmatized language varieties, such as African American or Chicano English, but also to beliefs about multilingual students who may possess English as a second (or third, etc.) language. Furthermore, ELA teachers face concerns about meeting the needs of English language learners, and while some scholars argue for biliteracy as a new threshold for all students (Laman & Van Sluys, 2008), students with multiple languages are often cast as a challenge for teachers. These conversations about who is (or should be) considered linguistically diverse demonstrate how power intersects with understandings of language use and access. In this case, discussions often blur distinctions between understandings of English language learners, Generation 1.5 students, or L1/L2 English use, which can lead to overgeneralization of how to respond to different populations and conceptualize the differing power dynamics of these allegiances.

Even with NCTE/CCCC policies in place for Students' Right to Their Own Language and second language writers, gaps exist in practice between understandings of language variation, language acquisition, and enactment of linguistically informed pedagogy since 1) teachers may or may not even know about these policies and 2) teachers may not consider their enactment of these policies in relation to other pressures on their curricular approaches or classroom interactions. As mentioned in Chapter 1,

existing gaps between linguistic scholarship and everyday practice mean that even teachers who strive for engagement with language variation and equity may not know *how* to actually enact principles of descriptive grammar in their classrooms or engage with language variation (NCTE Commission on Language, 2008). The repercussions of this lack of applied linguistic understanding are that teachers may be underprepared with actual strategies and understandings that would help them approach language diversity in equitable ways. Scholars Jerrie Scott and David Bloome addressed this ongoing problem at NCTE's 2009 Commission on Language session. Jerrie Scott described the problem as the struggle for "how to get into teachers' heads" and the need for better ways to help teachers learn about assessing language abilities, particularly oral language, reading, and writing assessment (NCTE Commission on Language, 2009). She described the ways ELA may need to address attitudes, promote radical changes, and move beyond word learning as a deficit model. David Bloome further argued that the focus on prescriptive language is still at the heart of current language study (rather than including a focus on descriptive language), which often leads to a deficit model. The session also discussed the need to address language in more integrated ways that acknowledged power, issues of belief, and other language knowledge.²⁰ This need for integration points to the ways partitioning aspects of linguistic knowledge may relate to unfair conditions in which certain students are marginalized.

These more recent calls are nothing new as in many ways they reiterate past attempts in English education to remedy the lack of focus on the intersections between the oral and written components of language and the persistent circulating ideologies in ELA that promote a right/wrong focus on language. While these scholars at NCTE argued for linguistics courses in teacher education programs—a move that might remedy some of the results of bifurcation between linguistic and English studies—the history of language in English education points to the need for developing strategic ways to address the ongoing complications of ideology and prescriptive/descriptive distinctions. To promote equitable instruction, these areas need to be addressed along with addressing

²⁰ For instance, Yetta Goodman described how language study needs to move from a focus on form to a more integrated focus that incorporates everything scholars know about language: form, use, processes, power and politics, inquiry approaches, language history, development, and variation.

how to enable English teachers to operationalize understandings of language variation in non-deficit ways, particularly with students who use stigmatized language varieties.

This history and current situation suggests the potential complexity of what new English teachers may be bringing to teacher education, what their programs may or may not be focusing on, and what they may be stepping into as English language arts teachers. Voices of scholars, practitioners, community members, policy-makers and textbook companies compound these complexities and may serve to obscure applicable ways to incorporate equitable understandings about how language works. The gaps between knowledge and practice are heightened by the stakes of this partitioning of oral and written language in teacher candidates' English coursework, the disconnection of ELA practices from varied understandings of language, and ways deficit models of student language intersect with equitable classroom interactions.

The current challenges for framing equitable ELA instruction in relation to language are unsurprising, as the history of language in English education demonstrates how specific dilemmas and problems emerged over time. While the field has moved from demands simply to have clearer standards related to English instruction (*Freedom*, 1965) (though these are clearly still being hashed out) or even requirements to become an English teacher (Dixon, 1967; Hatfield, 1935), challenges related to language in equitable English instruction remain due to powerful forces in the field.

As noted in Chapter 1, some teacher education programs have introduced aspects of linguistically informed principles during teacher preparation, yet we still know very little about how preservice English teachers engage with these linguistically informed principles in teaching philosophy and practice, especially given the forces in the field. While research shows that pairing instruction in linguistics with focused attention to language attitudes can influence inservice teacher practice in some ways, there is still a dearth of studies that focus on preservice teachers. This strongly suggests the need for studies of preservice teachers who have engaged with linguistically informed principles in their preparation. Additionally, there is need to pick up where past work has left off and conceptualize language in a more integrated way in English education in order to explore the ways powerful beliefs about language, particularly issues of race and power,

play into preservice teachers' choices of everyday teaching moves in ELA when they have had some linguistically focused preparation.

The next section describes how I address these needs by conceptualizing linguistically informed principles (LIP) and folk beliefs about language (FBL) in relation to my study focused on preservice English teacher preparation. This conceptualization is meant to bring together language-related silos for English education in an applicable way as a means for considering how to teach English language arts equitably and engage with language-related dilemmas.

III. Conceptual Framework for This Study: LIP and FBL

This literature highlights the implications for equity of compartmentalization of language study, such as a lack of understanding of written and oral forms, right/wrong focus on language, lack of teacher enactment strategies, and deficit approaches to student language. Given the language-related dilemmas preservice ELA teachers may encounter due to these conditions, understanding how they encounter these conditions may provide insight into future support for teachers' attempts at equitable instruction. This section responds to the conditions and gaps suggested by scholarship and conceptualizes these conditions in relation to folk beliefs about language that preservice English teachers bring to the work of teaching and linguistically informed principles they are being taught in coursework.

A. Conceptualization of Folk Beliefs about Language (FBL)

My approach to addressing the lack of understanding of how preservice teachers negotiate folk beliefs about language (FBL) and linguistically informed principles (LIP) acknowledges the need to better describe the complexity of their experiences and the interactions between their beliefs and practice. My approach acknowledges the ideological, contextualized nature of FBL and LIP: These understandings of language are constructed in interaction with others, whether that interaction is within classrooms or within research conversations.

In this project, I employ the term folk beliefs about language, or FBL, to signal the commonsense beliefs about language that preservice teachers have that run counter to

LIP. As discussed in Chapter 1, these beliefs are tacit on some level but also reinforced by powerful social forces and conversations. My lens for identifying and analyzing these beliefs relies primarily on what scholars in linguistics, anthropology, and education have termed *language ideology* and have used to explore the nature of beliefs about language. (See Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994, for a broad review of language ideology across fields.) My rationale for using “folk beliefs about language” (FBL), rather than simply referring to these beliefs as “language ideologies” is to avoid slippage between more general (and varied) scholarly discussion of the overarching category of “language ideology” and my overarching category of FBL, which includes specific unproductive language ideologies (i.e. deficit ideologies and standard language ideologies) in addition to other myths about language acquisition. I also use this term to signal that these “folk” beliefs are beliefs of non-linguists.²¹

I framed this project with the view of *ideology* from a critical position that rejects a broad, neutral definition of ideology as meaning every belief. I rely on a pervasive definition of ideology as beliefs intersected with power and the awareness that ideology is bound by the power dynamics of who can say what, to whom, and with what consequences (Eagleton, 1991; Johnstone, 2007). In alignment with this view of ideology, I focused on past scholars’ work in describing specific types of problematic ideologies that perpetuate inequity, commonsense beliefs about what language is, or should be, that marginalize non-dominant groups and promote a dominant group’s interests (Lippi-Green, 1997; Wolfram, 1998a). This provided a lens for analyzing issues of power that are related to the often invisible nature of folk beliefs about language. For instance, a belief that some languages are inherently “better” than others forms a deficit ideology that conflicts with the linguistically informed position that spoken languages are linguistically equal. This ideology ignores the socially constructed nature of why some spoken languages are considered socially “better” due to sanction by those in power over schooling and in other powerful positions in a society.

Other specific language ideologies from the literature include assumptions that language is static (and any change represents the slovenly nature of those who are

²¹ One might argue that both FBL and LIP are language ideologies by some definitions, even if LIP are those ideologies about language that are promoted by linguists.

changing it), that oral and written languages are the same, and that currently accepted language rules are based on superior ways of communicating (e.g. standard language ideology, see L. Milroy, 1999). These FBL transfer to beliefs about people who command different languages or varieties of English and, therefore, reveal underlying issues of power related to language and equity.

B. Conceptualization of Linguistically Informed Principles (LIP)

My conceptualization of LIP is ideological in its focus on how to better support preservice teachers' approaches to equitable instruction by bringing together partitioned language-related domains that may have obscured possibilities for integrating linguistic understandings into English education. This conceptualization builds on scholars' realizations of the important links between equity and language and an ever-increasing body of resources related to language and teaching that is now available for English educators. For instance, these materials have attempted to tackle obstacles to equitable learning through linguistically-informed understandings of classroom talk (Fecho, 2004; Heath, 1983; Rex & Schiller, 2009), language and culture (Delpit & Dowdy, 2002), academic language and code-switching/style-shifting (Brown, 2009; Schleppegrell, 2004), linguistic understandings of grammar (Curzan & Adams, 2006; Justice, 2004; Rex, Brown, Denstaedt, Haniford, & Schiller, 2005; Weaver, 1996), and other research-based practices to affirm student language and support critical learning (Denham & Lobeck, 2005; Scott, Straker, & Katz, 2009).

For the purposes of this study, I conceptualized three categories that appear in this work as salient for equitable student learning and that were incorporated into participants' teacher education program at Midwestern University (the site of this study): *1) language equity, 2) descriptive approaches to grammar, and 3) consequential language choices in classroom interactions*. These categories were described in Chapter 1; now I explain how these categories intersect with this study, particularly how the preservice teacher participants engaged with coursework in these categories and how each category connects with equitable teaching in English language arts.

1) Language equity

As a component of multicultural and English education, participants learned about the need for awareness and appreciation of language variation. The topic of language variation emerged in multiple sites across the required coursework in the undergraduate teacher certification program at Midwestern University: University Writing Center Seminar, Introduction to the English Language, Reading and Writing in the Content Areas, Education in Multicultural Society, and Teaching of English (methods). In these courses, participants read texts that describe the inevitable nature of language variation, including varieties of English in the United States and language change (e.g. Curzan & Adams, 2006; Delpit, 1988; Milner & Milner, 2003). Furthermore, participants had opportunities to explore the links between identity and variation, such as how language variation can signal desire to connect to a particular community. These discussions included how teachers should value student language, casting student language as competence rather than deficit.

This category is particularly relevant given ongoing discussions of supporting students who speak stigmatized varieties of English (like Chicano English or African American English) as well as recent changes in language and school populations due to computer mediated communication and increasing numbers of English language learners, Generation 1.5 students, and multilingual students in the United States.

2) Descriptive approaches to grammar

Coursework also addressed how to think about “grammar” as more than just prescriptive grammar, and participants encountered linguistic views of descriptive grammar, including functional approaches to grammar for language learners (e.g. Brown, 2009; Gebhard, Harman, & Seger, 2007; Milner & Milner, 2003; Schleppegrell & Go, 2007). For instance, participants read articles about teachers using systemic functional linguistics to analyze student writing for patterns of meaning and how to support language development for language learners. Materials introduced “register” as a way to think about differences between oral and written language used for different purposes. Materials also presented alternative views of what it means to teach “grammar” beyond what is commonly called “grammar” (i.e. prescriptive grammar) in schools. In relation to the history of language study discussed in Section I of this chapter, it is important to note

that the participants' methods textbook, *Bridging English*, acknowledges the current confusion about what is meant by "grammar" in English language arts. This textbook discusses the ambiguity of the term "grammar" and creates three main "Grammar" categories that are described over five packed pages, including multiple views such as contextualized, comprehensive, and critical grammar. The textbook points out that "grammar" means very different things to different parties, including parents, students, teachers, and linguists, and it acknowledges that these views might require much mastication on the part of ELA teachers.

Participants also participated in discussions of process-based writing instruction and were introduced to the view that "teaching" writing is different from "assigning" writing, which requires ways to understand the genre/register and associated structures that students would need to understand to complete writing assignments.

This category is particularly critical for English teachers who tend to enter teacher preparation fully apprenticed into a view of grammar as "prescriptive" from their own schooling. From their schooling experiences, they often have internalized pervasive anxiety and confusion about how to "correct" and teach "grammar," especially since recent ELA teachers' approaches have ranged from ignoring focused language study to reverting to traditional prescriptive methods due to increased concerns to teach "grammar" for student success on standardized exams.

3) Consequential language choices in classroom interactions

In general, teacher preparation courses focused on helping participants to begin viewing themselves as teachers. Part of this position of being the "teacher" means that participants learned about how their language use and beliefs as teachers can have implications for student learning. For instance, participants read *Using Discourse Analysis to Improve Classroom Interaction*, which describes the ways discourse in interactions can limit or open up opportunities for student learning and provides examples for how teachers can use discourse analysis to improve their practice and relationships with students (Rex & Schiller, 2009). This text provides examples of how teachers' language choices in classroom interactions have implications for whether or not students are positioned as having power as readers and writers. For instance, a teacher's response can value student use of a discourse pattern like signifying in African American English

or can cast student language use as a threat. Participants also read examples of how teachers' handouts structure opportunities for learning. For instance, the way a teacher introduces or structures an assignment can provide a means for "circulating power" to students as readers and writers, or it can take away power by dictating and constricting learning to certain language rules related to standardized testing or simple recall. Their readings also showed how teachers' language use communicates certain identities and how students with different identities and literacy practices respond and interact with teachers' projected identities, such as race, class, or community affiliations (e.g. Delpit, 1988; Moje, 2000; Rex & Schiller, 2009). For instance, in *Using Discourse Analysis to Improve Classroom Interaction*, participants were exposed to the concepts of "alignment" between teacher and student worlds; they read about how teachers can analyze discourse in interactions to help them understand how to better meet the needs of students who come from very different worlds.

This category is relevant for English teachers due to the heavily language nature of ELA; classroom interactions construct key disciplinary dispositions and opportunities for students to learn, meaning that effective, equitable communication with students is critical.

4) Rationale and conceptual basis from pilot study

While these three categories appeared in literature related to teaching teachers about language, my pilot study also affirmed that these categories remained relevant for beginning teachers as they grappled with language-related dilemmas related to their identities and teaching practices as English teachers. Based on the literature and findings from my pilot study, my hypothesis was that preservice teachers have to negotiate conflicts (which I conceptualize as language-related dilemmas) between these three categories of LIP and their folk beliefs about language. Across my pilot study interviews with seven preservice teachers, multiple conflicts emerged as they described their views of language and described putting their beliefs into practice. While some strategies and beliefs aligned with LIP in parts of the interviews, preservice teachers often counteracted these principles in other descriptions of their practice or ways of talking about students.

Overall, the interviews showed that preservice teachers take up linguistic understandings within the contexts of their own experiences of English teaching, range of

coursework or field work experiences, and language beliefs. Some comments illustrated the ways preservice teachers can internalize a need for language appreciation but still maintain folk beliefs about language learning, such as oral correction or overcorrection of every written “error” in student writing. Furthermore, a view of “grammar” as prescriptive rules prevented some preservice teachers from seeing linguistics as useful to them as English teachers. Pre-existing views of language in English teaching, therefore, may cause teachers to dismiss LIP as irrelevant to practice.

In the pilot study, even within a short description of practice in an interview, my discourse analysis of key segments uncovered both the struggles between folk beliefs and LIP and how they emerged. These pilot study findings targeted a crucial area for better understanding how to address the overall problem of providing teacher education to promote equitable instruction. Consequently, this study focused on the nature of this negotiation in order to explain and describe why preservice teachers are often unable to enact productive, linguistically informed principles that counter folk beliefs about language.

C. Conceptualization of negotiation of conflict between LIP and FBL

In addition to my conceptualization of LIP and FBL, this dissertation uses theoretical understandings afforded by the concepts of dilemmas and subject positions. These concepts worked together to construct my initial lens for looking at the conflicts preservice teachers negotiate between LIP and FBL.

1) Dilemmas:

As I framed this study, I used *ideological dilemmas* to theorize the negotiation of conflicts between FBL and LIP that arise for preservice teachers. This concept interrelates with my conception of ideology, since I do not assume a strict Marxist understanding of ideology that assumes that ideology consistently represents the desires of a ruling class. Instead, my definition acknowledges the nature of lived ideology, which Michael Billig (1988) theorizes as fragmented, incoherent, and inconsistent, thus leading inevitably to ideological dilemmas. Ideological dilemmas occur when “contrary ideological values” are brought into “argumentative conflict with each other” and both sets of values are managed by the speaker (Stanley & Billig, 2004, p. 160).

This concept provides a lens for thinking about how FBL and LIP are not ideologically neutral, nor are they mutually exclusive. In fact, ideological dilemmas occurred rhetorically as participants attempted to make sense of the everyday in their discursive interactions, which required locating themselves in relation to both LIP and FBL as they talked about their practice and teaching philosophies (see Chapter 6 for further description). The concept of *ideological dilemmas* provided a lens for conceptualizing how dilemmas occurred when multiple beliefs or principles of language clashed yet were managed by preservice teachers as they described their teaching practice and philosophy.

The concept of *ideological dilemmas* for understanding the negotiation of conflicts between LIP and FBL was a useful starting point, but by the end of the study I moved towards a more nuanced understanding of *dilemma* and the relationships between LIP and FBL. In Chapter 7, I provide further discussion of how my study extended this understanding of dilemma and builds on other understandings of dilemma. However, mapping the landscape of language-related dilemmas in relation to LIP and FBL remained a thread that helped me better understand describe the complications of engaging with LIP in support of equitable English instruction.

2) Subject positions:

I also use the concept of *subject positions* from positioning theory as a lens for conceptualizing how conflicts manifest as preservice teachers locate themselves in relation to LIP and FBL in their stories about teaching and interactions with others. I use *subject positions* as “locations within a conversation” and as “identities made relevant by specific ways of talking” (Edley, 2001, p. 210). Available subject positions are created through ongoing discourses, due to the ways that participants are positioned and position themselves through language. In contrast to “roles,” available subject positions are multiple, contradictory, and they are constructed during social interactions (Davies & Harré, 2001).

The lens of subject position enabled me to focus on how preservice teachers’ language moves located them in relation to FBL as well as to competing interests (such as cooperating teachers or curricular demands) at their field sites. Related to any subject position are particular ways of seeing the world through available metaphors or story-

lines that people use to make meaning of their words and actions to others or to align themselves in relation to the rights and duties associated with a particular position. This lens helps theorize the negotiation of the multiple and possibly conflicting positions of preservice teachers as they talk about practice and the ways talk constructs their relationships to language beliefs and principles. Furthermore, this lens extends to how talk creates available positions within research and teaching interactions with others, including the ways participants engage with the researcher, other teachers, and their students.

IV. Conclusion

The next chapter describes the methodology for the study in more depth and how this approach and design intersects with this conceptualization of the problem and focus of the study.

Chapter Three

Methodology

This chapter introduces the study research questions, methodology, and rationale for how I designed the study (including my research role, interactions with participants, and selection of study sites) based on my theorization of language. It also includes description of Stages 1 and 2 data collection and analysis. Lastly, this chapter frames the results chapters by describing the thematic structure and data presentations in later chapters and providing background information about the participants and their student teaching sites.

I. Study Overview

This exploratory dissertation study was designed to investigate the language-related struggles that arise for preservice English teachers during teacher education. As I described in Chapters 1 and 2, my design was based on my casting of this problem in a novel way based on a combination of past work in English education, linguistics, and teacher education. Furthermore, this study's design was grounded in an earlier pilot study focused on preservice teachers' language understandings. My design was connected with how I conceptualized the problem in a new way, which required an original approach in terms of study design.

My long-term program of study reflects my focus on beginning teachers' negotiation of folk beliefs about language (FBL) and linguistically informed principles (LIP): *How do beginning English teachers negotiate conflicts between folk beliefs about language and linguistically informed principles of equitable language use?* For this study, I focused on the following questions:

- How do student teachers negotiate conflicts between FBL and LIP as they make practical teaching decisions in student teaching and as they talk about their teaching goals and philosophies?
- As student teachers make practical teaching decisions, how do competing interests (cooperating teachers, curricular demands, and other site-based pressures) work to reify, perpetuate, or dispel their FBL and LIP?

Drawing on case study methodology, the study incorporates a variety of qualitative and discourse analytic methods to establish dense description of the phenomenon of preservice teachers' negotiation of the conflicts between LIP and FBL. These methods include prolonged engagement with participants, a semi-structured interview protocol, focused observation, and key artifacts of participants' written work.

The study focuses on four preservice teachers' experiences during student teaching, using their learning from an English methods course as a backdrop. For instance, these student teachers have studied in coursework how their language use communicates certain identities. They also have explored how students with different identities and literacy practices respond and interact with teachers' projected identities, such as race, class, or community affiliations. Data collected during participants' coursework (Stage 1) was thematically coded in relation to the three organizational categories of LIP and related FBL (see Appendix A); and analytic memos (Maxwell, 2005) recorded these themes before participants' student teaching semester. During Stage 2 (the student teaching semester), qualitative and discourse analytic methods were used to collect, transcribe, and analyze data to track the ways participants positioned themselves and others during weekly interviews about language in teaching during the 14 weeks of student teaching.

II. Theoretical Rationale: Language as Discursive, Interactive, Ideological, and Relational

The research design aligns with how I understand *what* I am studying (language as discursive, interactive, ideological, and relational) and my *ways* of understanding this topic (through qualitative description and discourse analysis). My approach required using linguistic tools to look at how, where, and when conflicts arose and were negotiated

from the perspectives of the teachers themselves. In keeping with this approach, *Field Sketches* (described later) serve as my primary vehicle for exemplifying participants' cases in the results chapters and align with my focus on language as a medium and the emic approach to this work.

Additionally, my approach to this project from a qualitative lens meant that it was crucial to allow for patterns to emerge authentically during the research process. The results chapters, therefore, provide a window into how preservice teachers experience negotiation of conflicts between FBL and LIP as well as other salient themes that emerged as I investigated this negotiation. This meant that while I entered the project with hypotheses based on my pilot study and literature, I remained open to disconfirming evidence and incorporated member checking during Stage 2 in order to maintain the best direction for this project (Patton, 2002).

Utilizing shifting roles: Design alignment with theorization of language

Credibility as a qualitative researcher is built in large part on a researcher's ability to interact with participants and understand a project from an insider's point of view. The study accounted for the researcher's role so that I could interact with participants over three semesters of teacher education in multiple shared contexts, meaning that my relationship with them changed over time: field instructor, methods instructor, and researcher. The rationale for this design is based on my situated view and theorization of language. As a researcher, I was uniquely positioned to hear these teachers' stories²² due to my ongoing relationship with participants. The design enabled me to utilize my experience with the teacher education sequence and my participants over the time span of their three semesters in teacher education,

This means that I investigated using an emic²³ lens that acknowledges that to hear my participants requires an in-depth understanding of the socially constructed language they are speaking. I had an understanding of the common language developed during the methods course and other aspects of the teacher education sequence, which sensitized me

²² I use stories here to reflect the use of "story" in my weekly debriefing protocol in which participants were invited to tell stories about their experiences in the field.

²³ An emic approach means looking at phenomena from participants' point of view, or insiders' ways of meaning-making.

to the ways participants interacted with this language during interactions with me as a researcher.

The study design also reveals my perspective that culture, of which language is an integral component, is a shared and interactive process; both interviewer/interviewees engage in multiple imbedded cultures (Anderson-Levitt, 2006). This approach accounts for the ways that language is situated within particular contexts and social worlds. Situations, such as interviews and teaching interactions, provide ways of using and interpreting language. Discourse as language-in-use also framed my understanding of language in classroom interactions observed during this study; actual talk in classroom interactions (both in the moment and over time) shapes, and is shaped by, teaching and learning in classrooms (Lin, 1994; Rex & Green, 2008).

This theorization of language meant that my role in the interviews remained a key part of the data since this approach acknowledges the co-creation of meaning within an interview context (Silverman, 1993). I also recognize how interview situations provide ways of using and interpreting language; time and space shape these interactions. Language data contain meaning dependent on the speech community (Freeman, 1996b). Consequently, my approach enabled me to connect to existing social systems, such as engagement with common experiences with participants, in order to better access these social meanings. While it will never be entirely possible to know whether or not my participants and I made meaning with language in the same ways, my close participation enabled me to categorize and contextualize my data as a means of triangulation. For instance, participants referred to concepts from shared course experiences (e.g., face threats or functional grammar) and described their use of specific strategies learned during coursework (e.g., the “like” lesson from David Brown’s *In Other Words*).

There were affordances and challenges as I operationalized this situated view and theorization of language. Sometimes familiarity led participants to assume common knowledge; for instance, one participant referred to literacy strategies related to “fisher people” discussed in “Methods” when actually this knowledge was from an article read in an earlier literacy class. Even with shared history, terms like “grammar” and “language” often were negotiated in interactions, yet this offered some affordances in the study. When participants initially focused solely on “grammar” as “prescriptive grammar”

during student teaching (Stage 2)—despite shared methods coursework discussions of varied views of grammar—I developed and noted glosses to use in the weekly debriefings, like “language structure,” to use for “grammar.” This was useful to my work in order to analyze how the participants’ shifts in use of terms added insight into how they were processing beliefs (i.e. LIP and FBL) about language study at their student teaching sites in relation to earlier coursework.

Managing the shifting roles: Ethical considerations

My shifting role in relation to the participants from instructor to researcher also raised ethical considerations and informed the research design. During Stage 2, I moved into the role of researcher rather than instructor. However, participants still had a relationship to me as their past methods instructor. Therefore, there was a protocol for our interactions (see Appendix B). This protocol anticipated teaching and mentoring relationships but did not anticipate the ways the time and space of Skype interviews (i.e. scheduling in the evenings and on weekends in home spaces) also would bring relational aspects to bear. Therefore, using the protocol raised some questions about the shifting roles between personal and research modes: When was marking these roles productive? Why was this protocol distracting or difficult to manage at times?

In relation to these questions, the protocol afforded me with a framework by which to analyze its effects on data. In certain interview interactions, I functioned as a potential “competing interest” (mentioned in my second research question) as I struggled with how to respond to participants’ direct questions, such as “What would you do?” in the Socratic manner I had described in the protocol. To refuse to answer felt disingenuous, but framing my answers required negotiating how much to say about what I would do and how much to 1) say what I had done in the past; 2) describe how a range of teachers might respond; or 3) talk about how “it depends” on the context: “I might ask myself X or Y.” These multiple responses required further attention during the analysis phases, and I investigated how participants were looking to me as a competing interest during weekly debriefings and how my answers might have influenced subsequent participant responses.

The protocol also helped me understand what participants did and didn’t consider part of the research, which sometimes signaled their understandings of language in teaching. For

instance, participants' requests for resources in methods instructor mode served useful as I tracked the trends. However, the phrase "methods instructor" also became mediated by laughter and was used by participants to maintain our personal connections; for instance, "As methods instructor, is it true that you are getting a puppy?" At times, these personal connections led back to contextual classroom information, such as a conversation about scheduling, dogs, and the Steelers at the end of one debriefing that led to how the participant's cooperating teacher used her Steelers bulletin board to gain leverage with students. This bulletin board and Steelers fandom resurfaced in a later interaction the participant had with a resistant student, providing useful ethnographic details.

Theorizing preservice teachers' learning processes

This study design also draws on the theorization of language as discursive, interactive, ideological, and relational to inform understandings of teacher learning in this study. I call on constructivist theories of learning to inform the understanding that teacher learning is a social, situated process, and my work acknowledges the varied dimensions of learning processes. I understand professional learning as taking place in both informal and formal settings (Berlak & Berlak, 1981; Jurasaitė-Harbisson, 2008) and as mediated by doing and socialization, such as the apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975) in which participants may be socialized into folk beliefs about teaching and language. Some of this learning is formal through schooling (Berlak & Berlak, 1981), such as secondary schools and teacher preparation programs. Rather than using verbs like "develop" or "integrate" that imply a developmental or cognitive model for learning, I use verbs like "engage" and "enact" that are meant to reflect 1) the moment of interaction with LIP or FBL; and 2) the moment of doing in relation to LIP.

III. Overview of Data Collection and Analysis Methods

In explanatory qualitative research, trustworthiness is established through reflexivity and triangulation (Gergen & Gergen, 2000; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). To ensure trustworthiness within my own research, I used a variety of data methods to establish dense description of the phenomenon of preservice teachers' negotiation of the conflicts between linguistically informed principles and folk beliefs about language.

These methods included key artifacts of participants' written materials, semi-structured interview guides, prolonged engagement with participants, and focused observation. Triangulation of data collected across this study allowed for in-depth exploration of my research questions. My design flexibility acknowledged that "every discourse event is unique," and this requires openness to understanding the complex inter-texts in which discourse occurs (Lemke, 1998); therefore, this project's data collection and analysis evolved based on interactions with participants and salient themes that emerged in the data.

This study encompassed two stages. Data collection for Stage 1 was completed January 2009-July 2009 and was used to generate participant profiles based on the three categories of LIP in August 2009. Data collection and analysis for Stage 2 focused on study participants' experiences during student teaching and was completed August 2009-May 2010. In addition to the data collected, I maintained a research notebook to log research decisions like transcript choices, data reduction, and analysis decisions.

1) Stage 1 description:

Once student teaching placements were available, four study participants (of the eight students originally in an English methods course during pre-student teaching) were selected to represent the widest variety of school contexts possible, based on factors such as location, student population, and curricular approach (see school profile information in Section IV). Data from study participants' English methods course was collected and used to contextualize what they said and did during student teaching. Data included participants' teaching philosophies, written responses, video-recorded class sessions, and follow-up interviews. These data provided details of how participants understood various aspects of teaching English and their approaches to language in the classroom (see Appendix C: Stage 1 Data Summary; Appendix D: Stage 1 Interview Protocol).

During Stage 1, participants were able to select pseudonyms for themselves, their cooperating teachers and their school sites but some opted out. In those cases, I chose pseudonyms that reflected the ethnic and cultural roots of the original names. I also chose transcription features that reflected my theoretical position, such as using first names for

participants and myself to signal my role as a participant in research interactions (Ochs, 1979).

After following analytic phases suggested in qualitative research, such as organization and immersion in data (Marshall & Rossman, 2006), Stage 1 data was analyzed thematically (Lemke, 1983; Spradley, 1979), using the three categories of linguistically informed principles and related folk beliefs. During Stage 1 coding, I noted the slippery nature of the broad categories I initially generated. There were intersections between categories, leading me to create and delineate principles and sub-principles in order to have clearer subcategories. In my notes about research decisions I created a section to track the intersections and disconnections between participants. For instance, beliefs about standard English crossed over all three categories of LIP.

Based on this thematic analysis, I generated a working profile of each study participant. These profiles described each participant in relation to the three categories of LIP: how they aligned with these principles, their levels of certainty in relation to the positions they took in relation to these principles, and the emerging dilemmas or contradictions in relation to their positions. To add detail to this description, I used tools from discourse analysis to analyze the linguistic ways (as well as gestures and facial expressions) that participants used to signal their relationships to LIP (Martin & Rose, 2007). For instance, Stage 1 interviews were fleshed out to include relevant gestures using field notes and updated using audio to include laughter and significant pauses because this sometimes signaled how participants positioned themselves in relation to their statements.

I also noted overall interview speech patterns for participants. For instance, Jessica slowed down or sped up at moments that seem significant. When she seemed more assured and louder in tone, Jessica's speech rate increased. However, Jessica became slower and harder to hear at other points, which seemed to signal uncertainty. These patterns became useful later as I constructed *Field Sketches* (see Field Sketch section later in this chapter) to exemplify participants' experiences.

On a monthly basis, I revisited my early assertions in order to critically challenge the emerging patterns and search for alternative explanations. For instance, I revisited patterns in the profiles in a research memo (November 2009) and explored my position

and perceptual frame for anticipating what might be salient during lead teaching. I revisited my assertion that language was important to English education due to my own experiences in schools with achievement gaps between students with “standard” language varieties and those with stigmatized language varieties. Questions included: Is something emerging here that is more important than language? How does this phenomenon extend beyond students with stigmatized language varieties? I also questioned my assumptions that participants who did not enter student teaching with a strongly articulated approach to LIP might be less likely to enact linguistically informed practices unless those practices were already in place at their school sites. This led me to other questions, such as: Could there be other triggers for whether or not—or to what extent—participants are able to enact linguistically informed principles?

2) Stage 2 description:

As part of participant recruitment and the informed consent process during Stage 2, study participants were aware of my purpose to describe their ongoing experiences in relation to language and were aware of the broad categories of language equity, grammar, and language in classroom interactions. They received a copy of the Stage 2 Weekly Debriefing Guide prompts and protocol based on these three categories, which asked them to tell “stories” from the field related to these categories (see Appendixes B and E). During student teaching, data collection for each participant included 14 weekly debriefings (an average of an hour-long interview over Skype at the end of each week), a video-recorded teaching experience observation, a follow-up interview after video-recorded observation, and unit plan materials (see Appendix F: Stage 2 Data Summary). In this data, participants described how they took up and engaged with LIP in the contexts of their student experiences, teacher education experiences, language beliefs, and relationship to me as the researcher.

The end goal of the qualitative analysis in Stage 2 was to generate case studies that provided detailed description of the phenomenon of how student teachers negotiated conflicts between LIP and FBL, including salient manifestations of the negotiations they attempted. I used the analysis to look at how the conflicts manifested as well as other salient patterns by using frames of subject positions and ideological dilemmas. I also

looked at *how* preservice teachers negotiated these conflicts or struggles through discourse analytic approaches to the data. As participants told stories about student teaching in the weekly debriefings, multiple forces—such as school culture, available instructional time and space, their cooperating teachers’ approaches, and interactions with students and me—surfaced as relevant to their understandings of language in teaching. Tools from discourse analysis provided ways to identify metaphors and story-lines related to particular subject positions, such as awareness of “*who* is implied by a particular discourse” and how these subjects are positioned reflexively (by self) or interactively (by others) (Davies & Harré, 2001; Edley, 2001). This analysis enabled tracking of how competing interests function to reinforce, dispel, or reify student teachers’ positions in relation to LIP and FBL. Furthermore, tracking repeated story-lines or metaphors associated with particular subject positions—and how these patterns related to where ideological dilemmas emerged—provided a means for pursuing salient ways that LIP/FBL conflicts were negotiated.

Process of data analysis and theory generation

My first immersion in the Stage 2 data meant looking at each participant’s case and then looking across cases after review of the weekly debriefings in sequential order. This led to conceptualizing and reducing the data while generating emic categories in relation to the three initial organizational categories of LIP. Category generation involved listening to weekly debriefings and reading through all weekly debriefing notes, tagging sites of negotiation of conflicts in relation to LIP or emic categories, and reviewing tagged areas to identify patterns. At this stage I generated a list of initial patterns related to the challenges and dilemmas that seemed salient for the participants:

- **Grading**—how, when, and why to respond to student writing (or other work)
- How, when, and why to discuss **vernacular** (related to blogs, online writing, and in-class use)
- **Own language use**—how, when, and why to manage, change, or use language and related identities
- **Students** as sites of language issues
- How to work with language in **literary texts**

A reflexive approach to data reduction is an important part of a long term qualitative project. For both practical and theoretical purposes, my transcription of the weekly debriefings included attending to how much to transcribe and in what format. Based on salient patterns, I narrowed the data and made summary notes of parts of the interviews that I did not include in the excerpted debriefing transcripts (labeled with date and time). This meant that I had notes about what was omitted when segments became pertinent in later analyses.

As technique for qualitative analysis, analytic memos during the data collection and transcription process facilitated analytic insights and tracking of emic categories in relation to the three initial organizational categories of LIP (Maxwell, 2005). One example of using data from across stages and a memo includes material that is now in Chapter 5. In Chapter 5, I describe how participants engaged with LIP during student teaching and how unexpected encounters reflected a more complex intersection between text, oral language, and writing. After coding data from Stage 1, I wrote a memo (October 2009) that included my conjectures based on thematic coding of principles and related FBL of the organizational categories of *language equity*, *descriptive approaches to grammar*, and *consequential language choices in classroom interactions*. In the memo, I anticipated what I expected to see from participants using sub-categories of experience, environment, and philosophy as organizational boundaries. Returning to this memo during data analysis in Stage 2 enabled me to question how the predictions in this memo might have been limited and to interrogate my previous perceptions. As I looked back at this memo, it was clear that the ways text related to language variation (in particular literature and written text) as well as the ways language in classroom interaction intersects with the ideological aspects of teaching literature in English classrooms were not addressed explicitly in my categorization.

This process enabled me to note a gap in the ways I had interpreted the organizational categories of *language equity*, *descriptive approaches to grammar*, and *consequential language choices in classroom interactions* during Stage 1 analysis. While one principle of *language equity* included “oral and written language are different” and one principle of *descriptive approaches to grammar* included “register is one way to think about how oral/written language is used for different purposes,” I had not

considered how these principles could more specifically relate to reading or analyzing literature from multiple time periods and authorial perspectives. However, Stage 2 analysis of weekly debriefings revealed that this was an area in which participants described surprises, struggles, and notable interactions. This led to further consideration of how preservice teachers may not initially recognize areas of dilemma—some awareness of language complexity had to emerge in order to then engage with this complexity and any related dilemmas.

Furthermore, during initial open coding, I noted possible relevant information related to conflicts between LIP and FBL, created a running list of descriptors, and re-organized these descriptors into a more focused category system with subcategories, asking, What is going on here? When, where, and how? I elaborated categories with their properties and dimensions (through some microanalysis of transcript excerpts). Analytic codes were then used to group data into relevant categories as I also noted recurrent terms, statements, and ways of talking to help me develop and interrelate the categories. During coding, I highlighted key phrases of what/how participants said as they told “stories” that expressed negotiation of conflict-ridden areas.

The initial categories of LIP provided a topical structure, and after looking at how each participant’s words and actions aligned them with these categories, I used axial coding to generate meta-categories. These meta-categories were then used to organize my work semantically, or propositionally, in order to move into a conceptual realm and look across cases to meaningfully address issues of language in English language arts. As I constructed an explanatory scheme from data, I looked at relationships that explained “who, what, where, when, why, how, and with what consequences an event occurs” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 22). This meant developing theory about the educational phenomenon of negotiation of conflicts between LIP and FBL.²⁴

Moving into the conceptual realm required analyzing the “stories” told by the student-teacher participants in the weekly debriefings and noting how the open-ended protocol enabled participants to select which “stories” they determined were relevant.

²⁴ In this approach to qualitative research, “theory denotes a set of well-developed categories (e.g. themes, concepts) that are systematically interrelated through statements of relationship to form a theoretical framework that explains some relevant...educational...phenomenon” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 22).

Sometimes their stories were prefaced by expressions of surprise, excitement, or uncertainty. For instance, I interpreted levels of the “unexpected” or uncertainty in several ways: participants’ pauses as they told stories, explicit statements such as “I don’t know,” repeated ruminations about interaction details during interviews, references beyond their own experiences (i.e. in relation to me, their cooperating teachers, or other experienced teachers), requests for verifications of their teaching approaches, and requests for other resources and/or my response to specific questions.

Using in vivo concepts derived from participants’ perspectives, I used these linguistic cues and looked at *what* participants selected in terms of “stories” to tell and revisit during student teaching in the weekly debriefings. I looked at *how* they talked about these events: What did participants find interesting, challenging, surprising, or notable? For instance, some of the in vivo concepts that I kept revisiting during microanalysis were “driving blindly in the dark,” “opened eyes” (to ESL students), and “pick your battles” or “tough love.” These concepts led me to develop some provisional hypotheses and ask sensitizing questions. Negotiating conflicts related to LIP seemed clearest in relation to the metaphor of “pick your battles.” However, I also wanted to explore how driving blindly or opening eyes related to negotiating conflicts or language-related dilemmas. These patterns extended my initial research questions, and I began considering how unexpected or unanticipated classroom interactions created moments of potential tension between LIP and FBL:

- What are the consequences of being surprised; i.e. having eyes opened or closed at different time points to ELL, Generation 1.5, or bi-dialectal students?
- At what points in student teaching are these realizations made?
- Are “stories” re-told in different ways across the student teaching semester?
- How often are participants’ own experiences tied to understanding others’ experiences? What happens when these clash?
- When do the participants label, note, or express negotiations between LIP and FBL, and when am I identifying this? What am I seeing that they do or don’t see?

These questions enabled me to flesh out new categories. One such category was that of *having eyes opened* to how language worked within a particular situation in relation to specific students, texts, and situations of language in use. As I further explored this

category, I considered how the flipside of this category is the concept of *having eyes closed*, which led me to consider additional “blind spots” for both participants and myself. What emerged as the most salient unanticipated area—whether participants became aware of this or remained unaware to a greater or lesser extent—were the complex intersections between written and oral language within specific classroom situations.

Of course, in some ways the weekly protocol led participants to drink at the “language trough,” and so it was important to consider whether they would have generated these stories if I hadn’t asked them to. It is also possible that participants might not have wanted to share negative reactions they had to students’ language use. While it is not possible to know without certainty if participants hid deep negative perceptions, they were not required to focus on language in the ways they did. It is also notable that initial “stories” from the week were more generally about classroom interaction, whereas the two other categories required more probing. I did not ask participants to use the actual language referred to in the methods class, such as face saving, but the results chapters demonstrate how they did anyway. Furthermore, participants William and Lindsey had the hardest time referring to language, even when they were asked directly. Yet, when they were asked about general stories from the week, instances of language popped up. This was consistent with their styles of relating and studenting in the methods classroom in which neither student worked to say what I wanted to hear. This further offers validity of the evidence presented in later chapters. Not only did participants talk about language in their classrooms (even when they thought they were telling more generic stories), but also they used language concepts to discuss the language-related interactions. This shows that they were able to reflect back and attend to language even though it had been eight months since they heard the language in coursework.

IV. Constructing Results Chapters

As part of the categorization and analysis process, it was important to select thematic contributions from the data that were empirically sound as well as provided useful understandings for preservice education. My goal was for my work to have relevance for both academic and nonacademic stakeholders (potentially for teachers

themselves), and this desire meant a need to consider how what I was seeing in the data was re-emerging in other student teachers' classrooms in similar or different ways. This meant comparing data patterns to other experiences as well as the literature in order to organize data into a theoretical explanatory scheme. According to *On the Case*, locating oneself within the case remains important since the research process reflects "meaning people make of their lives in very particular contexts" (Dyson & Genishi, 2005, p. 9). Locating myself in the cases included using my ongoing work as a field instructor for student teachers and long-term participation with my research participants to inform how I approached research decisions. During data analysis, I was also in the field spending time with other groups of preservice teachers, and this work sensitized me to areas that were most salient to preservice teachers. As researcher, these experiences informed my interpretations; for instance, I often have noticed gaps between what new teachers themselves do or don't see in terms of power or FBL that may be at play.

Drawing from case study as a methodology, the three results chapters are organized conceptually across the four participants' cases and describe the experiences of the four preservice teachers as they move from coursework to student teaching, using *Field Sketches* as the primary vehicle for this description. The three results chapters provide a detailed description of participants' experiences, using rich and robust data from across their semesters of teacher education. Across these chapters, participants' cases exemplify the ways that ideologies about language and race can support or stymie preservice teachers' desires for equitable teaching.²⁵ These cases provide description of how participants negotiated language-related dilemmas, engaging with folk beliefs about language, linguistically informed principles, and obstacles to discussing language.

In the results chapters, I represent participant's cases in two ways: illustrative transcript excerpts and *Field Sketches*. These data representations are constructed in order to offer concrete examples that can help teacher educators better understand how preservice teachers engage with linguistically informed principles in relation to their

²⁵ Social conceptions of "race" in relation to language emerged as salient during analysis as participants described their interactions with students. I theorize race as socially constructed, as a "category of practice" (from everyday social experience) based on participants' identification of their students and themselves rather than a biological category (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000). At times, this was based on participants' descriptions of their students' self-identification. I recognize that any categories of "race" or "ethnicity" may serve to reify essentialist or commonsensical notions.

experiences and classroom interactions. First, I use transcript excerpts in order to provide transcribed snippets of participants' responses during weekly debriefings to exemplify the themes in the three results chapters. In some illustrations, these excerpts show participants' reflections on teaching moves, description of specific classroom interactions, or interpretation of their learning over time. In other illustrations, excerpts are the most direct way to show how the participants' language moves reflected ambivalence or struggle between LIP and FBL. Second, the results chapters' illustrations include *Field Sketches*, which are the product of multiple analytic processes. In the next section, I describe how I constructed the *Field Sketches*—contextualized case descriptions of teacher and student interactions—in order to make the data accessible to readers and engage with the complex phenomenon described in this study.

Field Sketches: Partial and constructed accounts

In this section, I describe how *Field Sketches* used in the results chapters are constructed from weekly debriefing interviews and other data as a type of case study. Each *Field Sketch* is a more concise compilation of weekly debriefings and interviews (see Appendix G for an overview of *Field Sketch* features). *Field Sketch* is used to signal that these are sketches (partial and constructed accounts) generated from “stories” told by participants about their time in the field in response to the weekly debriefing protocol.²⁶ These compilations enabled me to reconstruct classroom interactions from the participants' perspectives more concisely instead of using excerpts spread across a much longer transcript or multiple transcripts. The multiple interviews in this study also provided varied ways for participants' experiences to be represented in their own words. Other data sources—such as Stage 1 data, field observations, and participants' annotated unit plans—were used to add sequential and contextual details. In this way, the *Field Sketches* also represent the products of grounded, thematic, and discourse analytic analyses.

²⁶ The “linguistic turn” in educational research has influenced my approach along with ethnographic approaches to data presentation. While my work builds on some ethnographers' use of impressionistic, participatory tales (Van Maanen, 1988), my approach differs in that I am retelling “tales from the field” that my participants already recounted to me.

Why use “sketch”? In the *Field Sketches*, I construct participants’ cases by representing their multiple, embedded accounts of their field experiences in a more concise and sequential form. In weekly debriefings, participants were asked to select and tell “stories” from the field, and each week’s transcript includes multiple embedded accounts related to the three main areas from the interview protocol. In my re-telling of participants’ “stories,” I sequence these accounts for clarity, staying as close as possible to the ways participants used language to construct multiple accounts over time. The term “sketch” is used to signal the constructed nature of these illustrations (by me) in order to provide a useful glimpse into the participants’ experiences.

While some descriptive parts have been collapsed, participants’ terminology was retained as much as possible. As part of constructing each sketch from participants’ interview responses, I did change the point of view from the participant’s first person “I” to third person (i.e. Aileen, Lindsey, Jessica, or William). This shift enabled me to clarify who is speaking or acting when and to call attention to the construction of the sketch using multiple elements. By offering these multiple points of view for participants, the sketches offer a plurivocal illustration that includes me in my different roles of researcher and methods instructor as well as participants’ representations of their cooperating teachers’, field instructors’, and students’ voices. The sketches also provide a way for multiple voices, or multiple “I”s (researcher and participants) to be heard. For instance, I used word-for-word representations from weekly debriefing transcripts when including direct quotations or participants’ representations of dialogue or their thoughts within a classroom interaction.²⁷

For clarity, sequential time markers were added and some transcript excerpts are re-ordered chronologically to describe a classroom interaction within a larger context. The *Case Chart* in each chapter also shows when during student teaching participants focused on particular classroom interactions during the weekly debriefings. In this way, participants’ descriptions of their experiences are located in time in multiple ways, and *Field Sketches* reflect multiple ways of thinking about time, including 1) the moment of

²⁷ My work considers questions developed by Holley and Colyar (2009) for thinking about qualitative research and the researcher as storyteller: “In whose voice should this story be told? What (or whose) meanings are embedded in this perspective?” (p. 685).

teaching as participants related to students; 2) what participants said about those moments and their descriptions of in-the-moment reflections; 3) participants' ways of reporting in weekly debriefings (i.e. talking about what they were thinking in the moment to me); and 4) participants' thoughts as they looked back at the end of student teaching. Located within these time points, participants' use of language and their perceptions of their learning as teachers have enabled me to understand better how their responses reflect their sense of efficacy, relevant experiences, and long term views of their teaching; repetition and emphasis within their responses also point to what emerged as salient for participants over time and in the moment of teaching. I used analysis of participants' multiple dimensions of experience to guide how I constructed sketches to capture their actions and words, interpreting past tense as potentially signaling significance, present tense as signaling value, and future tense as signaling intention.

Field Sketch 1: Shared Language (see Figure 3.1) serves as an example to demonstrate how closely I worked to describe the case using the participant's terminology and highlights the purposeful changes made for clarifying chronological and contextual details. Appendix H includes original transcript lines from which bolded parts were generated.

Figure 3.1. Field Sketch Example with Commentary

Field Sketch 1: Shared Language (Jessica, Week 3)	Commentary
<p><i>It's the third week of student teaching and Jessica is still trying to figure out her role within her popular cooperating teacher's classroom. She feels like her moves to show authority are perceived as too extreme and yet she feels like if she shows interest in her seniors it is interpreted as trying to be friends with them. Her students look like they could be students at the University, but she's noticing a big disparity in how they look and act, finding the right tone hard to gauge. This week she's been a bit stressed out because she feels she can't suck at student teaching—even though she knows rationally that she will make mistakes, she wants to make sure she responds the right way to those mistakes. She's trying to find the right teacher lingo and has been trying to find ways to get students into One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, which they will be reading soon. The main character is described as having a "swagger."</i></p> <p><i>While students are blogging, Jessica hears two of the African American young women talking about "swag game." "Miss Brown, you know what swag game is," they laugh.</i></p> <p><i>Jessica responds, "Yeah, well, I'm not sure what swag game is, but I know swagger." Jessica thinks to herself, "This is how I'm going to get you guys into the story, because in this book we're going to be reading the main character has swagger." Jessica senses that this was an appropriate time for her to show she is relaxed enough that they could just talk about something that wasn't only about school. So they talk about where the terms come from, which was interesting, laughing while they are talking. They talk about how the students define swag game and how the word swagger had sort of resurfaced, changed, and was being used a lot now. As she relates the story to Melinda, Jessica describes how she realized that she could have just said, "No, I don't know what that is" and walked away, but the interaction led her to feel like they can talk about things... she could teach them something; they could teach her something.</i></p> <p><i>It's funny, Jessica realizes and shares with Melinda later, but this conversation showed her that the students perceive a difference between them—that she "may not be part of their little language world." It seems like this difference may have been more cultural than age-related, which is what she's been focused on so far this semester.</i></p>	<p>Contextual detail in the first sentences is fleshed out by earlier interviews recounting the cooperating teacher's popularity.</p> <p>Data about her state of mind is grouped from several parts of the interview.</p> <p>Description of the event is re-organized more sequentially than the interview description, including Jessica's rationale for how she was thinking about the interaction.</p> <p>Jessica's analysis of her choices is positioned within the research encounter reflection, which may have been spurred by Melinda's interview responses.</p> <p>The culture and age distinction is elaborated by comments in other interviews and the annotated unit plan about areas of language in which Jessica focuses her teaching.</p>

It is important that I also take on the role of critic in relation to these *Field Sketches*. In my sketches, I work for verisimilitude, trying to avoid illusions of causality. Yet, I realize that these sketches are inherently incomplete. Each *Field Sketch* prioritizes certain details over others. By naming these as “sketches,” I indicate my awareness of their incomplete nature and other untold stories from my data. On the other hand, these sketches enable me to capture a picture of the phenomenon of participants’ engagement with LIP and FBL in relation to other contextual pressures, and my hope is that the sketches provide useful illustrations of this phenomenon.

V. The Participants and Their School Sites

The conditions and context in which each participant taught, the relationships they had, and their cooperating teachers all have a significant role to play in understanding and interpreting why they told the stories they told. In this section I include a brief profile of each participant and an overview of each student teaching site, describing the school contexts and the cooperating teachers primarily from participants’ points of view. Cooperating teachers (CTs) and their approaches and ideologies about teaching, particularly in relation to LIP, are an important part of contextualizing the illustrations in this dissertation.²⁸ These descriptions were generated primarily from participants’ reports in interviews, which I fleshed out with demographic data found on school district Web sites and my school visits.

After student teaching placements were selected, I chose four sites based on their locations, grade level (two high schools and two middle schools), demographics (racial and socio-economic status), and overall school structures and philosophies. All sites had cooperating teachers who had many years of experience as English language arts teachers. Using principles of theoretical sampling, I chose participants by placement, rather than by personal characteristics, since I anticipated that variations between field sites might offer different site-based pressures. For instance, high school teachers often encounter pressures based on preparing students for ACT and SAT; whereas, middle school teachers must meet state standards for preparation for high schools. I was unable to find statistics related to language use for these sites.

²⁸ Chapter 7 provides additional description of the approaches taken up or rejected by participants.

A) Participants at middle school sites:

1) Aileen Meyer

Aileen is in her early twenties and identifies as a white, lower middle class female. She described herself as speaking some Italian and Spanish, but not being bilingual or able to talk to her parents in Italian. She reported that her difficulties learning Spanish for over five years might sensitize her to students who are learning multiple languages. Aileen grew up in large Midwestern city, and based on her public schooling experiences in a predominantly African American high school, she expressed her desires to foreground student-centered pedagogy and issues of equity. This was not a one time expression—Aileen reiterated this aspect of her teaching philosophy several times over the year and a half that I worked with her. Before student teaching, Aileen described her teaching philosophy in contrast to the ways she felt students were underserved at her high school. Her experiences led her to see the ways language intersects with inequitable teaching; however, she expressed some unease with incorporating linguistic understandings at this stage of her teaching, due to a sense that she did not yet know enough about student language. In fact, thematic coding of Stage 1 data led me to anticipate in an early analytical memo that Aileen might pay attention to language variation on an individual level with students, but would not overtly address language variation and appreciation in whole class situations or within her larger approach to teaching English language arts.

Aileen's Student Teaching school site

Aileen's student teaching placement was at Butler Middle School, a public school with approximately 550 students (38% Caucasian, 34% African American, 10% Latino, 9% Asian, and 9% multi-racial). Over a third of the students qualified for free and reduced lunch. Butler is situated within a well-funded district in a medium-sized Midwestern town. During the year of the study, the district was written up in local papers for their efforts to close the achievement gap between African American and Caucasian students (although the most recent article noted that a significant gap still persisted based on the recent testing data and despite higher expenditures in per-student allocations than other districts). In an inservice professional development session during Aileen's ninth

week of student teaching, a discussion about equity caused “tension” for the faculty and staff, according to Aileen.

Aileen’s teaching assignment at Butler was to teach heterogeneously grouped eighth-grade English language arts classes. Before and during student teaching, Aileen expressed excitement about the diversity and heterogeneity of her teaching site. She reported that the curriculum at her site was designed to engage with students’ diverse abilities and interests, using reading/writing workshop to allow students to select texts and write using a variety of genres. For Aileen’s final unit plan assessment, she established a blogging assignment, which she described as a way to encourage students to take on identities as writers and share their views of historical fiction with each other.

Aileen described how she was integrated into the overall school community, which prioritized relationships and student responsibility. When I visited Butler, I noticed that a bulletin board by the main office included photographs of teachers and what they did over the summer: The images showed teachers hugging families on vacation and grinning on mountain-tops. A picture of Aileen and her family was featured along with the other teachers. Student entries for the National Day on Writing were posted in a common hallway. Class bulletin boards promoted new Young Adult literature titles, sporting events, and pictures of students and teachers.

Aileen’s Cooperating Teacher: Colleen Bradley

Aileen started and ended student teaching by expressing a deep respect for Colleen Bradley’s experience and relational approach to teaching. Aileen reported that Colleen is an experienced teacher with a “tough love” mothering philosophy towards teaching and whose children had recently attended Butler. When Colleen corrected students’ oral language, particularly features of African American English, Aileen cited Colleen’s insider status in the school as informing this choice. From the beginning of student teaching, Aileen described Colleen’s approach as aligned with her own student-centered approach and lack of focus on “grammar.” Before student teaching, Aileen noted that she did not place standard English as a focus or a top priority and anticipated that Colleen would not focus on this area. Throughout the semester, Aileen described Colleen’s approach as including root-based vocabulary study (with roots aligned with thematic units), proofreading and spelling correction in context at the final stages in

reading/writing workshop approach, and game playing (Grammar Punk). Students learned about the “6 traits + 1 model” for writing, but they did not use worksheets related to grammar or language study. At the end of student teaching, Aileen questioned the lack of a systematic approach to “grammar” or language study in the Lanhill district and wondered if there would be other ways to integrate language study into the thematic reading and writing units.

2) William Carter

William is in his early twenties and identified as a white, upper-middle class male who grew up in a suburban area of a large city.²⁹ He described himself as speaking “Midwestern, or with a Midwestern accent,” and having pretty much been born speaking standard American English. William also reported that he knows “five words in Lebanese” from his father and has some “working knowledge” of French. Several times, William asserted his desire to teach at a boys’ school like the Jesuit boys school he attended in a large urban area near his suburb. He described his decision to go into teaching as partly because it was a subject he was “good at” but also because he wanted to “do something the world needs.” In his expressions of his teaching philosophy, William prioritized showing his personality to students, teaching in student-centered ways, and making reading and writing relevant. In particular, he expressed the ways he valued written language as a “legacy” and attributed this partly to his own identity as a creative writer. Before student teaching, however, William expressed how he felt much of the linguistic knowledge from his coursework lacked usefulness, especially as he imagined working with the students at his student teaching site. William reported that this student teaching site matched the linguistically and racially homogenous demographic of his hometown.

William’s Student Teaching school site

William’s student teaching placement was at St. Ignatius Catholic School (K-8) in Lanhill (the same medium-sized midwestern university town in which Aileen was placed) with students from surrounding towns, including Ashberg, a lower income area. St.

²⁹ Although William grew up in the same large city suburb as Jessica, he perceived the community as linguistically and racially homogenous while she described the opposite.

Ignatius is a private Jesuit school (K-8) with approximately 445 students. In 2006, the school was 88% white, 5% Asian, 6% Latino, and 1% African American. William was placed with a class of 27 eighth graders (9 female and 18 male). At the beginning of the semester, William identified most students in the class as Caucasian and described two as Asian and one new female student as African American.

William's teaching assignment at St. Ignatius was to teach this group of eighth grade students in English (literature), Grammar (with a focus on sentence diagramming), math, and an elective, forensics/yearbook class. Before the semester began, William noted that while he would like to focus on more creative aspects of writing, he understood teaching parts of speech or sentence diagramming as something "necessary" to his placement. Literature units were based on canonical pieces of literature rather than larger themes. During the semester, William was responsible for teaching a unit about parable writing and *The Pearl*, various canonical short stories, and the *Christmas Carol*. Teaching in a classroom attached to a seventies-style parish building, William's day started with uniformed students listening to schoolwide prayer over the intercom. The classroom walls featured religious icons and posters about the class rules, the eight parts of speech, a simple sentence structure diagram, and vocabulary words.

William's Cooperating Teacher: Clare Henrickson

William described Clare Henrickson as a middle-aged woman who had been teaching at Ignatius for a "long" time. Clare was surprised by William's desire to learn about his students and their out of school literacies at the beginning of the semester and followed an approach to English language arts that prioritized canonical literature and prescriptive grammar. William described Clare's policy to mark all student writing in red for any prescriptive grammar errors that occurred. He reported that she explicitly asked him to follow this policy and corrected William when he went "too lightly" in this area. Her Grammar course focused on teaching parts of speech and sentence diagramming, having students identify parts of speech in writing or on quizzes. William described how Clare often corrected the oral language of students, including William's use of "got" and "you guys" during teaching.

Before student teaching, William expressed how he felt "green" and ready to learn from his cooperating teacher. He described the methods used at his site as aligning

fairly closely to his own schooling experiences, yet expressed his openness to resisting concepts that did not align with his philosophy.

B) Participants at high school sites:

1) Lindsey Krupke

Lindsey grew up in a small Midwestern town, is in her early twenties, and self-identified as middle class and Caucasian, a speaker of primarily “standard English.” She reported that she speaks some Spanish but would only “last about two days in Mexico City.” Lindsey described her experiences in a small town, with parents who “were very quick to correct grammar and pronunciation of things,” which she reported as pushing her in the “right direction.” She described how her decision to become a teacher was inspired by an experience with teaching a fellow high school student to read, which she identified as the fault of teachers who didn’t care and passed on the student. Lindsey explained that this experience informed her sense that standard English instruction is “key to success.”

While some new teacher candidates express uncertainty about their professional path, Lindsey entered the teacher education program with a sense of purpose. She presented herself confidently, with a straight back and direct eye contact as she described her desire to work at alternative schools or with students at a detention center like the one where she worked in the past. She reported that she took two linguistics classes in addition to education coursework and “found a lot of things very interesting from that class and very useful and applicable” to how she thinks about English teaching. In her expressions of teaching philosophy, Lindsey maintained a consistent focus on student-centered teaching and communication. This focus on communication was described by Lindsey as what students “lack” in order to provide them with additional communication skills they will need to be successful.

Lindsey’s Student Teaching school site

Lindsey’s placement was at Haven High School in Lanhill, a medium-sized midwestern university town. Haven is a small alternative high school that focuses on student freedom and prides itself on being student centered and creative. A vibrant array of student voices, artwork, and written expressions crowd the hallways at Haven. Images

of faculty-student campouts and other community events are displayed prominently in the classrooms. Haven has an open campus, no bells, student-initiated study opportunities, and no tracking. Teachers and students call each other by their first names.

The population is approximately 450 students: 74% Caucasian, 10% Multi-Ethnic/Other, 7% African American, 4% Asian, 3% Latino, 2% Middle Eastern, and 1% Native American; 6% of students received free and reduced lunch. Lindsey taught 9-12 grade Creative Writing and 9th grade American Literature, which Lindsey described as having an analytical writing focus. During the semester, Lindsey reported how faculty engaged in heated conversations focused on the district's achievement gap on writing tests.

Lindsey's Cooperating Teacher: Ruth Petrov

A teacher at Haven for multiple decades, Ruth Petrov was described by Lindsey as being known in the larger Lanhill community as a “fabulous” teacher who inspires student curiosity and intellect. Even before student teaching, Lindsey reported how much she valued Ruth's expertise as a cooperating teacher. Lindsey had been placed with Ruth in an earlier teacher education placement and described Ruth as someone who has successfully interacted with students and taught writing in the past. Rather than asserting her own learning or approaches to teaching, Lindsey's early interviews expressed her deference to methods used by Ruth. During the semester, Lindsey described ways that Ruth values multilingualism. While Lindsey described Ruth as correcting and grading for “grammar” on students' analytical essays, she also noted ways that Ruth's instruction focused on larger structural and rhetorical issues related to writing analytically.

2) Jessica Brown

Self-identified as middle class, Caucasian, and female, Jessica was another teacher candidate in her early twenties. From early on in her teacher education, Jessica expressed an overall passion for linguistics, both her learning and the applications in her teaching. Jessica, who is from the same large city suburb as William, noted this area as internationally and linguistically diverse. Without prompting, Jessica often talked about coming to awareness of perceptions about language in linguistics classes. While she talked about parental correction (like Lindsey), as her parents' focus on “standard

sounding route to success English,” she countered this with skepticism about the overall usefulness of standard English. Jessica expressed her awareness that her language use might include English regionalisms and gendered features, such as “like.” She also described herself as “barely speaking” Spanish. Jessica’s expressions of her teaching philosophy included her value of instruction about language variation and appreciation, which overlapped with her past teaching experiences and her take up of concepts from coursework. In an interview before student teaching, Jessica expressed her desire to integrate these topics into her teaching at her student teaching site, but she implied occasionally that she might defer when necessary to the best practices of her “rigorous” field site and her cooperating teacher. Jessica’s consistent focus on language variation and instruction in her expressions of her philosophy in her written philosophy, interviews, and class assignments led me to anticipate in a memo after Stage 1 that she would be most likely to engage with LIP into her teaching.

Jessica’s Student Teaching school site

Jessica’s student teaching site was at Westlake High School in Pottersgrove, a suburban district with a growing African American population, currently 76% White, 20% African American, and 4% other. Approximately 6% of the students were eligible for free lunch and 40% of families earn above \$150,000. The district is known for high test scores, and Westlake has approximately 1400 students and an excellent reputation, according to Jessica who emphasized before student teaching that it is a “good school” and that she was excited about working with “good teachers in a rigorous curriculum.” She described ways that the English department was trying to focus more on “grammar” for the ACT and experimented with several approaches during Jessica’s student teaching semester. Jessica taught in 12th grade Science Fiction and Contemporary Literature and Culture, following a block schedule. The latter course is a mandatory writing “elective” focused on college-level writing. Jessica’s teaching occurred primarily in Contemporary Literature and units focused on themes in contemporary culture and academic writing skills (essays, eportfolios, and academic blogs).

Westlake’s freshly painted earthtone hallways are pristine and free of notices, with benches for students to work on between classes and often filled with well-dressed students and teachers. On one visit, I sat on a bench, and I could hear a choir singing,

students chatting about the upcoming *Guys and Dolls* performances, the recent Jewish holiday, and scenes they were practicing for their freshman English class.

Jessica's Cooperating Teacher: Allan Harty

Jessica described Allan Harty as a laid back middle-aged teacher who was “intimidating intelligent,” enjoyed joking around with students, and was an expert in science fiction. In an interview before student teaching, Jessica implied that she would defer when necessary to the best practices promoted by her cooperating teacher. She reported that when students got off task, Allan subtracted participation points and expected her to maintain this system. Allan’s approach to language study included prescriptive grammar lessons with worksheets, correction of students’ essays using a number system for comments (most of which referred to prescriptive, structural, or rhetorical errors), and insistence on “academic” writing in students’ blogs. Jessica noted several times that while she was teaching, Allan would jump in to add information or make a joke, which at times spurred her to wish he would step back and “stop talking to the kids.”

VI. Case Illustrations

These brief profiles of the four participants, their cooperating teachers, and the student teaching field sites provide additional contextual information for their cases in the next chapters. Before moving into the results chapters, I also include an overview Case Chart that shows the map for the *Field Sketches* and transcript excerpts used to exemplify the three themes explored in those chapters (see Figure 3.2). Chapter 4 illustrations explore ways that participants avoided deficit ideologies (highlighted in green). Chapter 5 illustrations describe participants’ engagement with complexity related to language (highlighted in yellow). Chapter 6 illustrations highlight ways that they negotiated language-related dilemmas (highlighted in blue).

This overview Case Chart shows where these illustrations fit within the fourteen weeks of student teaching, and each chapter includes a chart that highlights the illustrations in that chapter. The purpose of this chart is to provide an overview of how

the cases play out over the weeks of student teaching, thus showing the ways that negotiation of overt language-related dilemmas overlay moments of unanticipated language complexity and instances of engagement with LIP.

Key for Figure 3.2

Case Chart Chapter Key:

- Ch. 4: Avoiding deficit ideologies with LIP
- Ch. 5: Encountering language complexity
- Ch. 6: Negotiating dilemmas

FS: Field Sketch; **E:** Excerpt

FIGURE 3.2. CASE CHART: OVERVIEW OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	Weeks 1-2	Week 3-4	Weeks 5-6	Weeks 7-8	Weeks 9-10	Weeks 11-12	Weeks 13-14
Aileen					FS8: Written/Oral Language Intersections		E8: "That's Racist" E9: "That's Proper"
Jessica		FS11: Dangerous Line FS1: Shared Language		FS4: "That's Not Funny"	FS12: Discussion Obstacles		FS10: Hitting Two Birds? (2-14) E10: "What Scares Me"
Lindsey		E2: Not Blaming	FS2: "Face Saving Is Huge"		FS6: Appropriate E7: "Funny" Things Happen	FS9: Pictures in Their Writing	FS7: Eyes Opened E1: What Counts
William	E4: All Talk the Same? E6: Assumptions			FS3: Expert E3.1/3.3: Pick Your Battles		E3.2: Pick Your Battles	FS5: Literary Language E5: Speaking/ Writing Differences

VII. Appendices

Appendix A. Stage 1 categories: LIP and FBL

1) Language Equity

Principles:

1. LP1: Teacher candidates need to be aware of and have appreciation for language variety.
2. LP2: Language variation and change is inevitable.
3. LP3: There are links between language variety and identity (i.e. language variation can signal a desire to connect to a particular community).
4. LP4: Effective teachers value student language, casting student language as competence rather than deficit.
5. LP5: “Standard English” is one variety of English.
6. LP6: Oral and written language are different.

Related FBL:

- Deficit ideologies (“Not a lot of language”)
- standard English myth (knowing “standard English” will lead to upward mobility)
- standard ideologies (one and only one correct way, related to prescriptivism) and language subordination

2) Descriptive approaches to grammar

Principles:

1. GP1: “Grammar” encompasses more than prescriptive grammar.
2. GP2: Descriptive grammar, including functional approaches to grammar for language learners, provides a linguistic view of grammar that can be useful for student learning.
 - a. For example, SFL can be used to look for meaning in student writing
 - b. Register is one way to think about how oral/written language is used for different purposes.
 - c. “Teaching grammar” doesn’t have to mean teaching prescriptive grammar or “standard English”.
3. GP3: Teaching writing is different than assigning writing: (i.e. teachers have to teach the genre/register and associated structures in order for students to complete writing assignments)

Related FBL:

- standard language ideologies (one and only one correct spoken form, modeled on single correct written form—others as substandard); mythical standard safeguarded by teachers
- ideologies of prescriptivism and authority (“Red pen equity”)
- myths about language acquisition

3) Consequential language choices in classroom interactions:

Principles:

1. CP1: As teachers, our language use and beliefs have implications for student learning.
2. CP1: Discourse in interactions can limit or open up opportunities for student learning.

3. CP3: Teachers can use discourse analysis to improve their practice and relationships with students.
4. CP4: Teachers' language choices have consequences for whether or not students are positioned as having power as readers and writers.
 - a. For example, a teacher's handouts structure opportunities for learning
 - b. structure of an assignment can circulate power to students as readers and writers
 - c. structure of an assignment can take away power by dictating and constricting learning
5. CP5: Teachers' language use communicates certain identities and students interact with/respond to these projected identities in relation to their own. (multiple worlds)

Related FBL:

- standard language ideologies and language subordination (“You can’t talk like that here”)
- colorblindness and monolingualism (False equity of colorblindness)
- ideologies of prescriptivism and authority

Appendix B. Protocol for my different roles

- *As researcher*—my role will be to listen and follow a semi-structured interview guide to surface the participants' experiences rather than to serve as an authority to answer their questions. My role is to describe participants' experiences, including their questions, challenges, and need for resources.
- *As methods instructor*—the participant can elicit my help as a resource. My position as an instructor is that if a student asks for help, I will use the Socratic method to help the student come to his/her own point of view. In this role, I feel it is ethically sound to share curricular resources with students if they ask for this kind of support. This sharing of resources will not compromise the kind of data I am collecting. In fact, tracking this need for resources will add to the richness of how we understand the participants' experiences.
- *Safeguard*—during the Weekly Debriefings, I can ask clarifying questions to indicate which way we are talking: “In which role are you talking to me now?” I also will clarify the nature of my response: “Now I am talking to you as your past methods instructor...” or “Now I am talking to you as a researcher...”

Appendix C. Stage 1 data summary

The following data from the methods course was analyzed for each participant:

Participant Work from Methods:

- initial teaching philosophy (1-2 pages)
- initial definition of grammar in English teaching (1 paragraph)
- Response #6 to *In Other Words/Bridging English* chapters on language use (1 page, includes description of how the participant would apply linguistic concepts in teaching)

- mid-term concept grid (1 paragraph total, includes brief description of how concepts related to grammar/classroom discourse are useful to participants as English teacher)
- handbook entries (3-7 pages, includes self-selected, often language-related, activities that the participant generated as something ELA teachers would want to know or implement)
- unit plan cover letter (2-3 pages, includes description of how planning choices relate to beliefs about teaching)

Methods Course Video Data:

- Video data of weekly methods class sessions (13 recorded classes, 39 hours): Micro-analysis focused primarily on two sessions—1) 1-27-09: focus on classroom interaction; 2) 3-03-09: focus on supporting students as language users.
- *Follow-up Interviews:* Audio-recorded interviews followed a standardized open-ended interview guide (45 min.-1 hour). See *Appendix D: Stage One Interview Guide*.
 - These interviews provided key background information for participant profiles, such as participants' current views of language variation and grammar in ELA. Questions were developed during the pilot study and helped surface salient information about LIP and FBL that may not be available in course materials.

Appendix D. Stage 1 Interview Guide

Background:

- Describe what led you to become an English teacher at the secondary level. (Probe for depth.)
- Ideally, where would you most like to teach? Why? (Describe your ideal school and students.)
- Describe your student teaching placement. Why did you choose this site?

Current experience/expertise:

- At this point, what do you feel it takes to be a successful English teacher?
- Which areas do you feel you need to know more about to successfully teach English? (Probing ideas—writing, grammar, literature, language, classroom interaction)
- How do you think language plays a factor in English teaching?
- What kinds of language-related issues do you predict could arise during student teaching? (Probing ideas: issues that arose during Practicum I or II; language variation, grammar, classroom interaction)

Language background/beliefs:

- Tell me about your language history. Do you speak any other languages or varieties of English?
- If so (or, If not), how do you think this knowledge will (or will not) influence your teaching of English?
- Describe any experiences you have with linguistics. How do you think this knowledge (or lack of knowledge) will relate to your success as an English teacher?
- As a future English teacher, do you think some languages (or varieties of English) are better than others? Why?
- What is the role of a language variety like Standard American English in the English/Language Arts classroom?
- What is the role of a language variety like African American English in the English/Language Arts classroom?
- What is the role of “grammar” in the English/Language Arts classroom?

Overall questions/concerns:

- Do you have any questions or concerns about language or English teaching as you move into student teaching?

Appendix E. Stage 2 Weekly Debriefing Guide

- Time frame: (30 min.-1 hour weekly, after school on Thursdays or Fridays for the 14 weeks of student teaching).
- Location: over Skype (video-recorded) or phone (audio-recorded)
- Prompts:
 - Tell me a story about something that happened this week in the field.
 - Tell me about anything that happened related to language equity.
 - Tell me if an incident related to teaching grammar came up this week.
 - Tell me a story about something that happened this week related to your classroom interactions.
 - Probing
 - Detail probes: who, when, where, how
 - Encouragement probes: “tell me more...”
 - Clarification probes: “did you say...”
 - Specific prompting questions will be based on the study participants’ profiles.

Appendix F. Stage 2 data summary

For the four study participants, I collected the following data:

- 1) *Weekly Debriefings* (audio-or video-recorded over Skype): (30 min.-1.5 hour weekly, after school on Thursday or Friday for the 14 weeks of student teaching).
 - Weekly protocol (conversational interview approach guided by pre-determined prompts; participants were given the protocol ahead of time); see *Appendix C: Stage Two Weekly Interview Guide*
 - Protocol focuses on incidents from the week related to language equity, grammar, and language in classroom interaction. Specific prompting questions were based on the study participants’ profiles and ongoing weekly themes.
 - I took notes during each interview and memo-ed key themes related to the research questions after each interview (or soon after if interviews were back-to-back)
 - 87 pages of notes
 - Transcript pages from excerpted audio from 64 total hours of interviews: William, 148 pages; Jessica, 117 pages; Aileen, 143 pages; Lindsey, 184 pages.
- 2) *Video- and/or audio-recordings of a student teacher-selected classroom interaction and follow-up discussion* (1 observation/discussion per participant)
 - This observational data helped establish the trustworthiness of the project by providing an opportunity to triangulate data types and provide dense description of the ways the participants understand the role of language in classroom interactions.
 - In the follow-up discussions, the video provided a common classroom interaction text and different perspective; compared to field instructor

supervision, the student teachers' authority is intact and they offer different points of view than while teaching.

- 3) *Student teaching artifacts* (Annotated unit plans, 70-169 pages each) 392 pages total
- This data provided an additional means of triangulation by adding to the ways that participants are enacting their understandings in their teaching choices and articulation of their teaching beliefs in their annotations.
 - I had planned to collect revised teaching philosophies as part of this plan, but this was not part of the updated assignment for the course.

Appendix G. Overview of Field Sketch features

- Includes contextualization of specific weekly debriefings from other data sources and debriefings
- Refers to Melinda, participants, field instructors, cooperating teachers, and students in the field
- Incorporates participants' language to re-tell classroom interactions; some include longer transcript excerpts to re-tell classroom interactions
- Includes time markers
- Describes participants' emotions based on video-recorded interviews, vocal emphasis, and self-description
- Shows how classroom interaction moments intersect with time, ongoing curricular pressures, other voices, and other incidents
- Includes participants' description of teaching moves (actual, planned, and future)

Appendix H. Transcript excerpts related to Field Sketch 1: Shared Language

Lines from Week 3 Weekly Debriefing interview transcript:

Jessica:

11-14

It was pretty stressful. There were some ups, but it ended Friday, and I felt like I had started out and then gotten a lot worse, so I just didn't feel – I just felt really frustrated and just exhausted.

83-86

I don't know if it's that I just – like, I can't – I'm having trouble walking this really narrow path between, like, if I show interest, I feel like I'm on my way to becoming friends with them, and that's not okay.

90-92

And then, any time I try and redirect their behavior, get us on track, it's like I'm being too short with them or, you know – like, I am feeling like my CT just kind of laughs with them.

486-490

I mean, it's like I'm just totally confused about my role, because I'm trying so hard to get to know them, and that seems – getting to

know them seems to be counterproductive in terms of them getting classroom management skills, because my instinct is to be more firm.

502-512

I mean, they don't look like – they're just not – they don't – they're just – in my mind, there's this huge disparity from how they look and how they act. They look like they could be at Midwestern University. They act like they're totally immature, and I get really frustrated with that really quickly, and so I'm just like – maybe that's why I have less patience is just my perception is skewed and I don't understand that they're just not at that point where they've gone through life experiences and changes where they've left home and they've graduated and they're on their – they may be totally not sure what they're doing, but they're on their own feet for a bit.

583-598

Jessica:

And I'm like, "Well, I can't suck at student teaching, because it'll affect me getting a job," and I know rationally that I'm supposed to be making mistakes, and it's probably more about how I handle the mistakes than anything.

Melinda:

Mm-hmm.

Jessica:

Right, like if I handle the mistakes well and learn from them and –

Melinda:

Yeah.

Jessica:

kind of roll with it, rather than trying to get everything done this weekend, which is what – I was like, "I'm going to just get everything done this weekend. Then, it'll be fine." But, I realized – then, I just get paralyzed because I'm so overwhelmed with how much I really need to do that I don't do anything, so –

975-1035

Jessica:

It's funny, because we were talking about my teacher lingo, and it – I've been trying to think of ways to get the kids into *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, because that's what they're going to be reading. I am – like in the book, they describe him as having a swagger, and two of my girls were just talking – two of my African American girls – and they were talking about swag game, and they were like, "Miss Brown, you know what swag game is." And it was really funny. I told them, I'm like, "Yeah." Well, I'm not sure what swag game is, but I know swagger, and I was like – and I was thinking, you know, "This is how I'm going to get you guys into the story, because this book we're going to be reading has – main character has swagger." So, it was just funny, and we were just

talking about how the word had come – you know, sort of resurfaced, and it's being used a lot now, but –

Melinda: So, I'm not familiar with swag game, so can you enlighten me?

Jessica: I guess it's just kind of like game, like, in terms of game with ladies, but the –

Melinda: Oh, yeah.

Jessica: – swag part is kind of like your walk kind of and – so, I'm not really sure exactly that I got it, but – yeah, they were just kind of like using – defining words the way you're not supposed to. Swag game is, you know, swag with game, and so I think that I know what they meant, but yeah, I guess your swag is just like your – how you carry yourself, I guess, like in a – it's a positive –

Melinda: Right.

Jessica: – you have swag, I guess, so –

Melinda: That's interesting.

Jessica: It was just funny, because that just showed me that they perceive a difference in how – that I may not be part of their little language world. Other than that – and that may have been cultural, not – rather than age.

Melinda: Mm-hmm.

Jessica: So, that was interesting to me, and kind of funny, because we had to laugh while we were talking about it.

Melinda: And did you feel like that interaction brought you closer to those students, or do you feel like –

Jessica: Yeah, it did. Yeah, I felt like I could – you know, that we can – like, we can talk about things that – you know, I could teach them something, they could teach me something sort of thing, that it wasn't – that I – you know, even – I don't know why they were talking about it. They were blogging, so it was like an appropriate time in class where they could, you know – I showed that I was a little – you know, I was relaxed enough that we could just talk about something that wasn't necessarily like, "Oh, we can only talk about school," and that I cared about what they were talking about.

I wasn't just like, "No, I don't know what that is," and walked away, so –

Chapter Four

Engagement with Linguistically Informed Principles: Moving Beyond Deficit Ideologies

This chapter provides illustrations of how participants engaged with linguistically informed principles (LIP) in ways that helped them move beyond deficit ideologies.³⁰ Participants' "stories" in the weekly debriefings revealed ways they chose not to take up deficit ideologies as a teaching position in relation to language use and to interactional language, or discursive interaction. The illustrations in this chapter describe how awareness of discursive authority in classroom interactions and language's relationship to positive relationships with students enabled participants to conceive of ways to create more effective, equitable interactions with students. This awareness enabled participants to position students positively in some interactions, moving beyond deficit ideologies that cast student language as irrelevant to curricular conversations or as broken, sloppy, or bad. In addition, their ways of using language as teachers were important to this ability to move beyond deficit approaches.

By positioning students in less adversarial and deficit ways through their talk and class activities, participants positioned themselves as certain kinds of teachers, such as equitable, student-centered, and/or appreciative teachers. Instead of relying on adversarial metaphors that position teachers in authoritative binaries of teachers vs. students, or us vs. them, participants took on more interactional, complex positions. This meant participants moved away from deficit-based positions of the more knowledgeable teacher/language user who wields authority over a less knowledgeable student/language

³⁰ In particular, deficit ideologies are often used to think about minority students (Valencia & Solórzano, 2004). As a form of FBL, deficit ideologies classify speaking African American English and other stigmatized languages as language problems and groups them with developmental and literacy problems (J. Milroy & Milroy, 1999; Smitherman, 1986).

user. Ultimately, this movement away from deficit ideologies enabled participants to position students as knowledgeable language users and/or valid co-constructors of language and literary understandings.

In this chapter, I use illustrative transcript excerpts and *Field Sketches* in order to demonstrate rejection of deficit thinking in two main organizational categories related to engagement with language principles, or LIP: 1) participants' ways of describing language variation and their students in relation to writing and literature instruction (E1/FS1); 2) participants' use of interactional language as they described responses to students' behaviors or characteristics, particularly those that might typically be cast as deficits (E2-3/FS2-3). *Case Chart: Chapter 4 Illustrations* shows where these illustrations were located in each participant's case across the weeks of student teaching (see Figure 4.1).

Moving beyond overt deficit ideologies about language variation so often decried as a stumbling block for prospective teachers, all participants expressed awareness of and appreciation for language variety on some level. While it is true that their abilities to enact this perspective in all circumstances had varied levels of success and were fragmented (see Chapters 5 and 6), they were able to access and enact LIP related to language equity and variation. Section I will provide illustrative examples of ways two participants were able to engage with understandings of language variation and move beyond deficit understandings of student language. This section explores how Lindsey and Jessica enacted positive attitudes towards language variety and change. The first example, *Excerpt 1: What Counts*, will present this enactment in relation to teaching writing; the second example, *Field Sketch 1: Shared Language* will look at language in literary study. In particular, ways of thinking about computer-mediated communication and varied levels of formality as aspects of students' varied linguistic repertoires enabled participants to create more effective learning environments. Their understandings of this area of LIP enabled them to frame what is "appropriate" in their interactions with students in ways that afforded openness to students rather than negative judgment.

Section II explores how participants engaged with discourse analytic concepts to position students in positive ways during classroom interactions and, in doing so, resisted deficit-fueled, adversarial approaches to student/teacher communication.

FIGURE 4.1. CASE CHART: CHAPTER 4 ILLUSTRATIONS

Key:
 • **FS:** Field Sketch
 • **E:** Excerpt

	Weeks 1-2	Week 3-4	Weeks 5-6	Weeks 7-8	Weeks 9-10	Weeks 11-12	Weeks 13-14
Aileen					FS8: Written/Oral Language Intersections		E8: "That's Racist" E9: "That's Proper"
Jessica		FS11: Dangerous Line FS1: Shared Language		FS4: "That's Not Funny"	FS12: Discussion Obstacles		FS10: Hitting Two Birds? (2-14) E10: "What Scares Me"
Lindsey		E2: Not Blaming	FS2: "Face Saving is Huge"		FS6: Appropriate E7: "Funny" Things Happen	FS9: Pictures in Their Writing	FS7: Eyes Opened E1: What Counts
William	E4: All Talk the Same? E6: Assumptions			FS3: Expert E3.1/3.3: Pick Your Battles		E3.2: Pick Your Battles	FS5: Literary Language E5: Speaking/ Writing Differences

This section looks primarily at two particular instances of the engagement with LIP that had powerful positive effects: teaching literature and “managing” students during ELA class activities. The first example described in *Excerpt 2: Not Blaming* and *Field Sketch 2: Face Saving is Huge* looks at how interactional language related to Lindsey’s approach to the teaching of literature. The second example described in *Field Sketch 3: Expert* and *Excerpts 3.1-3: Pick Your Battles* explores the ways William built and sustained a relationship with a difficult student who would typically be written off as a class clown, or thought of by teachers in a deficit way. These illustrations exemplify the ways both explicit and implicit discourse analytic understandings enabled participants to effectively pick their “battles,” recognize students’ abilities, position students as experts, and plan ways to help students save face. These examples also show how participants may have used discourse analytic concepts as lenses for analyzing the ways their cooperating teachers positioned students with their language choices and other actions.

Lastly, the implications section of the chapter will explore how the resistance of deficit ideologies related to language use and interaction has implications for how prospective teachers create equitable classroom interactions related to ELA learning. These implications of these cases include the ways engagement with linguistically informed principles supported participants as they encountered potential language-related dilemmas in classroom interactions. The illustrations in this chapter demonstrate ways that preservice teachers might do this by understanding where their students’ worlds are similar and different from their own and valuing what these students bring to the classroom. Furthermore, these illustrations offer particularly salient language concepts that enabled participants to approach instruction in ways that integrated awareness of language in curricular and interactional domains. These concepts grounded participants’ engagement with LIP in ways that may have provided them with the authority to make sense of their decisions in light of multiple obstacles or forces.

I. Positive Attitudes Towards Language Variety and Change: What Is “Appropriate”?

Positive attitudes towards language variety, instead of alignment with deficit views, emerged as a key area of participants’ ongoing understanding of LIP that was present during student teaching. During weekly debriefings, participants were able to use concepts like “code-switching” and “style-shifting” to talk about the use of multiple codes or registers. They also engaged with knowledge of these concepts in their interactions with students. For instance, during the last week of student teaching William encouraged his students to stop making fun of a regional form of English. Some participants identified and attempted to validate specific features of African American English in one-on-one interactions; some participants also facilitated large group discussions about vernacular “like” and the links between language and identity (see Chapter 6).

While some English teachers—including cooperating teachers who participants encountered in the field—cast online communication as a threat to writing and reading in English class, participants were able to think positively about digital writing features in student writing as language variation. Furthermore, based on their beliefs that student language should be affirmed and that academic language should be scaffolded, participants were skeptical when their cooperating teachers orally corrected student language when students were language learners or used a stigmatized language variety.

To exemplify the ways participants’ engagement with linguistic principles of variation enabled them to reject deficit thinking, this section focuses on two cases: Lindsey’s conception of these principles in relation to student writing; Jessica’s use of language appreciation to build positive connections with students in relation to language in literature.

A. Lindsey’s case: Enacting language variation concepts in relation to student writing

In this illustration, Lindsey’s case provides a window into how prospective teachers might engage with concepts of language variety and change in their approach to writing instruction, particularly writing that is influenced by online or texting forms. Digitally-influenced writing is the most recent site where English teachers’ positions as

language guardians (gatekeepers) have been codifying in ways that often marginalize students' experiences and literacy practices. This gatekeeper position is often informed by public views of a literacy crisis, a historical position that pinpoints the latest technology or language change as a sign of civilization's collapse (see Carrington, 2005). This is unsurprising, since for the past 150 years or so, "bad" language has been associated with criminality, and linguists argue that this association speaks to a desire for control and authority (J. Milroy & Milroy, 1999, p. 41).

In contrast, participants—who had read articles about "language mavens" and prescriptivists in coursework and engaged with these positions in their written work in the semesters before student teaching—distanced themselves from these positions to greater or lesser extents.³¹ In opposition to current positions that cast technology as a destructive force for literacy, Lindsey affirmed her students' language use by engaging with her linguistic understandings in relation to the manifestations in their writing. Instead of being "alarmed," like other teachers in the field, including her cooperating teacher, Lindsey knew how to notice unfamiliar or unexpected features in student writing without seeing this as a sign of "mental deficiency" (*Excerpt 1*, line 38).³²

In *Excerpt 1: What Counts*, Lindsey is sharing her thoughts at the end of student teaching. Before the excerpt, Lindsey explained that her success during the student teaching semester was assisted by linguistic understandings about "what counts as language" that she learned in her coursework. Lindsey could not pinpoint whether she learned these concepts in her Modern Language, Multicultural Education, or Methods classes, and she implied that it could have been a combination of all three courses:³³

³¹ Language mavens often criticize others by advocating for rules that dictate how language *should* be, not how it *is*. This advocacy, also called prescriptivism, often leads to a deficit thinking about particular language users. Prescriptivists generally "blur the distinction between syntax, meaning and social identity. So, syntactic (i.e. formal) deviation from 'correct' usage leads to imprecision of meaning which, in turn, leads to social chaos," and they often equate "correct usage with good citizenship" (Bex & Watts, 1999, p. 7).

³² Although Lindsey's cooperating teacher generally encouraged students' interests, Lindsey noted her strong negative reaction towards slam poetry as not real poetry; Lindsey felt this move silenced students who identified as slam poets (Week 7).

³³ The concepts were most likely reiterated in all three courses.

*Excerpt 1: What Counts (Lindsey, Week 14)*³⁴

1 *Lindsey:* But the big issue of what counts as language. If they're not using
2 Standard English, is it still a grammatical, thoughtful language? Syst-
3 We're talking African American vernacular. We're also talking text speak
4 or informal – just informal language. I wouldn't even call it a dialect. But
5 just how kids talk to each other. Is that still in its own right a grammatical
6 form, a language. And when we talk about it in our classes, a lot of times
7 it is.

8 It has different rules. They have different rules than Standard
9 English, but they're still languages in their own right. They're not
10 indications of mental deficiencies or anything. So thinking about that, I'm
11 able to think about student writing in terms of – I don't know if I'd call it
12 – maybe it could still be called code-switching when you're telling them to
13 write instead of writing in a conversational tone to write in a Standard
14 English, academic tone.

15 But it also lessened my concern, that in their first writing, if I
16 wasn't explicit that I wanted this in paragraphs and Standard English, and
17 they wrote it casually. I wasn't as concerned as I might have been, or
18 maybe was even a year-and-a-half ago when I was reading the first student
19 work that I'd seen since **I** was in high school and seeing these very
20 casually-written things. I wasn't as alarmed, it was just, "Oh, I didn't
21 explicitly tell them to be formal." They know how to – they could still,
22 quite possibly, know how to write formally and standardly, they're just not
23 in that mode right now.

24 *Melinda:* So having that concept helped you not make assumptions that
25 "Oh, they're just unable to do this." It's more just like, "Oh actually
26 maybe I need to tell them what level of formality to write in."

27 *Lindsey:* uh-hmm. And sure enough, I was – and it proved to be correct.
28 And so, even if a student, I mean, I didn't come across this so much, but
29 because of the school I was in, because of the teacher that I had, because
30 of the classes they've had before or whatever, but if a student wasn't able
31 to do that code-switching, but they were doing just fine in their own
32 grammatical structures, their own form, their own dialects or something,
33 I'd be able to use that and say, "Look, this is what you're doing and this is
34 how it looks in Standard English in academic form; what your professors
35 are going to be expecting and what your business partners are going to be
36 expecting."

37 And I've come across it that way rather than thinking about it in
38 terms of mental deficiency or – which, I mean, I probably wasn't all that
39 ready to think it was mental deficiency to begin with, but it definitely gave
40 me a more appropriate way to approach it, even mentally and definitely **as**
41 a teacher.

³⁴ See Appendix A for transcription features of the excerpts (exceptions will be noted in the description of specific excerpts).

Lindsey was able to enact principles of language variation in the ways she responded to students' writing features at her student teaching site; these principles grounded her approach with students.³⁵ Moving beyond a model of “deficiency” (lines 10, 38), Lindsey took a different approach “as a teacher” to features she saw in student writing. Instead of being “as alarmed” on line 20 (the response in some current ELA literature), Lindsey positioned her teaching approach as the site for remedy—as a teacher, she needed to be more “explicit” about expectations.

Students were positioned by Lindsey as capable of using multiple registers and “code-switching” between varieties when a teacher gives them explicit instruction. Lindsey positioned all students as knowledgeable in this instance, casting herself as an enlightened teacher, who has had her approach proved “correct.” Lindsey also described how this response was different than the way she reacted to students' papers at the beginning of her teacher education experience; she attributed her change in response to her knowledge of LIP. This knowledge enabled Lindsey to describe her view of student language in a way that worked against a manifestation of deficit thinking known as the “grammaticality myth,” the idea that if it is not standard English, it is not grammatical (Wolfram, 1998b, p. 108). This is the belief that sloppy people, or students, use sloppy grammar. Linguists point out that no time existed when, before standards slipped, people knew “grammar”³⁶ (J. Milroy & Milroy, 1999). Lindsey rejected this view as she described her most recent approach to student writing.

What other factors might contribute to Lindsey's rejection of this deficit position? In contrast to her cooperating teacher, Lindsey described in other interviews how her own language use—which is often mediated by technology— was different from both her

³⁵ Standard ideology is still at play here; Chapters 5 and 6 will address the problematic nature of not recognizing that standard English can be informal or non-academic as well as formal and academic. Lindsey's words also point to an ideology that certain languages are more or less socially “appropriate” in certain contexts. Some linguists argue that teachers and employers should consider how to accept the languages of peripheral groups instead of participating in the language subordination process. Conversely, students and teachers must also be aware of continuing questions of power surrounding language use. After elementary school, most children have internalized the appropriacy argument and may already believe that their home languages are inferior to school language. Discussions about these internalized understandings could provide opportunities for secondary English teachers and their students to engage in critical thinking about the ideological reasons for who gets to use what kind of language, when, and where.

³⁶ Here ‘grammar’ refers to a strict adherence to prescriptive standard English that implies social propriety. Milroy and Milroy point out that many people were not even literate in the mythical past glorified by language mavens. Similarly, the rules for “sloppy” language have changed in even contradictory ways.

students and her cooperating teacher. This enabled Lindsey to take a stance that was different from her cooperating teacher; she realized that she switches between multiple forms in her own writing and communication. In this way, Lindsey aligned herself with “code-switching” students who use language in multiple ways for multiple purposes, while rejecting a traditional English teacher position of ultimate language authority that casts language variation as a sign of deficiency or threat. This may be because she saw herself as closer in age to her students than her cooperating teacher, yet Lindsey also recognized that language use had changed even in the short time since she was in high school.

Lindsey’s experiences with technology-mediated writing and awareness of herself as both similar and different than her students as language users seemed to provide her with a means for understanding the varied linguistic abilities of her students. However, this reliance on her own experiences may have limited her ability to recognize the full range of student language use in her class (see Chapter 5, FS 7-9). Lindsey’s description revealed her confusion about the differences between code-switching and style-shifting. While I argue that this distinction is useful for student teachers to understand, even this confused understanding provided Lindsey with useful grounding to reject deficit approaches.

What is clear is that as Lindsey described her experiences at the end of student teaching, she positioned herself as a teacher with access to this more “appropriate way” to approach student language—as rejecting a deficit view and approaching language variety as a teacher. Her concern with what is appropriate “as a teacher” might point to how new teachers like Lindsey often have their own sense of control and efficacy at stake as they engage with what they learn in teacher education. In the next sub-section, Jessica’s case will further exemplify how ways of engaging with understandings of language variation might help prospective teachers re-frame what is appropriate (and when) in ways that promote engaging, equitable ELA learning.

B. Jessica’s case: Learning when and how to value students’ language worlds

The principle of appreciating and understanding language variation also helped all participants address language in literature to some extent. In Chapter 5, I address further

how this aspect of LIP helped participants start to identify why students might struggle in their engagements with literature. This section focuses on an interaction in which Jessica engaged with and enacted understandings of language variation and appreciation of student language in a conversation about literature.

Throughout the year and a half I worked with Jessica, she was fairly vocal about her desire to appreciate language variation. She often linked this desire to her own experiences as a language user, having spent time in England and gained understanding of herself as speaking a specific variety of English. In particular, Jessica revisited an experience from coursework several times that she linked with her awareness of her need to appreciate and validate language variety. She remembered a coursework experience with an African American college peer who talked about the challenges of shifting between language varieties applicable in the university and his home community. Jessica linked her desire to include discussions of the importance of language and identity in her class to this experience, and this experience provided a window for Jessica as she described her engagement with concepts of language variation.

Jessica used her linguistic understanding of variation at several times during the student teaching semester. For instance, Jessica described how the idea of language change from linguistic coursework helped her to address the meaning of language in a novel and to push students' perspectives. Jessica cited the usefulness of the linguistic terms *ameliorating* and *perjorating*³⁷ as conceptual tools in her attention to language variation and change. For Jessica, language change came up in class discussions of a novel and the narrator's word choice. In her description of this discussion, Jessica asked herself if the author actually used the "n-word," which she couldn't remember, but that the word choice made it clear that they were looking at a book from decades in the past. This led to conversations about how language has changed and also can be picked up by certain groups and "taken back" in terms of meaning.

Another instance of this engagement with LIP was early on in student teaching as Jessica was first establishing relationships with students. In *Field Sketch 1: Sharing*

³⁷ These terms refer to ways of talking about semantic change: According to *How English Works*, the text used in one of Jessica's courses, amelioration refers to the "semantic process by which a word means something 'better' than it had at an earlier stage of its history" and pejoration refers to the "semantic process in which a term of neutral significance takes on negative meaning" (Curzan & Adams, 2006, pp. 510, 526).

Language below, this instance is re-constructed.

Field Sketch 1: Sharing Language (Jessica, Week 3)

It's the third week of student teaching and Jessica is still trying to figure out her role within her popular cooperating teacher's classroom. She feels like her moves to show authority are perceived as too extreme and yet she feels like if she shows interest in her seniors it is interpreted as trying to be friends with them. Her students look like they could be students at the University, but she's noticing a big disparity in how they look and act, finding the right tone hard to gauge. This week she's been a bit stressed out because she feels she can't suck at student teaching—even though she knows rationally that she will make mistakes, she wants to make sure she responds the right way to those mistakes. She's trying to find the right teacher lingo and has been trying to find ways to get students into One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, which they will be reading soon. The main character is described as having a "swagger."

While students are blogging, Jessica hears two of the African American young women talking about "swag game."

"Miss Brown, you know what swag game is," they laugh.

Jessica responds, "Yeah, well, I'm not sure what swag game is, but I know swagger." Jessica thinks to herself, "This is how I'm going to get you guys into the story, because in this book we're going to be reading the main character has swagger." Jessica senses that this was an appropriate time for her to show she is relaxed enough that they could just talk about something that wasn't only about school. So they talk about where the terms come from, which was interesting, laughing while they are talking. They talk about how the students define swag game and how the word swagger had sort of resurfaced, changed, and was being used a lot now. As she relates the story to Melinda, Jessica describes how she realized that she could have just said, "No, I don't know what that is" and walked away, but the interaction led her to feel like they [Jessica and her students] can talk about things... she could teach them something; they could teach her something.

It's funny, Jessica realizes and shares with Melinda later, but this conversation showed her that the students perceive a difference between them—that she "may not be part of their little language world." It seems like this difference may have been more cultural than age-related, which is what she's been focused on so far this semester.

Field Sketch 1: Sharing Language describes a "story" Jessica chose to tell about how she connected to students by learning from them about language use in an on-the-side interchange. This interaction was one in which Jessica felt she connected positively with students. As she recalled the classroom interaction in the weekly debriefing, Jessica positioned herself as a learner and receptive to her students. This interaction required a stance that she had something to learn from students about language, positioning them as

knowledgeable and as participants in a learning exchange. Jessica also was able to use her understandings of how language works to add to the conversation and make connections with literary texts.

In addition, this field sketch includes Jessica's realizations about how her students might perceive her as "other" and test her reaction to their positioning of her as not in the know. The Field sketch recounts Jessica's choice to take up their comment to her as an opportunity to connect around language knowledge or reject the opening as irrelevant or a distancing move. Her attention to whether or not this was the "appropriate" time to have this exchange points to Jessica's ongoing stake in gaining teacher authority and managing control (which she imagined her cooperating teacher already possessed) while also developing relationships and hooking students into her curricular agenda. Her linguistic knowledge was partly what enabled Jessica to make the connections between the student conversation and her future planning to teach a novel; this knowledge reframed what counted as "appropriate" conversation for Jessica.

Another key factor may be that earlier in the week, Jessica facilitated a discussion about "teenage vernacular" related to an essay the students read (see Chapter 6 for further discussion). By sanctioning discussion of language variation, Jessica may have opened up the conversation between herself and the two young women, whether this variation was linked to culture or age (or both).³⁸ While referring to their language world as "little," she may have positioned their language knowledge as separate or marginal, yet Jessica's overall excitement and demeanor while talking about this interchange also communicated her appreciation of her students' language knowledge and the opportunity to share her own.

C. Engaging with LIP: Concepts of language equity

Jessica and Lindsey's cases provide a glimpse into ways in which teachers might engage with understandings of language variation and appreciation to reject deficit positions of students as less knowledgeable or incompetent language users. Their stake in being "appropriate" as new teachers is assuaged by their knowledge that students bring pertinent linguistic knowledge to the classroom and that this knowledge has potential

³⁸ Jessica later described how she wanted to build in further course discussion about race and language based on this interaction, which further signaled how she perceived this interaction as racialized.

connections to writing or literature instruction. Jessica's ability to recognize the affordances of paying attention to students' language use and knowledge may have helped her establish a less antagonistic relationship with her students. The frame of seeing language variety and change as inevitable and not linked to deficiency enabled Lindsey to avoid casting student language as threat or sign of mental deficiency. Instead of taking for granted the demands of expected registers, Lindsey realized how the specificity of her instructions might influence the writing students turned in; this realization enabled her to not make assumptions about giving instructions for this type of school-based writing. Other participants experienced similar affordances as well. For instance, Aileen used her unit format to verify that "dialogue" was important to identity and culture in *Elijah Buxton* and *Code Talkers*, which opened up a much richer conversation about the texts.

I concede that I am not the first to argue that the ability to enact language appreciation principles offers affordances for teachers, particularly English teachers (Godley et al., 2007; Smitherman & Villanueva, 2003; Sweetland, 2006). What these cases provide, however, are illustrations of the interactional domains in which Lindsey and Jessica were able to engage with these understandings to reject deficit approaches and how they interpreted situations for enacting those understandings (and success of that enactment) through their experiential filters and engagement with particular language concepts (i.e. code-switching, style-shifting, and language change). Chapters 5 and 6 will further complicate this picture by showing the complex ways that deficit language ideologies surface as participants grapple with unexpected teaching situations and multiple, dilemmatic ways of thinking about language in ELA.³⁹

II. Talk in Classroom Interactions

Language from discourse analysis emerged in weekly debriefings and provided a language for participants to grapple with their approaches to classroom interactions.⁴⁰

³⁹ For instance, Jessica's lesson about a specific vernacular feature focused on the use of "like," a form that has been linked to whiteness; Jessica counts herself an insider in these linguistic and racial categories (i.e. white, "like" user).

⁴⁰ At some point, all participants described classroom situations and their approaches using explicit discourse analytic terms from coursework. In weekly debriefings, descriptions of how specific language

This section looks at the ways participants used these concepts to reject deficit ideologies. By positioning students in a less adversarial and deficit way through their talk and class activities, participants also positioned themselves as certain kinds of teachers (equitable, student-centered, or appreciative).

The need for prospective and experienced teachers to understand and engage with discourse analytic concepts has been argued by multiple scholars in a variety of studies. For example, scholars have described the usefulness of cross-racial discourse in high school English (Ford, 2010); discourse as a tool in professional development (Rex & Schiller, 2009; Thomas, 2010); and politeness moves as related to authority (Pace, 2003). My findings focus on prospective teachers who learned these concepts in coursework and the implications for their practice as new teachers.

It is not surprising that participants would engage with these concepts: Engagement with discourse analysis concepts can be tracked to participants' experience during teacher education in which they learned how to use discourse analysis to analyze teaching situations. Over two semesters, participants had class sessions which focused on readings from *Using Discourse Analysis in Classroom Interactions* (Rex & Schiller, 2009), and they analyzed classroom video using the concepts. Common language that emerged in their weekly conversations, methods course wiki, teaching philosophies, and other course discussions included "saving face," "freeze frame," "alignment," "frame clashing," "genuine questions," "face threat," "circulation of power," and "positioning." While some terms discussed in coursework, such as "repair" as connected to face threat, were not used explicitly during the weekly debriefings, implicit references to these concepts surfaced. For instance, a less explicit way that positioning emerged was Lindsey's adoption of a "safe talk" approach to talking to students, particularly one who might be a suicide risk.

This section focuses on saving face and positioning as affirmative discourse moves, or concepts that enabled participants to resist deficit ideologies. The first illustration explores Lindsey's case, which provides a description of her engagement with the concept of *face saving* as a frame for her teacher talk and actions. The second

between teachers and students constructed ineffective and effective classroom interactions also revealed implicit understandings of the ways discourse could be analyzed to shed light on an interaction.

illustration considers the concept of *positioning* and William's case, which highlights the role of discourse analytic principles in moving beyond deficit perspectives of students. Additionally, *Field Sketch 3: Expert* describes how the structure of a peer editing activity can provide positions for students beyond those of *less knowledgeable* and *more knowledgeable student writers* by putting each student simultaneously in the positions of *expert and apprentice writers*.

These illustrations offer implications for equitable ELA instructions, as the concepts of *face saving* and *positioning* are inter-linked in relation to the participants' *status*, or their standing as part of the social groups in their classrooms and schools, including their relationship to students and to more experienced English teachers. Participants had awareness of how their language moves could reinforce unequal status for students; in the two illustrations that follow, Lindsey and William took on a higher status in their new position as teachers, and yet they still made efforts to face save for their students with less status. Additionally, these illustrations show how participants, as "student" teachers, used their stories to position themselves and describe how they were positioned by students or other teachers. The illustrations show how the positions both intersected and diverged from traditional norms, such as story-lines of teachers as *adversarial* (in a fight with students for control) or *all-knowing*.

A. Lindsey's case: "Face saving is huge"

The concept of *face saving* is salient to the ongoing struggles and fears that student teachers often have with what they call "classroom management," conflicts with students, or threats to their authority. All participants grappled with establishing appropriate and effective "authority" with students at their field sites, especially during weeks 2-5. This pattern repeated when I worked as a field instructor for student teachers and reveals the complicated dance in which student teachers must participate to establish themselves as a teacher while apprenticing with a particular cooperating teacher in a particular school. "Classroom management" is often an area in which student teachers claim to feel underprepared. In participants' methods course, conversations in this area were framed by a focus on having effective classroom interactions rather than managing students.

This site of concern underscores new teachers' developing sense of themselves as the "teacher" and fear that a classroom interaction may undermine this position or lead to loss of control. For instance, Jessica was still debating how to establish herself as an authority at the end of student teaching and wondering about the role of "tough love" in teaching as she read the popular book *Teaching with Love and Logic: Taking Control of the Classroom* (Fay & Funk, 1995). This book emphasizes the concept of "shared control" and provides principles to help teachers to demonstrate unconditional and respectful acceptance of students in order to gain control. This popular text and conversations in schools further underscore the priority for teachers, especially new teachers, to maintain "control" of their classes.

In relation to power in the classroom, "saving face"⁴¹ was used explicitly in weekly debriefings by some participants as they told stories of challenging classroom interactions and power dynamics in those interactions. For instance, Jessica reported asking herself during the fifth week of student teaching: "how do I save face?" in her interaction with Ben, a conservative Caucasian student who had been challenging many of her teaching moves during the first weeks of student teaching (see Chapter 6, FS12).⁴² Similarly, the following illustration from Lindsey's case will explore how saving face was used explicitly.

Excerpt 2: Not Blaming will show how Lindsey's engagement with *face saving* has important consequences for thinking about face saving as a concept available to prospective teachers as they take on the position of teacher. While Lindsey described some difficulty in practice with avoiding face threatening moves as a teacher, she linked this practice to affirming student writing and applied this frame to her teaching in multiple moments, taking on the position of teacher as "ally."

⁴¹ Our course text defined saving face as "protecting someone's view of himself or herself so they are not embarrassed or diminished in any way" (Rex & Schiller, 2009, p. 45). Use of the concept is partly notable because it had been eight months since the term had been used in coursework and specific course concepts rarely surfaced explicitly. Of course, saving face is a phrase also used in everyday discourse, which may have influenced the student teachers' take up of this concept as an easily accessible concept to use in analysis of classroom interactions.

⁴² While the coursework materials included ways to help students save face, Jessica's case showed how she was more concerned with her own face or authority in the classroom in response to a belligerent student. The face work Jessica struggled with stemmed from her fear of not being recognized as the teacher. At other points, Jessica did take on the status of being "the teacher" (i.e. the person who starts and ends conversations), yet she also described her desire to negotiate this status to help students save face.

In the excerpt, Lindsey’s ability to label her cooperating teacher’s specific moves as “saving face,” grounded her understanding of what works in available teacher/student power dynamics. Early on in student teaching, Lindsey paid close attention to the teacher talk of her cooperating teacher and applied discourse analytic terms to what she observed at times. She reported that her cooperating teacher was careful about sensitive discussions, choosing when, how, and why to talk to students based on her ongoing relationship with them. For instance, the cooperating teacher was “being very careful about saving face” with a student with notably bad hygiene by acting as if she was talking about a different class, remaining “low key,” or taking the student aside. (As a teacher and field instructor, I know this is one of the specific types of difficult conversations that new teachers are often deeply concerned with how to address: How do I deal with the “stinky kid” in my class?) This excerpt is from our Week Four debriefing in which Lindsey described the moves her cooperating teacher used to help students respond positively to hygiene-related discussions. (I have bolded phrases in this excerpt to highlight Lindsey’s description of her cooperating teacher’s teaching moves.)

Excerpt 2: Not Blaming (Lindsey, Week 4)

1 She’ll **be very straightforward** with them: “I’ve noticed that you
 2 haven’t been wearing cleaner clothes or I’ve noticed that your hair
 3 is dirty and you’re not taking care of yourself. And I really want to
 4 encourage you to take care of yourself. And are you getting three
 5 meals a day?”

6 And just **being very straight** with them, **making sure** that they’re
 7 **being taken care of** and **not blaming** them and **not saying** that
 8 it’s **not putting any value judgment** on it and **not saying** they
 9 look gross but **just saying**, “You look a little down lately, and this
 10 is what I’m noticing. You’re not as alive as you used to be” or
 11 things like that and they’ll notice. I noticed this last year, too.
 12 They’ll notice and they’ll change. They’ll pick themselves up a
 13 little bit and maybe it’s just the support that they needed, maybe
 14 it’s just that noticing that they needed. But they don’t come out of
 15 those meetings looking embarrassed or downtrodden or anything,
 16 but they’re almost more empowered.

17 And she’ll **check up** on them, and she’ll **say a little later** or in a
 18 while, “You’re looking so great lately,” and she doesn’t mean like
 19 they’re more beautiful or anything. She just means you’re looking

20 healthier and alive. “Just so you know I’m proud of you for the
 21 steps you’ve taken,” things like that. And so **she’s very aware**
 22 that she’s **not going to be able to teach** them English when
 23 they’re not even getting three meals of food a day or if they’re not
 24 eating healthy and running and taking care of themselves so. It’s
 25 ***good for me to see*** that, too.

In this description, Lindsey described her cooperating teacher as an empowering force for students. Lindsey placed the cooperating teacher in this empowering position based primarily on what the cooperating teacher did and did not say (parts in bold). The moves Lindsey described include straightforward questions, one-on-one conversations, affirmative language (not blaming), and positive follow-up comments. The reason why the cooperating teacher did these actions, according to Lindsey, was due to her awareness that these are necessary steps to take before she is able to teach her subject matter.

Ultimately, these moves described by Lindsey build a story-line about effective English teachers: they are straightforward yet careful to help students save face. At the end of this description, Lindsey included herself in relation to this story-line: this awareness is “good” for Lindsey to “see” (line 25, bold italics). Lindsey’s words prioritized this kind of careful interaction with students—and position of the teacher as an empowering force who decides what to say or not say—as important to being a successful English teacher. Furthermore, Lindsey positioned herself as aware of this as a face saving move through her categorization of this classroom interaction as an example of the ways a teacher can be careful about saving face.

Beyond engagement with this concept as an observer of another teacher, Lindsey engaged with this affirming, face-saving approach in other interactions throughout the semester, such as giving an emotionally disturbed student a creative outlet and drawing on that student’s past strengths. She described giving the student the benefit of the doubt rather than assuming the student wanted to sabotage her teaching efforts. As another case in point, *Field Sketch 2: Face Saving Is Huge* below provides a way of seeing how Lindsey positioned herself in the middle of student teaching. This field sketch extends *Excerpt 2* by describing the ways Lindsey related *face saving* to her own teaching moves. Although the focal week is Week 6, time is layered onto the sketch to clarify where excerpts fit in relation to each other. This also highlights how, over time,

Lindsey moved from a focus on what her cooperating teacher would do in a situation, to an inclusion of herself (we), to a focus on herself (I), and, lastly, to a focus on students in relation to herself.

Field Sketch 2: Lindsey (Week 6)

Before this week:

Since the first week of student teaching, Lindsey has been trying to figure out what it means to be the “teacher” when students are talking to her—she’s realized that the authority dynamic has changed between her and the students, even since last semester when she was a Practicum student. After an incident (Week 5) with students using cell phones when the cooperating teacher was out of the class, Lindsey has had to talk to the class about cell phone use. As she planned her response, Lindsey described how she sees each new classroom interaction as an experiment and a learning experience: she thought through several different ways to address the class. She talked to her cooperating teacher about ideas of how to respond and they talked through multiple “drafts” of what she could say. She also asked Melinda as her methods instructor during the weekly debriefing. In these conversations, she weighed which strategies would establish her best as a teacher. She ended up speaking in a firm voice about how respect between teachers and students is what makes their community work and dropping her roommate’s old cell phone to show what would happen to phones found in class. She told Melinda that this strategy worked: students have been respectful but not out of fear.

This week:

This week Lindsey has been busy responding to freshman emails about their latest paper and helping students at lunch time. The papers will be graded on rubrics on which students also grade themselves, and Lindsey is following her cooperating teacher’s lead on being flexible about deadlines to a point. For students with late work, she is learning to talk to the student about “what’s going on” rather than acting personally offended.

Using her cooperating teacher’s overall sequence of modeling, guided practice, independent practice, and feedback, Lindsey has been teaching analysis to her students and trying to give it relevance, relating it to other arenas and students’ lives. This means that she has been making sure she is thinking about her students’ ages and reactions to the material.

Thursday:

On Thursday she talks to Melinda about how she has learned from her cooperating teacher that one way to encourage students in their writing is to “praise them up one side and down the other.” This approach contrasts with what Lindsey is used to doing with her college friends who just want her to edit their papers for what’s wrong. Instead, she’s noticed that her cooperating teacher gives flat out encouragement. This has helped her realize how emotionally attached her students are to their work. There are so many emotional things going on with students’ development and where they are in life that she can’t just brush by. This was tough for her at first, but she feels like she’s getting better at it.

22 to being proved wrong. I mean I can't know exactly what went on
23 in their head.

Future Weeks:

As the weeks move by, Lindsey feels like she is learning so much. She tells Melinda that she is learning more about how to interact socially with the students as a teacher than she is sometimes about how to teach them English. Lindsey notes how she is focusing more on the range of students rather than herself as the teacher. She is more flexible with planning and responding to her instincts. For instance, when she deals with a student who is needling other students, she can look at the situation, not take things personally, step back, and try to be the “teacher of 33 students instead of just an English teacher.” Instead of focusing on new teaching techniques she is focusing less on herself and more on what’s “really going to work for this particular group of students.”

Looking back:

At the end of the semester, Lindsey looks back and tells Melinda how she has matured as a teacher and in confidence. She realizes that in the beginning she was only thinking about what she was going to teach—it was more about her than about her students when she was just starting out. Now, she can think about things in more complex ways, such as how she’s going to reach all of the students and engage them 100 percent. She feels a lot better, even though she knows she has a long way to go—but she feels more confident about looking at the full classroom. Now she asks herself questions:

24 How does the Asperger’s student think about the lesson or the
25 interactions in the room? How is my ESL student able to keep up
26 with the intense reading that I’m giving them during the class
27 period? Am I accommodating everybody? Is this activity really
28 appropriate for everybody, or is someone really going to lose face
29 over this because they have these exceptionalities?

Field Sketch 2 provides a view into why face saving felt difficult for Lindsey as she described her Week 6 interactions: she had to balance a sense of appropriate teacher authority along with moves to validate students’ contributions during the literary analysis discussion. This illustrates how engaging with discourse analytic concepts in order to establish a classroom in which power is circulating may be far from easy, yet the stakes may be high.⁴³ Part of what Lindsey analyzed while telling the Week 6 story was *how* she structured her responses in order to validate students and use it as a “teaching moment” (line 2).

⁴³ During week nine, Lindsey learns about suicide talk, or ways to use safe talk, in a professional development session, and this involved learning ways to talk to troubled students that were not her intuitive responses. Later, she uses phrases from the training to help her determine whether or not a student needs psychological help.

Over the weeks of student teaching, Lindsey’s case included multiple story-lines about what it means to be a teacher or student; these emerged partly due to how Lindsey told her “stories” about those weeks to me in the weekly debriefings (Figure 4.2). These story-lines intersected with positions that enabled *face saving* in Lindsey’s descriptions of her classroom interactions. The story-lines promoted shared, mutually constructed learning interactions instead of adversarial, authoritative approaches.

Figure 4.2. Story-lines About Teachers and Students

Teachers	Students
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers are experimenters to see what works for students • Teachers can be proven wrong to further learning • Teachers should be allies to their students • Teachers need to be aware of all students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students need relevance to learn material • Students respond well to validation of their intelligence • Students, even when acting out, may be offering generative feedback to improve teaching • Students benefit from not losing face in activities

In the “Before this week” section, Lindsey’s description positioned her as an experimenter in her planning of a response to the cell phone infractions. This position enabled Lindsey to test how students responded to her actions and cast being wrong in her teaching choices as a learning experience. What is at stake for Lindsey is being seen as a powerful, agentive scientist versus a failed practitioner. This position also enabled Lindsey to collect feedback from other experienced teachers and decide which approach would best protect her power and status as a novice teacher in relation to her students.

In the “This week” section, Lindsey’s actions positioned her as open to students’ perspectives and open to her cooperating teacher’s feedback and strategies, such as praising writing and not cutting students off. This positioned her as an *open learner*, an extension of the experimenter: her goal was to find out more what works for students, such as their ages, reactions, developmental levels, and emotional states. She also described how she responded to how students react to her with fear. Taking on this position may reflect Lindsey’s desire to align with her students and with her cooperating teacher. On one hand, she remembered her own student experiences and emotions in

order to gain understanding of her students' reactions; on the other, she labeled this as her 16-year-old self.

This openness relates to the way Lindsey positioned herself as a teacher during her description of the literary discussion. She described how the interaction "went well," which she attributed to her validation of students and her openness to being wrong. In this description, Lindsey aligned herself with a student-centered position that values student contributions. By saying to students, "I'm open to being wrong," she set herself up in contrast to the all-knowing teacher who does not recognize students' face or status within the discussion. She included a shared invitation to co-construct the literary knowledge ("okay, let's try that"). This action positioned students as analyzers and included the expectation of teacher and students working together. Metaphors about herself as a teacher also changed from teacher as fighter who "battles" in the classroom, to that of making alliances with students (although this metaphor still implies a war is being waged). For instance, towards the end of student teaching, Lindsey also described a young man who questioned her rubric as a generative way to attune her to what/how she should be teaching the class and ways to help a specific student learn to treat teachers as allies.

In later weeks, Lindsey positioned herself as the "teacher of 33 students," prioritizing students over English subject matter or even herself as teacher. This interactional position enabled her to see interconnections among whom she is teaching, the subject matter, and her teaching moves. From this position of the *student-centered teacher*, teaching is about the students, not the subject. Looking back, Lindsey identified ways that she had matured, saying that her practice is now more about students. She described her current ways of planning for a range of students, asking herself whether the structure of an activity contributes to a student losing face. This move connected her discourse analytic training to this student-focused position. Her questions at the end of student teaching were based on her reflection on particular interactions and how this might inform future interactions. Her questions implied that if an activity is appropriate, then a student will not lose face, or the activity may validate students on some level rather than diminishing them. This approach appears grounded in the understanding that the teacher needs knowledge of students in order to determine the appropriate nature of

an activity. Beyond using *face saving* as a concept applicable to moment-by-moment interactions, Lindsey engaged with the concept in relation to her teaching choices, such as a consideration of this concept in her overall activity structure and approach to instruction.

The trajectory of Lindsey's descriptions of her practice (and underlying philosophy) illuminates how she positioned herself as a teacher who recognizes the need for implementing ways to let students save face. Engagement with this concept might be part of what enabled her to take up a non-adversarial teaching approach toward teaching despite her fears of not being seen as a teacher and occasional teaching moves, such as cell phone crushing, that could be interpreted as antagonistic. In sum, Lindsey took on *face saving* as a concept that grounded her goals for equitable teaching. She used this concept to describe teaching moves she might use to keep students from losing positive ways to engage with curricular goals. Furthermore, Lindsey positioned herself as an experimenter in terms of talk and action when it came to how to enact this concept and meet her goals for equitable instruction. Actions related to this position included how to assess student knowledge in order to protect students' views of themselves as active, validated contributors to the shared ELA learning. This illustration underscores the ways engagement with a discourse analytic concept supported a participant's ability to sidestep dilemmas and actively work against a deficit approach to working with students by re-centering the focus on equitable, affirming teaching moves rather than prioritizing teacher or curricular authority.

B. William's case: Positioning students with appreciation

As described in the last illustration with *face saving*, teachers' use of language positions their students and also positions them as teachers; students' use of language in turn positions teachers, themselves, and others. While a number of interactional discourse analysts already have explored how *positioning* is related to language in teaching interactions in these ways, this illustration expands past work by describing the specific ways this concept clarifies what might be at stake in having preservice teachers understand and enact this concept in order to reject deficit ideologies about students.

The concept of positioning was introduced to participants during their first semester of teacher education in a manuscript of *Using Discourse Analysis to Improve Classroom*, which offered this definition: “Positioning: Through conversation, people situate themselves and others with particular rights and obligations. Speakers take up or resist positions others create for them” (Rex & Schiller, 2007, p. 6). In conjunction with positioning, course readings and discussions looked at how positioning requires alignment between teachers and students (rather than an adversarial relationship between teachers and students). Examples of how to frame or reframe difficult conversations pointed to how *positioning* relates not only to attention to language, or classroom talk, but also to time (when the language is being attended to) and to other communicative practices that constitute the ways people interact, such as looks, gestures, thoughts, and writing. As part of the course wiki during methods, participants defined positioning as a group by asking the following questions: “Where you position yourself with your students- who has the power? How much authority do you have as the teacher? What do you choose to control?” and referring to their common text: “If educators and students are to flourish as learners, they need to be aware of how they are positioning themselves and others” (Rex & Schiller, 2007, p. 48).

Since this illustration focuses on William, it is important to see how he used positioning in particular. Figure 4.3 below shows how he and Lindsey selected the concept of “positioning” as a key concept from the methods course reading and discussion related to *Using Discourse Analysis* on their mid-term concept grid developed during a pair activity.

Figure 4.3. William and Lindsey’s Mid-Term Concept Grid Excerpt

Concept (s)	Defined as... Or Explanation...	Useful how?
Positioning; working with students who don’t care; engaging diff. types of students	Who’s in power? Who’s doing more work? Where can I give students more choices/ freedom? How can I engage them	Gave concrete example to think of concerning students who don’t care and teacher positioning- →because she [Lesley Rex] was open to their personalities/ desires, she was able to teach them about persuasion. She also directly aimed the lesson at a skill they would want.

These examples show how the language component of positioning was less explicit in William's and other students' definitions of *positioning* on the course wiki and their concept grids, yet the concept in the class text and discussions was consistently tied to when, why, and how teachers used language in interactions, such as how to freeze-frame examples from teaching to see how teacher language and other moves position students and teachers during classroom interactions.

Due to this focus, it is perhaps unsurprising that during student teaching, positioning was brought up in several ways. It was referred to explicitly in Lindsey and Jessica's weekly debriefings; Aileen also used *position*, but in a more generic, everyday use that might also be rooted in her other understandings. William used the concept explicitly in his preliminary plan for his student teaching unit plan and planned ways to put a focal student in a position where he had opportunities to be successful and voice his opinion. The following illustration focuses on the concept of *positioning* in relation to William's stories told in the weekly debriefings. These stories further evoked a number of interactional constructs that he didn't always name explicitly but which were embedded in his teaching and were related to *positioning*. These concepts included *alignment* between teacher and student, *freeze frame*, *stake*, *status*, and *circulation of power*.⁴⁴

While some participants provided specific referencing to *positioning* in weekly debriefings, William used it without naming it. In the weekly debriefings, he was consistently concerned with how he was showing students that he was open to them, similar to Lindsey's concerns. As Figure 4.3 and his unit plan attested, this did not mean that William did not understand or use the concept explicitly. In course materials before student teaching and his unit plan during student teaching, William linked *positioning* to valuing student interests and reading choices, and possibly into an overall point of view of giving students the benefit of the doubt or encouraging their empowerment or voice. This is consistent with William's early teaching philosophy, in which he wrote: "I strive to create an environment where every individual can find their individual voice." In his

⁴⁴ There were some differences in the concepts defined in *Using Discourse Analysis* and methods class interpretation of these concepts. According to the second semester wiki created by students: "*Alignment* refers to 'getting on the same page as the student,' which includes asking the student questions about how they saw something or showing that you care. *Freeze frame* was used as a way to create alignment by analyzing a time when you don't know what you need to do or say: 'where why and how did I position the student in this interaction.'" The book focuses on using *freeze frame* to analyze a specific classroom conversation. *Circulation of power* was referred to on the wiki as "participatory teaching."

second semester coursework for methods, William highlighted Jeffrey Wilhelm's strategies as those that "position students" positively. This was just one demonstration of William's knowledge of how activity structure can contribute to affirmation of student learning through a circulation of power.

Across the weekly debriefings, William often described and analyzed classroom interactions and the affordances of the ways he talked to students. In *Field Sketch 3: Expert* and *Excerpts 3.1-3*, positioning offers a more robust way of looking at William's interactions with "Radiohead Student," a student (nicknamed by William for anonymity in weekly debriefings) who had been written off by his other teachers as a class clown. For instance, *Field Sketch 3* illustrates how William's talk about writing built on students' expertise. This approach enabled him to create an effective peer editing activity, noted by his skeptical cooperating teacher and field instructor. This was part of his overall positioning of students as writers; William aligned himself with students instead of with his cooperating teacher, and he positioned students in alignment with each other. *Field Sketch 3* and other excerpts exemplify how William expressed a philosophy of acknowledging students' strengths, interests, and prior skills to help him maintain a "pick your battles" position of affirmation with students versus a deficit position that cast them in an adversarial relationship. This also helped him incorporate a marginalized student, Radiohead Student, who was notorious with the other teachers as being an antagonist.

Field Sketch 3: Expert (William, Week 7)

Before this week:

Although William already had selected focal students for his unit plan, many of his conversations with Melinda have been focusing on "Radiohead Student," who he had not identified as a focal student. This student has had a history of being disconnected and disengaged from school activities. Yet, early on, William made a connection with him over a common music interest, when other students saw a Radiohead sticker on William's laptop and told him that this student also liked the band. Initially, William had not thought he had anything in common with this student, but now he sees the music connection as helping Radiohead Student (RS) respond to William when he looks at RS to redirect him from walking around the classroom. RS is smart and a bit bored, William has decided, an assessment that is affirmed when RS complains about math class going too slowly.

By Week 6 of student teaching, William is satisfied that RS is learning what he wants him to learn. He attributes this success with the way William does not focus on the "small things" with RS. So, RS hasn't been poking other

students or trying to get other kids to laugh while he is teaching. When William asks RS to verify if he likes the lessons, RS responds to say that William is one of the best teachers he's had.

This week:

The next week, William plans a peer editing activity for parables students are writing to emulate The Pearl. He tells Melinda how his cooperating teacher and field instructor are skeptical about peer editing, but William's own experiences in writing groups has taught him that peer feedback can be useful. He feels it is important to spend time strategically selecting peer review pairs before class, and he makes sure each student has an area of expertise and an area of weakness to work on. William spent a lot of time with their past papers giving each student a list of their strengths and weaknesses, and he's been tracking this in a chart.

He tells students to focus on what he wrote on their previous papers and encourages them to teach their partner how to do that. He emphasizes, "You are the expert in this area" for the peer editing. The students have to show their partner how they do what they do well, such as using good details or specific words to make the story more interesting. He tells them not to talk while they read the story the first time, based on his own experience with peers telling him too many details before he had a chance to read the paper. He has students who are struggling with run-ons and fragments read their papers out loud to their partners based on his tutoring experiences in his University Writing Center.

William structured the activity to help students who need to start having more fun while writing instead of just going through the motions. He has noticed that some students' writing doesn't have enough feeling and wouldn't be interesting to a reader. William pairs these students with really imaginative students who totally get carried away with their writing. For instance, he knows RS is a pretty interesting writer, so William pairs him with a student with dull writing.

When RS comes up to ask William a question, William underlines the part of the paper that lists RS's area of expertise: humorous writing and interesting details. As he underlines the area of expertise, William says, "You have got to go show her how to do this because you're really good at it."

RS responds, "I know." And William is happy that RS could tell that he has something to offer the other student with her writing. Every time William has given RS a genuine compliment, that had something authentic behind it, he's really responded.

William tells the story of this interaction to Melinda with a smile and describes how his initially skeptical field instructor noted how well William sold the activity by how much time he put into making the partners; students seemed to respect who they were paired with and what they had to say about the paper. William feels like his hard work paid off and that he has been able to change the minds of his cooperating teacher and field instructor about the usefulness of peer review.

Field Sketch 3: Expert describes ways that William structured a writing activity to position all students as experts. His choice to pair students as experts put students in the

simultaneous dyads of expert teacher/learner and learner/apprentice writer. This meant that students had positions of both expertise and apprenticeship available to them.

This approach also enabled William to specifically position RS as a valued writer. In the dialogue between William and RS, RS aligned with William's positive assessment of him as an expert writer by responding "I know." What William valued in telling the story was his representation of his authentic compliment and RS's response as desired. (William never actually told me whether or not RS successfully taught his skill to his peer.) Additionally, RS was valued as a critic of William's teaching performance in the way William took time to ask RS about the effectiveness of his teaching. By asking RS for feedback, William positioned RS as a valued critic or member of the class and aligned them as having a common goal of having a good lesson.

Yet, William also described how his own experiences as a writer were partly what drove his choices of activity structures, implying that he may use strategies based on his experience versus input from others. His value of writers having "fun" in writing may be what he felt was at stake in the activity. Being an effective writing teacher may also be at stake for William; William told the story in a way to show how his risk-taking and hard work paid off and were affirmed by his field instructor. While he positioned himself as a hard worker and as a risk-taker who goes against the advice of experienced teachers—who have written off collaborative approaches to peer review and RS as a student—by the end of the story, William re-aligned himself as validated by the field instructor, an experienced teacher.⁴⁵

This is not the only story William told about affirming RS. *Excerpts 3.1-3: Pick Your Battles* exemplify how in later weeks William recounted the differences in teacher talk between his cooperating teacher and himself and how this contributed to his relationship to RS over time. These excerpts further illustrate the powerful ways that positioning has implications for teachers' abilities to reject deficit models, particularly in ELA classes. These three excerpts fall under the title "Pick Your Battles" to signal the ways the three excerpts work together to demonstrate how William's choices to position RS and other students in positive ways intersected with an overall philosophy related to

⁴⁵ However, William did experience various models of peer review and read research in this area in at least three classes; this may have provided support when he chose to go against the experienced teachers' views.

the type of affirming relationship he wanted to have with students in contrast to an antagonistic approach.

Excerpt 3.1: Pick Your Battles (William, Week 8)

The week after the peer review activity, William told a “story” in the weekly debriefing about how he approached interactions with RS and how RS responded.⁴⁶

1 It didn't mean that he [RS] was hands folded and listening. He would still
2 call out. He made some — like I was writing a math problem on the
3 board, and then I got to the answer, but one student didn't understand one
4 of the subsets.
5 So with my body I blocked the answer, and I said, "Okay, forget
6 about the answer. Let's look at it a different way."
7 And he said, "There's something orange in the way." I was
8 wearing an orange sweater, and he was making fun of me.
9 I was like, “very clever” and everyone laughed a little bit, and it
10 just went back to normal.
11 My CT [cooperating teacher] probably wouldn't have said anything
12 or said, "That's not appropriate," or something, but I don't know. I don't
13 know what it is about the way that I **appreciate** him or whatever it is that
14 makes him kind of just behave a little bit better when I'm teaching.
15 Because all I know is when she's teaching, he doesn't pay attention very
16 much. She calls on him a lot just to get him to look at the work, just to
17 say, "Hey, what's the answer to No. 5?" and then he'll have to look bad
18 and fumble a little bit and then figure it out, which I don't like to do that
19 with him, or ever, really. So I don't know. I think for him, I'm a better fit
20 than she is; but for other students I'm sure there's other students that
21 maybe wish she was teaching sometimes.

In this excerpt, William again presented himself as in conflict with his cooperating teacher, the experienced teacher. As part of his appreciative approach to RS, William’s “very clever” response to RS contrasted with how he imagined his cooperating teacher would react: “that’s not appropriate” (line 12). In this way, William selected his teaching move based on whether it seemed productive to set up an antagonistic or authoritative relationship with RS, thus positioning them in relation to each other in a way that supported alignment. Using modality to temper the comparison, William described how RS behaved “ a little bit better” (line 14) when he was teaching and William may be a “better fit” (line 19) for RS but not others. Here William deployed politeness in relation

⁴⁶ See Appendix A for Transcript Conventions.

to his cooperating teacher, acknowledging that his teaching style was in more alignment with RS's learning needs but might not be as aligned with the needs of other students.

Around the time of this excerpt, students in William's class asked him who he was most like as a student, and—much to their surprise—William identified RS as most like him. William told me that he was thinking that the similarity was that they were both kind of disruptive and bored. This empathy for RS was not as apparent in William's early descriptions of RS and was an overt move to align himself with RS.

In the next excerpt from several weeks later, William more explicitly named his “pick my battles” approach to interactions with RS. This ongoing strategy further contrasted with his cooperating teacher's adversarial and deficit positioning of RS. William's strategy related to his ongoing appreciation of what RS had to offer to the class.⁴⁷ By week 11, RS seemed to be responding consistently to William's approach.

Excerpt 3.2: Pick Your Battles (William, Week 11)

1 I just pick my battles a lot with him, and just this past week if I just look at
2 him and I say, “Radiohead Student, come on,” he'll stop doing whatever,
3 so that's all I have to say, and then I don't really have to – I mean I don't
4 have to scold him or anything. I'll just look at him and say, “all right,
5 okay” and he'll stop.

In his example of a picked battle, William describes:

6 If he starts disrupting other kids – if he just does it once and says
7 something, then I'll look at him and he'll know that I want him to stop,
8 and if he does it a second or third time, then I'll say something, but most
9 of the time he won't do it the second or third time, and I don't even look at
10 him sternly. I'll look at him and kind of smile at him. It's like
11 recognizing that I know he just – he's trying to be happy in the classroom
12 and be funny and enjoy himself, not that he's trying to be malicious or
13 anything or really try to affect the students around him in a negative way.

This excerpt describes how William positioned RS more positively through both verbal and nonverbal cues. By saying “come on” and using looks and smiles, William provided a position in which RS could be both funny and a learner. The verbal cues included the ways William talked about RS to others—other students, the cooperating teacher, and RS's parents. After this excerpt, William continued in the weekly debriefing to explain

⁴⁷ Pace (2003) looked at teacher authority and tracked a similar approach, “selective expression of and attention to students' transgressions, softened by face saving” as a kind of bureaucratic authority softened by exchange, arguing that professional authority is established by building up the value of schoolwork (p. 50).

In this statement, William asserted a non-adversarial approach. For him, being in a constant adversarial mode was “just too much” and limited what students take up about the writing. In this excerpt in comparison to *Excerpt 3.2*, however, William distanced himself from the “battle,” referring to the teacher/actor in second person: “you should pick your battles” (line 1-2) instead of using the first person like in *Excerpt 3.1*. This could simply be William’s conversational use of the phrase, or this construction might demonstrate that he felt less confident, or willing, to fully take on this position in relation to choices about whether or not to adopt his cooperating teacher’s prescriptive/correct everything approach to commenting on student writing.

Across William’s case in FS3 and E3.1-3, the awareness of social groups, or difference in status, may be what enabled William to move beyond an adversarial position, one that some English teacher colleagues might use as a way to deal with the “class clown” by establishing that the teacher has hard and fast rules that must be followed in every situation. In his strategy of picking battles, William rejected this position at times. Even while using the battle metaphor—he acknowledged RS, but did not explicitly pinpoint their difference in status in whole class interactions. William chose other less confrontational ways to say no to RS, such as in one-on-one moments in the hallway or during class. In whole class interactions, William built social alignment with RS that respected RS’s individual stake and enabled him to save face—RS wanted to be seen as funny. William did not claim all authority for himself or see his position as teacher as threatened by acknowledging RS’s stake and performing face saving moves. He also positioned RS to question former teacher reactions to him and see himself as like the teacher instead of in opposition to the teacher.

This illustration highlights the role of discourse analytic principles in moving beyond a deficit perspective of a student and the importance of language in William’s student/teacher connections. The concept of *positioning* provides a lens for understanding how these connections are interrelated with the kinds of language deployed in relation to both particular students and to ELA writing instruction—how, when, and by whom language is used. William’s awareness of the way he talked to RS grounded the ways he positioned RS to act in certain ways in the classroom interaction. This awareness of himself as a teacher in relation to students meant acknowledging ways

of positioning students while also moving beyond an insular focus on himself as the location of teaching and seeing students as obstacles. Instead, finding ways to connect, validate, and affirm students enabled William's engagement of a student who might otherwise be seen as disruptive.

Furthermore, William's language positioned him in relation to his cooperating teacher, and he seemed to use strategic sensibilities with where to make changes in his approach. This demonstrated a certain amount of confidence and commitment that enabled William to take a different path than his cooperating teacher, at least in the case of peer editing and RS. Story-lines and positions about who RS was as a student emerged in this account and were constructed by experienced teachers' discourse: as an inappropriate contributor, as unprepared to learn, as an antagonist to others (by cooperating teacher/other teachers); as an imaginative writer, as a clever commentator, as an appreciated member of the class, as like the teacher (by William). This illustrates the ways words can position a student as a learner, as clever, or as an expert, and just as easily as a student who is an obstacle to learning. Nonverbal cues like smiling and nodding were also part of how William communicated these available positions to RS. Where and when these cues take place also have power, such as the ways William represented RS with his peers and in parent/teacher conferences.

Teacher empathy also may have been at play in this classroom interaction: Did William need to see himself in RS to know how to respond? The original connection of music must be noticed. How might this teacher/student interaction have evolved if RS had been a student with whom William felt unable to establish connection? This reveals a potential story-line that might be powerful in analysis of classroom interactions: Students as like or unlike their teachers. In this case, age or sense of humor seemed to block the cooperating teacher's ability to validate RS, whereas common music and humor seemed to link William and RS.

Additionally, there is racial, gender, and linguistic alignment between William and RS. If this alignment had not been available, it is hard to know what new story-lines might have been created for RS. Communicative mismatches can prevent teachers from recognizing what their students know (Gay, 2000). For instance, deficit thinking literature has noted how if teachers have an underlying belief that students' language practices are

causing all learning difficulties, they may not analyze critically their own means for communicating or teaching. Furthermore, this illustration points to the ways available positions for a student can be linked to schoolwide story-lines about a student. If a student becomes cast as a “problem” student, then he or she may be seen in a similarly negative way. Unfortunately, this type of reified deficit view played out between RS and most of his teachers.

III. Discussion: Engaging with LIP to Move Beyond Deficit Ideologies

In discussions of “disadvantaged” students, Lisa Delpit posits that “we teach teachers rationales for failure, not visions of success” (Delpit, 2006, p. 178). Illustrations from participants’ cases in this chapter may point to one vision for success. These illustrations show how new English teachers might engage with linguistically informed principles to help them see their connections to and barriers with students as well as ways to provide affirming positions for all students to take on in the classroom.⁵⁰ This engagement might provide tools for responding to challenges or dilemmas related to English teaching. For instance, even as Jessica acknowledged that she was not part of the language world of some of her students, she sought to show them that she appreciated the knowledge they brought from this world and they began to establish a shared world that connected their understandings about language, or LIP. Specific language concepts, such as “style-shifting” and “code-switching” may enable teachers, like Lindsey, to frame their approaches to what is “appropriate” as a teacher instead of casting students’ language or behavior as “not appropriate,” like William’s cooperating teacher. In this way, engagement with LIP also provided participants with tools to analyze the affordances of different teachers’ approaches.

This chapter highlights the ways teaching moves and ability to think conceptually about language may have implications for student learning by helping teachers take on more equitable positions in classroom interactions. The social, linguistic aspect of teaching, in addition to issues of power and authority, mean that thinking about interactions using an affirming stance is not always an easy or straightforward task for

⁵⁰ This confirms scholarship in literacy that looks at the ways discourse brings worlds “into being” (Bloome, 2008) and interrelates with equitable learning (Rex et al., 2010).

prospective teachers. As William's case signals, there may be obstacles for implementation of a non-deficit view when intersections of race, class, language, and new teacher uncertainty (or experienced teacher resistance) come into play. Experiences are potentially sensitizing for new teachers but also potentially limiting. In this way, the illustrations in this chapter also extend the understandings of how preservice teachers may negotiate tacit, experiential, and conceptual understandings. These illustrations might shed light on how to make more durable or accessible any equitable understandings provided by teacher education.⁵¹ Furthermore, the illustrations point to how specific language concepts may provide ways for understanding equitable, non-adversarial teaching moves and grounding new teachers' abilities to engage with those concepts in new situations.

Overall, this chapter provides illustrations of specific language concepts that grounded how participants moved beyond and resisted deficit ideologies. While other scholars have claimed that rejection of a deficit position is what successful teachers do, the usefulness of this chapter is to show the complex ways this might look for preservice English teachers at the intersections of ELA content and classroom interactions. However, I do not argue that these illustrations represent participants' teaching moves or approaches at all times. These illustrations also provide examples of potential dilemmas faced by these participants at the intersections of instruction and perceptions related to language use, writing, literature, and particular student and teacher positions. They show the anxieties new teachers might face around not knowing, particularly in the face of cultural expectations that as English teachers they may need to maintain a gatekeeping role by asserting cultural, linguistic, and age-related authority. In Chapter 5, I will further address the struggles and unanticipated sites that complicated participants' rejection of deficit ideologies and other power dynamics between teachers and students.

⁵¹ For instance, the frame of articulation in both local and professional languages may be a useful frame for considering LIP in relation to FBL: Teachers combine the conceptual language of the teacher education program with local language as they engage in reflection and critique of their practice (Freeman, 1996a). In ELA teacher education, this might mean looking at local language in teaching practice (i.e. what is defined as "appropriate" or a "battleground"). What conceptual language might be linked to ways to help preservice teachers share worlds with students rather than battlegrounds around literary and writing instruction?

IV. Appendices

Appendix A. Transcription Conventions

These conventions apply to excerpts and line numbered parts of *Field Sketches* except when noted otherwise:

- Bold underline shows vocal emphasis (when relevant to analysis)
- Period or comma shows falling intonation
- Question mark shows rising intonation
- : drawn out speech
- [x] clarifying information

Chapter Five
Surprised by the Unexpected:
Responding to Unanticipated Moments of Language Complexity

This chapter looks at ways that participants were caught off guard or were surprised by moments involving language. These moments matter because they reveal the ways folk beliefs about language (FBL)—such as myths about language acquisition and ideologies of colorblindness, monolingualism and standard English—can function even when prospective teachers work more explicitly to combat overtly deficit language ideologies, as described in Chapter 4. These FBL served to obscure the complexity of language use for student teachers in the study and, without tools for addressing this complexity, they encountered unanticipated struggles and were limited in the ways they engaged with linguistically informed principles (LIP) in their teaching. These limitations included gaps in participants’ abilities in planning for instruction; assessing and responding to students’ writing; promoting meaningful student engagement in reading and responding to text; and incorporating computer-mediated communication into their ELA classrooms. In describing these moments, this chapter points to the ways that participants did not recognize potential language-related dilemmas at times—they had to recognize complexity of language use to even realize that these dilemmas might exist.

The majority of these unexpected moments were triggered by the study of literature and writing in unplanned for sites of classroom interaction related to curricula. First, language within literature seemed to promote discussions that weren’t part of the student teacher participants’ planned curricular approach to language or to their sense of what was meaningful in the literature. Second, when their students engaged in producing their own texts, participants were also surprised to discover the diversity of students’ language abilities—specifically their bidialectalism and their multiple varieties of English. Participants also discovered what they referred to as “ESL” (English as a Second

Language) students or English Language Learners (ELL).⁵² Participants began to discern that students had diverse language resources that were brought forward depending upon the language demands of the situation. A third category of surprise for participants involved the intersections between their students' writing for school and writing/speaking outside of school. They discovered that students' formal writing for school was influenced by online writing as well as by oral features of their out of school language.

This chapter looks more closely at these three categories of unexpected moments of language complexity. These three categories of the unexpected are deserving of their own chapter and emerged as salient as I looked at how, where, and when conflicts between LIP and FBL arose for participants. Throughout the interviews other unexpected elements of teaching, such as students' varied reading levels and the time participants spent grading papers, also appeared, but I focus on these three because they intersect with what emerged as the most salient unanticipated overarching category: The complex intersections between written and oral language within a specific classroom situation with particular student and teacher positions at work. These three areas highlight gaps in participants' abilities to "expect" (i.e. notice or assess) aspects of language use that would help them engage equitably with students. These findings also confirm research about teaching linguistically diverse students: Prospective teachers often do not have tools to anticipate and account for language in their classrooms (Scott et al., 2009, p. 8; Smitherman & Villanueva, 2003). The findings are further supported by my pilot study that showed how preservice teachers encountered unexpected teaching situations related to language (McBee Orzulak, 2008). By providing the landscape of these unexpected areas of language complexity, this chapter illustrates the intersections of language in ELA. It also describes the potential language-related dilemmas that can emerge if these intersections of language are not understood or anticipated.

From these three categories, this chapter's illustrations describe how participants engaged with linguistically informed principles in relation to FBL related to oral and written language. First, I use the frame of colorblindness and connected

⁵² My goal in this chapter is to preserve participants' understandings of language diversity under which they grouped ELL, ESL, and bidialectal students; I acknowledge that their understandings of this category appeared to include overgeneralization of "ELL" or "ESL" as representing a wide range of students who come to English from another language, possibly including Generation 1.5 students as well as L1/L2-English use.

ideologies of monolingualism and standard language to outline the relationship between participants' FBL and these unexpected language moments. Then I provide illustrations from the participants' cases of the three categories of unexpected moments and how they reflect a more complex intersection between reading text, using oral language, and writing. In Figure 5.1, *Case Chart: Chapter 5 Illustrations* shows where these illustrations were located within the cases across the weeks of student teaching: 1) literature as a catalyst for language-related interactions (FS4/5, E4/5); 2) ongoing opportunities for assessing students' language use as revealing language complexity (FS6/7, E6/7); 3) encounters that revealed how online writing merges oral/written and academic/nonacademic registers (FS8/9/10). Lastly, I explore the implications of these findings, and I argue that prospective teachers would be well-served in teacher education to be exposed to a wider range of language uses and complexity of use; guided in assessing written language; and provided with models of how to act on these assessments. This exposure might include attention to heuristics for concepts of race, culture, and language that include whiteness as a category and the usefulness of planning for language-related encounters by attending to the recursive, multi-faceted nature of language assessment.

I. Colorblindness and Unexpected Language Moments

Much ink has already been spilled about the problem of teachers needing more tools to recognize and assess students' language abilities. This chapter's illustrations serve to highlight the hidden nature of students' language abilities and varieties in multiple learning scenarios: reading and responding to literature; writing formally, creatively, and digitally. These illustrations also elucidate how the unexpected nature of these moments is partly due to ideologies of invisibility, often promoted by a false sense of equity attributed to *colorblindness* (the idea that race is and/or should be unseen) and inter-related ideologies of *monolingualism* and *standard English*.

In their weekly debriefings, participants often relied on their initial perceptions of either students' spoken language *or* written language in their initial assessments of students' linguistic abilities; they assumed that their students' ability in one area

FIGURE 5.1. CASE CHART: CHAPTER 5 ILLUSTRATIONS

Key:
 • **FS:** Field Sketch
 • **E:** Excerpt

	Weeks 1-2	Week 3-4	Weeks 5-6	Weeks 7-8	Weeks 9-10	Weeks 11-12	Weeks 13-14
Aileen					FS8: Written/Oral Language Intersections		E8: "That's Racist" E9: "That's Proper"
Jessica		FS11: Dangerous Line FS1: Shared Language		FS4: "That's Not Funny"	FS12: Discussion Obstacles		FS10: Hitting Two Birds? (2-14) E10: "What Scares Me"
Lindsey		E2: Not Blaming	FS2: "Face Saving is Huge"		FS6: Appropriate E7: "Funny" Things Happen	FS9: Pictures in Their Writing	FS7: Eyes Opened E1: What Counts
William	E4: All Talk the Same? E6: Assumptions			FS3: Expert E3.1/3.3: Pick Your Battles		E3.2: Pick Your Battles	FS5: Literary Language E5: Speaking/Writing Differences

translated into the other. Before student teaching, the participants also described racial difference of students (whether or not students were white) as a default predictor for whether or not students would have access to multiple language varieties.⁵³ Although all participants identified as white and considered themselves to be “standard English” users, whiteness was not unpacked as a racial category in relation to language use, obscuring the ways that whiteness and understandings of linguistic practices might connect.⁵⁴ Yet, when faced with uncovering racial and cultural differences in their classes, some participants maintained colorblind and monolingual ideologies that masked the possibilities for seeing the complexities of language variation and use in their classrooms.

The *Field Sketches* and transcript excerpts in this chapter provide illustrations of how colorblind ideology connects to myths of monolingualism and standard English and how these interconnecting ideologies can lead to a reductive, paternalistic approach to assessing and responding to students’ language varieties. Colorblindness can obscure the complexities of the classroom through an assumption that immigration is what leads to language diversity. This assumption is an ideology of English monolingualism,⁵⁵ which oversimplifies and/or vilifies most people’s membership in multiple communities in the U.S. (Delpit, 2006). Monolingual ideologies are often underlying U.S. ideologies related to language diversity, particularly between English and other languages. This ideology casts language diversity (especially related to immigration) as alien and divisive and informs English-only policies. Ideologies of monolingualism intersect with standard language ideology as both position speakers in social hierarchies; standard ideology places varieties of English in a social hierarchy while monolingual ideologies focus on

⁵³ This is no surprise: Sleeter (2001) reviewed literature about preparing white teachers for culturally diverse schools and demonstrated that white teachers’ stereotypic attitudes about students and beliefs like colorblindness created obstacles for teacher efficacy.

⁵⁴ I critique the idea of whiteness as without color; I see this as another manifestation of colorblindness. Macedo and Bartolomé argue that “we need to understand how English masks the web of ideological manipulation that makes the white cultural group invisible and outside the realm of study” (1998, p. 354). John Baugh (2005) classified standard English as “talking white” and joins other linguists who contest arguments that standard English is simply “formal” English.

⁵⁵ Prospective teachers are just some of the many—including journalists, politicians, and other prominent public figures—who have internalized the ideology of English monolingualism (Richardson, 2003, p. 44). At an extreme, these internalized ideologies can leave parents “tongue-tied” and can be perpetuated by well-meaning people who internalize the idea that “nonstandard” languages like Chicano English, AAE, and others “must be cut out of the children’s mouths to advance their education” (Santa Ana, 2004, p. 3).

hierarchies related to immigrant paradigms (Wiley & Lukes, 1996).⁵⁶ These social hierarchies are often linked to social constructions of race, and these ideologies prioritize monolingual, standard English users (sometimes coded as white) as representing unmarked and privileged American English. These ideologies inform FBL linked to colonizing narratives about promoting particular types of English in schools and may obscure the need for linguistic knowledge on the part of English teachers who perceive themselves as native, standard English users who possess innate and privileged linguistic knowledge.

These ideologies lead to oversimplification of how people use language as well as racialized assumptions about language use in the U.S.; for instance, McWhorter points to the often ignored existence of standard English in African American communities and the complex nature of code-switching for bidialectal speakers (McWhorter, 1998). This complexity speaks to how language communicates social identity in intricate ways (Gumperz, 1982). Furthermore, these ideologies of monolingualism and standard English can obscure the complex relationship between multiple written and oral forms of language by promoting “the belief that there is one and only one correct spoken form of the language, modelled on a single correct written form” (L. Milroy, 1999, p. 174). As a case in point, these ideologies may have contributed to participants’ misunderstandings about written/oral language acquisition, leading to an elision between English language learners, Generation 1.5 students, and other forms of multilingualism in their discussions of students.

While participants never expressed the most extreme manifestations of a monolingual ideology, such as extreme statements about banning students’ multiple languages because they represent a deficit or challenge and/or oral correction of stigmatized features in students’ language, the “stories” they shared in weekly debriefings did reveal some assumptions about whether or not certain types of students would or wouldn’t have access to multiple varieties and what it would mean if students did have access to those varieties.⁵⁷ Participants’ cases show how they began to notice the

⁵⁶ For instance, a recent study demonstrated the ways “monolingual” bi-dialectal students were marginalized in approaches to supporting multilingualism (Rymes & Anderson, 2004).

⁵⁷ Participants did seem aware of the power inherent in such deficit ideologies, so this may have influenced what types of negative reactions they were willing to share.

complexity of students' language use but only after they encountered unanticipated manifestations of language in their English classes. They had to first encounter these language-related moments in order to consider strategies for acting on their beliefs about language, whether these were related to FBL or LIP.

II. Assessing and Reacting to Literary Language

Before student teaching, none of the participants mentioned teaching about language in relation to literature in their initial interviews. Even though Aileen predicted that one book taught at her site might have “local color,” or regional dialect, her description was not explicitly related to language study or variation. At the time, this absence did not stand out to me as a researcher since linguistically informed principles are often more overtly connected to teaching “grammar,” writing, or speech in English language arts.⁵⁸

Yet, as I discussed in Chapter 2, English language arts classrooms are heavily languaged spaces, and the “content” of the class is often linked to the highly interactive processes of discussing, writing, and reading. This view is confirmed by work that looks at the ways students' language resources intersect with teaching literature. For instance, in “High-Stakes Testing and the Social Languages of Literature and Literate Achievement in Urban Classrooms,” Dorothea Anagnostopoulos (2009) examined how high-stakes testing, talk about literature, and assessment function to determine whether students have opportunities to learn. Notably, this chapter in a book about *Affirming Students' Right to Their Own Language* was the only one that looked at the challenges of addressing language in a text while interacting and using language in an English language arts classroom. This complex interplay of various forms of language is exactly the problem space in which participants found themselves during student teaching. Yet much of the educational research focused on helping teachers enact linguistically informed principles centers on *students* as sites of language variation, not how students—from all

⁵⁸ During Stage 2 analysis, I noted a gap in the ways I interpreted organizational categories of *language equity*, *descriptive approaches to grammar*, and *consequential language choices in classroom interactions* during Stage 1 analysis. While one principle of *language equity* included “oral and written language are different” and one principle of *descriptive approaches to grammar* included “register is one way to think about how oral/written language is used for different purposes,” I had not considered how these principles could more specifically relate to reading or analyzing literature from multiple time periods and authorial perspectives.

sorts of linguistic backgrounds—engage with language variation in texts during moment-to-moment classroom interactions. Furthermore, while much of the attention in English language arts is paid to helping students (particularly “linguistically diverse students”) develop reading skills, academic writing skills, or “standard” oral language skills, these silos are not often explored in relation to each other and rarely are text selection or teachers’ language use and beliefs interrelated with these areas.

Classroom dilemmas related to language in teaching literature have been documented (see Arac, 1997). In particular, controversies include how to work with racialized language in literary texts, such as the n-word (Haviland, 2004; Thomas, 2010) and ineffective attempts at using dialogue to represent vernacular Englishes. These tensions certainly emerged for the student teachers, despite their varied field contexts. All participants talked about students’ interactions with language in literary texts; the unexpected elements included reading struggles, controversial classroom interactions related to race, and information participants gained about students’ language resources. Texts included “canonical” texts such as *Huck Finn*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*, *A Christmas Carol*, a Hemingway short story, and *Catcher in the Rye* in addition to young adult texts like *Boy in the Pink Striped Pajamas*, *Code Talker*, and *Elijah Buxton*.

Many experienced English teachers are familiar with exploring the historical contexts of a particular piece of literature, yet this approach may or may not include an exploration of how language has changed—both in structure and meaning over time. Locating language variation as something that occurs when teaching certain kinds of students (for William this meant African American⁵⁹ or Spanish-speaking students) can mean that a prospective teacher does not anticipate how oral and written language may intersect within the texts they teach, particularly in relation to the language abilities to which students already have access. This leads to teachers to miss opportunities to scaffold students’ reading of texts as well as create meaningful opportunities for students to respond to literature.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ William’s interview comments suggested that he did not distinguish between African American students and African American English speaking students, which demonstrates how racialized and linguistic identities are often elided.

⁶⁰ For instance, Mary Schleppegrell points to the many genres of text which students may be asked to read and write and how these texts can require vastly different linguistic skills (Schleppegrell, 2004).

A. Jessica's case: Literature as a catalyst for racialized language-related interactions

This illustration reveals how English teachers may encounter unexpected classroom moments while teaching literature that includes language related to race and time period. The following field sketch *That's Not Funny* demonstrates how Jessica did not anticipate the complications related to vernacular in a piece of literature—at least not in terms of race and student-to-student interactions. During her twelfth grade unit anchored in the novel *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, Jessica encountered students' complaints about the use of vernacular in the text and noted on her unit plan that in future teaching she would want to include activities to help students “crack [the] narrator's vernacular dialect code.” Even before these complaints, her cooperating teacher gave students the advice of reading the text aloud to help understand its more oral style (even though the text is written using vernacular that is no longer familiar to students).

Jessica was surprised by the reactions of students to the language in the text, in particular the tense inter-personal interactions that spiked up when students first started reading the book. Jessica was not the only participant who encountered this type of situation. For instance, Lindsey described a classroom conflict that occurred during an online discussion of *Huck Finn* when a white student signed on with the username “racist” and posted the n-word. In these interactions, language in the literary texts seemed to authorize students to co-opt potentially problematic language and surfaced racial tensions in the class that were unexpected for the student teacher participants. Jessica noted her struggle to provide opportunities for students to express their views in respectful or appropriate ways in class sanctioned-activities. Instead, *Field Sketch 4* describes how students created their own opportunities to engage with the language, such as on the back of a quiz and in the hallway.

Field Sketch 4: “That's Not Funny” (Jessica, Week 7)

Monday:

It's Monday and Jessica is concerned after an incident in which Chris, the only African American student in her class, reacted angrily during a quiz. Chris reacted indignantly, “That's not funny” to a racist caricature passed by him during a reading quiz by two white students.⁶¹

⁶¹ This incident and the one in the next illustration emerged in relation to reading quizzes, yet quizzing for reading comprehension and completion were somewhat discouraged during participants' coursework. This

Wednesday:

*Jessica explains to Melinda that she should have had the students erase the picture, but she was unsure of how to react in the situation and just told the students to stop what they were doing. This caricature mirrored the racist language and content in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* expressed by particular characters. While she doesn't note this incident in her unit plan notes, Jessica does make a note to herself to monitor quiz taking more closely.*

Because it seems like the students involved are friends who like to joke around, Jessica finds it hard to read when the young men are joking in a problematic way, something which she raises with Chris in a side conversation after he makes comments in an unusually defiant tone of voice when quizzes are passed back on Wednesday. His slightly more aggressive tone really gets to her, and Jessica doesn't know how to negotiate this in front of the other 30 students. She wonders if Chris's frustration is partly due to the fact that "there's too much packed in" to the class, including learning unrelated grammar (active/passive voice) lessons, watching a film, and taking reading quizzes. This hasn't left much time for discussion of the book.

As she talks to Melinda later that day, Jessica identifies the problem as partly the difficulty with helping students understand how to analyze the way the book is written from the narrator's racist point of view. They just haven't had the time to discuss this aspect of the book. She posits, "It's easy to write it off as this is racist and this is this, but then it's degrading women because they're all either controlling nurses or prostitutes, and it's hard – it's hard for me to articulate to them that yeah the language to us is bad, but why is it there kind of thing – is hard to get kids to sort of wrap their minds around I think."

Of course, there's just so much going on in the unit, she decides, and her lack of focus in the unit was because she hadn't gotten her head around where they would be going by the end of the unit. She makes another note that she wants to incorporate names, identity, and language into the unit more.

Friday:

On Friday, there is a sub and Jessica's class is writing blog posts. Another incident occurs when one of the white students from earlier in the week says, "Your mom's a prostitute" to Chris, leading to an angry interaction that involves the Dean. Students also make fun of one of the young ladies in the class by referring to STDs.⁶² Jessica attributes this teasing to overall "climate" problems in the class and decides to address appropriate behavior the next week before a whole class discussion.

Looking back:

By the end of student teaching, Jessica feels like she has some new awareness of the school's racial tensions, prejudices, and course stratification after visiting other classes. She feels like she didn't quite make the connections between language and identity that she had hoped to, but feels at least relieved that she was able to use her linguistic knowledge of the pejoration or amelioration of a

may demonstrate how the status quo in the field is often much more powerful than discussions about promoting authentic literacy in coursework.

⁶² Both incidents could be triggered by language and topics from *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*.

word's meaning to help students understand how words can change in meaning over time and in different contexts.

This field sketch illustrates how the language available in the literary text shaped the interactions that happened in Jessica's class; however, some of these student discussions were off-the-record and not sanctioned or facilitated by her as a teacher. When students co-opted new language from the text, issues of identity emerged, such as who can use what language in which situations. Jessica scrambled to make space in an already packed curricular plan to respond to the ways students were using the language from the text with each other in ways that were racialized and confrontational. One of her reactions was to have a class discussion about language change (which will be further described in Chapter 6). On one of the exams later in the term, Jessica required students to advocate for the author's language choice in their essay, a move that seemed to validate the author's right to use language while deauthorizing students' right to object to that use.⁶³ Jessica faced tensions of meeting multiple curricular goals, which she described as taking away time to explore the language issues in more in-depth ways, and she expressed disappointment when she reached the end of student teaching without incorporating students' views into the course themes.

In some ways, Jessica maintained a color-aware, rather than colorblind stance, in her reactions to these interactions, which was in keeping with her naming of herself as "white" multiple times in discussions of teaching. She identified tensions that emerged with how to signal the "appropriate" ways for students to take up and react to language in the text. These tensions appeared related to how white students used language that was racialized in their interactions and others felt uncomfortable with the author's use of racialized or gendered terms. Jessica also struggled with how to help students understand the orality of the text in order to improve their comprehension. She also identified the ways time-period specific language, particularly vernacular forms to represent dialogue and narrator's voice, seemed to cause students to struggle and/or provide fodder for "disrespectful" interactions. Also at work here was the way the language in the text bubbled up in tense classroom interactions and related to the underlying school and class

⁶³ In Chapter 6, I will explore further how Jessica's position as a white teacher contributed to dilemmas she faced about when, how, and why she addressed race and language in her class.

culture in which students were not invited to question and explore issues of race, class, and language in generative, respectful ways.

B. William's case: Literature as a catalyst for interactions related to language change

William's students also encountered reading difficulties with Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* due to the time period in which the text was written, similar to Jessica's students. Initially, neither William nor Jessica realized that the use of time-period specific language, particularly vernacular forms to represent dialogue and narrator's voice, would cause students to struggle. This lack of recognition may be due to the ways both English teachers and students can buy into the myth that school-sanctioned authors use a type of monolithic "standard English." While *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* may appear more explicitly linked to race, it is possible to point to *A Christmas Carol* as a racially marked text due to the ways it constructs whiteness across multiple classes by using representations of language variation.

Field Sketch 5: Literary Language describes how William encountered unexpected difficulty related to language in the text, his assessment of what students needed to learn after encountering the problem, and the ways he attempted to enact an activity in order to help students access the difficult textual language.

Field Sketch 5: Literary Language (William, Week 13)

It's almost the end of student teaching, and William is tired. He started a unit two weeks ago focused on A Christmas Carol. On the first day of the unit, he polled the students, and it seemed like they all knew the storyline from movies. Lately he has felt fairly successful with getting students excited about the story, hanging their drawings of the three ghosts around the room. But then, as he gave a reading quiz like he usually does, students began complaining: "I don't understand what's going on in the book."

The students bombed the quiz. William is shocked—he wonders why he hadn't noticed that the language in the book is something they're absolutely not used to at all. But this wasn't even a book that his cooperating teacher thought students would struggle with in terms of language, like she had mentioned when he had thought about teaching Mark Twain and other books.

William puzzles over why students are struggling—it all seemed straightforward to him when he was reading the book. They are thirteen years old, he reasons, I must not be putting myself in their shoes enough. He had planned vocabulary lists based on suggestions from other teachers online, but it's not the long, hard words that seem to be tripping up the students—it's that the

words aren't contemporary. He sighs as he thinks about how to revise his unit to include a jigsaw that he hopes will help the students begin to understand the differences in language between Dickens's time period and their own. He remembers participating in a jigsaw in his literacy class as a technique to help students work with difficult texts. William wishes he could go straight to the cool activities he had planned to focus on symbols and other explanations of the book, but realizes that this is going to be difficult if his students aren't first understanding the 19th-century language.

This week, when he talks to Melinda during his weekly interview, he remembers this as an interesting turn of events in his unit. He blames himself for not anticipating the students' difficulties with reading the text and sighs as he speaks:

The language has been kind of difficult for kids because – I mean obviously Dickens isn't really writing in a way that they're used to reading. So that was actually something that I hadn't foreseen for some reason. I don't know, bad teaching or maybe just looking forward to the end, so I was pushing forward with themes and plot and stuff without really considering that maybe they weren't understanding exactly what was going on.

William then describes the jigsaw activity to Melinda. He explains how each table group of students had a series of questions, but they struggled most with translating important quotations from the book into how they would say it rather than how a 19th century London person would say it. He talks for some time about how students struggled some with this task and needed help from him. It wasn't until he walked around, reading specific phrases out loud, describing comparisons to current English, and offering oral versions that students began to write their translations. He notes that the students with direct dialogue had an easier time but that students struggled more with how to write a translation of indirect speech or narration written from a character's point of view. He recognizes that this is the first time students have had to think about oral language as from a particular time and place. When Melinda asks him if the activity worked, William reacts positively that they needed some help but seemed to get it.⁶⁴

This field sketch is included in order to show how a classroom in which students are perceived by their teacher as being native, standard American English speakers⁶⁵ can still encounter difficulty moving between varieties of English—whether these varieties are due to language change or literary representations of vernacular English.

Furthermore, when English teachers rely on metaphors of spoken English (i.e. how we

⁶⁴ This characterization appeared to contradict William's description earlier in the interview in which he described a unit-closing discussion on the day of the debriefing in which students struggled with understanding a key passage.

⁶⁵ William's class did include a Brazilian speaker of British English and at least one English language learner.

“say” something), this can limit their efficacy when assisting students with written texts. This metaphor relies on standard English ideologies, which are further complicated by assumptions about views of white or native English speaking students as inherently aligned with the language used in school, whether that language is written or oral. William’s expectation that language variation would not be an issue (or a curricular focus) with his students seemed linked to his assumption that as standard speakers they would not need explicit instruction or understanding of variation. As William struggled to support students with understanding archaic vernacular language in the text, his struggles demonstrate that he also might experience challenges working with a curricular focus on present-day standard versus other language varieties with these students due to his misunderstandings about how to enact understandings of oral and written language.

When William told me this story, he skirted around the degree to which students were actually able to be successful on their own with the translation; to illustrate the problem, he started by recounting the ongoing struggles students had with language on the day of the debriefing and then revisited how he had developed a jigsaw when he initially identified the problem days earlier. In my interpretation, students may have struggled with the activity because the metaphor of “translation” required students to summarize the narrator’s words and provide a gloss for unfamiliar language and sentence structures while using current vocabulary and structures. William’s students seem to have been frozen when asked to produce new written translations until he provided some written examples and helped them delineate between the structure of the narrator’s voice and that of the written dialogue. The complex intersections of hearing, seeing, and talking meta-cognitively about language were incorporated into his initial instructions that asked students to “translate” Dickens. While William enacted principles of language change and variety on some level by raising students’ awareness of the time differences, he did not offer specific lexical or structural tools for the “translation” activity. In other words, William made a connection to overarching LIP but seemed to lack specific strategies for enacting these principles.

This illustration points to how William’s FBL may have shaped his teaching moves even when LIP were understood on some level. For William, these beliefs included a sense that oral and written language follow similar rules and language variation emerges

with certain kinds of students—other than white, middle class, “standard English” using students. His expectations also may have been shaped by perception of congruence between students and texts; for instance, *A Christmas Carol* is a familiar cultural tale for these Catholic school students who William perceived as speaking and writing in a unified standard English.

Yet, in the class discussions of the text, a basic understanding of language variation served to move discussions beyond what William initially identified as meaningful in the text. Engagement with LIP, such as discussing the ways language represents a culture at a given time (i.e. the term given to a certain game), offered opportunities for William to help students understand and connect to the text. Had he anticipated this opportunity by assessing the linguistic demands and opportunities of the text beforehand, William might have been able to better scaffold students’ reading of the text by incorporating linguistic tools earlier in the unit.

It is also worth considering William’s realization that he needed to put himself into the “shoes” of his students. He attributed this need to understand students better to their age differences. However, the persistence of colorblindness and monolingualism emerged early on in his assessment of students at his site. In early interviews, William persisted in his view that his class did not include students who weren’t standard English speakers. In *Excerpt 4*, William based this assessment on his own schooling experience.

Excerpt 4: “All Talk the Same”? (William, Week 2)

It seems like in a school I went when I grew up, it just seems like they already speak in the way that – I don’t know, they all talk the same and it all seems like standard English to me. They have their little slangs or whatnot but it doesn’t – when they’re in English class or lit class and they’re writing, it doesn’t come up but it seems like they’ve been trained from kindergarten.

In this excerpt, William merged his initial assessment of students’ talking and writing into one category. He further minimized any variation by referring to students’ “little” slangs. Over time, he described an awareness of the variation of students’ written and oral language abilities. During later reflections at the end of student teaching, William described the differences between students’ writing and speaking:

Excerpt 5: Speaking/Writing Differences (William, Week 14)

Well, it's been interesting to me to see the difference between certain kids – the difference in how they write and how they speak. I don't know if it's them being intimidated by writing, that they've had bad experiences in the past. I think, even if you tell them to read it out loud and say that's not how you think – I mean, it's just too long of a sentence. Trying to explain it in that way. It's kind of a 50/50 thing. Sometimes it works and sometimes it just doesn't work. And I don't know if it's just because they're kind of intimidated by the writing or what, but that's something I would think about with some kids. Other kids, I was really surprised at how good they were with writing.

And even – I mean, with some kids it was better than they would be talking. I would say that's true with me. If you read what I write, it's more eloquent than the way that I speak. So I would say for some kids that was pretty interesting to see; that even at that age in their writing they would actually come out a little bit better because they think about it.

This excerpt shows how William's realization of speaking and writing differences required his close attention and empathy based on his own identity as a speaker and writer. While he tracked students' writing strengths over time, he did not make any connections to this as an element of linguistic ability or seek to assess how their writing might inter-relate with other aspects of language abilities, such as oral language use, formal or informal uses, or abilities in other languages.

C. In summary: Illustrations of literary language interactions

The illustrations focused on Jessica and William's experiences highlight how students can be positioned linguistically and racially by language in interactions related to literature. In Jessica's illustration (similar to Aileen and Lindsey's experiences), students' identifications of themselves and others as racialized intersected with interpretations of who can use language and how they can use it. Chris's reactions may demonstrate that the white students crossed a line by taking up racist imagery and insulting language from the text; furthermore, his reactions to Jessica may demonstrate that he interpreted her as taking the sides of the white students rather than repairing the situation.

Other voices in the classroom, as well as participants' schooling experiences, shaped their expectations and strategies. For instance, the reaction to the “n-word” commentary in Lindsey's class evoked a strong reaction from her cooperating teacher who explained to the class that this use was a “big deal” and that this may be the “most

difficult word in the English language.” This reaction by the cooperating teacher spurred Lindsey to imagine how she might provide similar discussion before teaching certain novels, even though this was not something that she experienced as a student.

Figure 5.2. Unit Plan Student Descriptions	
<i>Aileen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes students’ interests and describes the overall school as “racially diverse” and includes percentage of free lunch students • Identifies focal students as “multi-racial” (African American/Caucasian), Indian, African American, and Latino • Notes that Latino student is an English Language Learner who attends support class
<i>Jessica</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes students’ income varieties, groups like “ethnic cliques” of African American, Asian American, Arabic American, and Jewish; • Identifies focal students’ racial and religious variation: Arabic, Chaldean, African American, and Caucasian • Notes African American student’s language and teaching goals to “help” her with habitual be and 3rd person singular (AAVE features) in her writing
<i>Lindsey</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes personal qualities like leadership and respect • Does not include racial, social, class, or language references
<i>William</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes students’ gender; likes and dislikes for reading and activities • Includes levels of verbosity; likelihood of talking in class • Only reference to race or culture is about Lebanese student (similar to William’s background); In embedded comments, notes that students come from “high affluence”

Participants’ approaches may be revealed in the ways they characterized what was relevant to know about students for planning their unit projects (see Figure 5.2). While both William and Jessica encountered unexpected language-related moments initiated and facilitated through literary study, Jessica’s illustration narrowed the scope in on particular students whereas William focused on his class’s struggle as a whole.

Due to her attention to the racialized identities of her students, Jessica case shows how she began to consider how the text positions individual students and how take up of literary language and themes heightened tensions in the class. Notably, however, she avoided naming the incidents specifically in her teaching notes, opting for more generic descriptors than when she described the situation orally. While her planning described students’ racial and cultural identities and the potential connections to writing, it did not include planning for how the heterogeneous class might interact with each other and

respond to the language and themes in the anchor literary text (even though she attended to this for discussion of music lyrics).

Like William and others, Jessica may have imagined the language in the literary text as neutral (yet also authoritative on some level). There was an assumption that the author's authority and literary privilege would not interact with students' language expectations and experiences. Yet, students' and author's language did intermingle, and this led to discussions that were not originally planned, raising potential dilemmas about how to proceed. Similarly, Aileen's students used the language in *Elijah Buxton* to help them understand the time period, leading to discussion of "dialogue" and culture as a class since her African American students noted the dialogue as "southern" and "country"; small group discussions of *Code Talker* enabled Spanish-speaking students to initiate their own discussions of language and discrimination based on their own experiences which sensitized them to the characters' experiences in the text. These examples could be seen as more positive, yet unplanned, models of how literary language might interact with students' interactions.

What is striking is that participants did not plan student groups, whole class discussions, or text-analysis based on the ways students' racial and linguistic positions might intersect or clash with the texts' authorial or narrative voices. This is a missed opportunity at least, and—in the cases of Jessica, William and, possibly, Lindsey's classes—could generate student frustration and discomfort, eroding the sense of safety and voice within the class. Participants also seemed unaware of how loaded language can be in a "homogenous" classroom and made assumptions about the "safety" or lower priority of talking about loaded language in what they read as more homogenous classrooms (i.e. classrooms in which "white" was deracialized and understood as linguistically neutral). Filters of FBL were partly what obscured these opportunities. The next section illustrates how lack of planning for these languaged opportunities also may have related to participants' ability to identify students' language resources.

III. Discovering Students' Language Resources: Lindsey and William's Cases

This section includes illustrations of the second area that emerged for participants as an unexpected site of language: Encounters with students who were multilingual or

bidialectal despite assumptions that their “homogenous” sites (i.e. white, middle-class majority) meant that students’ language would be equally homogeneously “standard English.” These illustrations further demonstrate how colorblindness interrelated with participants’ inability to see and value language diversity as well as assumptions about written and oral transfer within languages. The weekly debriefings shed light on how these participants began to have their “eyes opened” to the complex existence of English language learners, bilingual speakers, and bidialectal students. This often happened later on in student teaching, especially for participants who imagined students were homogenous in terms of language use (i.e. William and Lindsey); bidialectalism also was not as obvious at first.

Assumptions about race and cultural background led participants to make assumptions about students’ language use. For instance, William described how he corrected some assumptions during his second week of student teaching in *Excerpt 6*.

Excerpt 6: Assumptions (William, Week 2)

I think I made, I wrongly made the assumption about one of them just because he was Asian so I feel bad about that. He’s not ESL. But the other one, they’re both Asian. They still hang out with each other. But one of them is ESL and from indications from teachers, he hasn’t made any improvement from last year to this year. And today I finally felt like he liked to talk to me. And he’s very sarcastic in English and he’s very – he’s actually very funny in English, but in terms of participation he hates the class. He won’t raise his hand or he doesn’t want to read the vocabulary out loud, stuff like that.⁶⁶

William did not consider whether or not other students in the class might be multilingual, including the non-ESL student. Scholars have suggested that part of preparing prospective teachers to be culturally responsive means helping them develop an awareness of how to assess the multiple levels of reading, writing, and speaking students may have across multiple languages. Because William perceived the majority of his class to be white, middle class, standard English speaking Catholic students (like he was), he initially identified only the two “Asian” students as the only possible “sites” of linguistic diversity.

⁶⁶ Later it is revealed that the cooperating teacher made this student repeat most things he said louder and over again, which partially may explain his reluctance to speak in class.

Similarly, before student teaching, Lindsey described how she did not expect to work with students who used stigmatized language varieties; she anticipated that language use at her site would be fairly homogenous. Therefore, Lindsey was surprised to see how her “homogenous” group of students actually used multiple registers, languages, and language varieties. These realizations emerged in more detailed ways around Week 10 when Lindsey noted that English teaching is much more about focusing on her students rather than herself as the teacher. *Field Sketch 6: Appropriate* describes how Lindsey recounted a situation with a student who might be what some scholars would call bidialectal. Lindsey became almost tongue-tied when trying to describe the situation, and struggled with how to connect language and race.

Field Sketch 6: Appropriate (Lindsey, Week 10)

This Week

In the weekly debriefing, Lindsey tells Melinda a story about a classroom interaction that stood out to her this week:

1 The freshmen kids, the freshmen students, did parodies of Holden
2 Caufield, Holden Caufield’s language. They were really fun. There was
3 one in particular that the student didn’t want his name read when – or
4 didn’t want people to know his name when his piece was read, so he had
5 somebody else read it. We did it in such a way that it was anonymous.
6 The way that it was written there, the way that the dialogue was written, I
7 mean, and the subject matter, I thought in my head that something like – I
8 wondered if this kid is black? the kid that wrote it, because just like the
9 way that it was written. It sounded kind of – I don’t know, [laughs] this
10 goes back to issues of racism. This just sounds – I don’t know if this is
11 appropriate to talk like this [fades out]. When they had turned in their
12 papers and we realized who they were, he **was**, this author **was**, it was just
13 – but it wasn’t a student who – he doesn’t – he speaks standard English,
14 but he was really able to like write in – he was able to write in, I guess,
15 Ebonics or whatever. What do they call it? ... I suppose anyone can learn
16 how to do that. It was interesting that – it wasn’t – just the fact that it
17 wasn’t the vocabulary, but it was the structure that made the piece stand
18 out to me in particular. I don’t know. It’s interesting. I don’t think that’s
19 really necessarily related to equity [.4, looks down].

Lindsey continues telling the story in a halting manner, grappling with whether or not she thought the humor was intentional in the piece, and ends the story with a description of how the student submitted the story to the literary journal because of the positive reactions of his classmates.

Week 9

After attending a faculty inservice about achievement gaps on state tests, Lindsey describes her concern that the school district is unfairly identifying African

American students as struggling students, when she sees the issue as more related to income, such as students with families with single incomes or two working parents. This view is confirmed by her cooperating teacher's view that the district's efforts seem like the 1950s in the ways it singles out students by race. The inservice discussions sound to Lindsey like efforts to make students "whiter" or view white parents as more school oriented. She also wonders if the school's approach to offering African American literature as separate from American Literature leads students to feel as if their culture is recognized or if it signals a kind of deficit model.

Week 13: Looking Back

Three weeks later Lindsey revisits this classroom interaction and describes learning about other multilingual students in the class. She tell Melinda adamantly and without wavering that she didn't feel that being able to use both standard English and AAVE would be valued at her school in same way that a student who spoke English and another language would be.

As Lindsey described this classroom interaction, FBL emerged and were questioned based on her evolving perceptions of students' language resources. During Stage 1 coding, I noted that Lindsey's perception of her student teaching site's student population was that it would be fairly homogenous in terms of racial diversity, which she implied meant that students' language use would be homogenous as well. For Lindsey, this meant that she did not plan to incorporate information about language variation or appreciation into her units. While some English teachers might see discussion of vernacular English as a useful tool for analyzing youth language in *Catcher in the Rye*, this was not an area Lindsey referred to as an explicit goal. Yet the writing assignment she described asked students to play with language from a different point of view. In response to this assignment, Lindsey was surprised by the written playfulness of one of her students.

Yet in the way she recounted the classroom interaction, Lindsey struggled to refer to race or make a connection between language use and racial identity. This hesitation may indicate Lindsey's attempt to remain colorblind, leading her to become colormute. While describing the interaction, Lindsey hesitated and questioned whether she should have identified the student's story in terms of race and even paused in her account: "I don't know if this is appropriate to talk like this" (lines 9-10). She signaled her discomfort with appearing racist in the ways she talked about this issue or making assumptions about students. Lindsey appeared to take a colorblind stance out of fear,

which could mean that her coursework in multicultural education might have actually stymied her ability to engage with LIP.

Lindsey's expectation that race should not be mentioned in relation to her students buys into an ideology of colorblindness. She seemed uncomfortable with mentioning race, and this discomfort shut down the potential for a purposeful engagement with language and power. While she felt sanctioned to talk about the complexities and affordances of online writing features (see Chapter 4 and Section IV in this chapter), Lindsey's reluctance to talk about race or culture in relation to language in some ways kept her from affirming the bidialectal abilities of the student. Lindsey, like many prospective teachers, learned in her coursework about colorblindness as a pitfall for well-meaning, misguided teachers. To avoid this pitfall, she adopted a colorblind linguistic stance out of fear of classifying a student in a harmful or racist manner.

This may be partly due to her linguistic training and learning about the complexity of language, such as the reality that not all African American students speak African American English. This may have contributed to Lindsey's reluctance: She did not want to assume that students have this ability. However, when Lindsey noticed potential language variation, she questioned whether or not she could even talk about this ability in a non-racist manner or even identify this as a skill her student had. This may be partially due to her lack of confidence in identifying features, or possibly a result of the variety definitions of AAE, AAVE, and what constitutes variation in spoken and written language. Lindsey may have understood race and language in complex ways, but she did not seem to have a way for operationalizing this complexity into learning opportunities related to English language arts.

In this illustration, the relationship between LIP and FBL is complex in that the ways Lindsey took up LIP may have actually prevented her from overt affirmation of language variation. While Lindsey expressed interest in her discovery of the student's possible language variation in his written text and the class's validation of the student's writing, she also dismissed the potential complexity of learning and representing this variation in writing when she said, "I suppose anyone can learn how to do that." This phrase seems to function as a disclaimer to say that she won't assign race to this kind of linguistic ability, yet it also serves to mask the skills required to use a variety. This

comment functions as *erasure* (J. T. Irvine & Gal, 2000) of specific linguistic codes, by assuming that ability to command those varieties could be intuited or appropriated easily rather requiring users to learn rule governed systems or consult linguistic resources.

Based on a monolingual view, Lindsey did not account for students' multiple written and oral resources, which meant she did not expect this student to know multiple varieties since he is a "standard English" speaker. Even as students' language abilities were discovered, participants struggled with dilemmas related to these discoveries, such as what to do in response and expressions of multiple conflicting beliefs. They seemed to value the newly discovered linguistic abilities, but this meant moving away from a view that multilingualism causes problems. For instance, halfway through student teaching, Lindsey described her "biggest surprise" at parent/teacher conferences: She learned that two additional students spoke a language other than English at home, even though she already knew about a couple. She noted that she had not seen this language ability affect them in any negative way and that her cooperating teacher assured the students that this ability would affect them positively later in their lives.

Lindsey also described how her cooperating teacher applauded these speakers of German and Russian for having a language in which to emote (a statement that Lindsey reacted to positively as showing this ability as a possible resource for students but did not question in terms of ideology). Lindsey questioned how she should use this information about students' language abilities in her future teaching and explained that she might use the knowledge as an opportunity to make an interpersonal connection to these students at some point.

The surprise for Lindsey may have been because these students appeared as white students and, thus, she assumed they were monolingual. Until her description of her cooperating teacher's comments about the positive effects of multilingualism, Lindsey seemed to assume that any non-English language abilities might surface as problems.⁶⁷

Throughout student teaching, students with multiple language abilities kept

⁶⁷ When the media claims to name the language "problem," they are often actually arguing for further homogenization by promoting the good, uniform, economic and nationally aesthetic "mainstream" U.S. English. Depictions of language use tend to vilify nonstandard U.S. English as something that blocks communication, has "strong, heavy accents," and needs to be controlled, combated, and eliminated if it is regional, Asian, Indian, Middle Eastern or Spanish (not if it is French, German, British, or Swedish) (Lippi-Green, 1997, p. 146).

emerging from the woodwork for Lindsey. It was not until after Week 10 that Lindsey began to focus her attention on students with language challenges beyond a cursory level. For instance, Lindsey described a native English speaking student with oral language difficulties that did not appear in the student's writing yet became apparent during a formal speech. In *Excerpt 7: Funny Things Happen*, Lindsey described how grading papers led to her discovery of what she calls an "ESL student."

Excerpt 7: Funny Things Happen (Lindsey, Week 10)

1 *Lindsey:* We do have on ELL student. Well, she's not even ELL. It's just English
2 is her – it's just more ESL, I guess, or English is her second language. But she
3 knows it very well. I guess maybe she is ELL, but she's really advanced.
4 Sometimes funny things do happen in her papers that don't happen in other
5 people's papers as far as grammar goes. They're not things that I automatically
6 related to her language issues, but Ruth [cooperating teacher] definitely did. Ruth
7 pretty much lets it go. She'll correct it. She'll write the corrections and things, but
8 she won't mark the girl down for it as much as she might somebody else.

9 *Melinda:* Is that same kind of approach that you would like to take or that you
10 take when you grade papers?

11 *Lindsey:* I would definitely take all kinds of issues into consideration when
12 thinking about how someone's writing. Yeah. I think I would – as far as the grade
13 goes, I think I would cut someone – cut people slack for various – there are all
14 kinds of language sort of deficits as long as – because especially at this point in
15 the year, what I've seen where they're coming from and I can see that they're
16 making progress and you'll see the effort that's going into things.
17 But I would still try to help them learn the prop- right way to write so that they
18 can advance as much as their peers. As far as their grades, I would know that their
19 writing isn't coming out – some of their – certain writing mistakes aren't coming
20 out of negligence, but they're coming out of not being at the same level.

After this description, Lindsey asked me how I would respond to the student's writing, and she wanted to know whether her approach to the "English language learner" was "appropriate." I responded by describing how some teachers provide focused, limited feedback rather than correcting all errors, to which Lindsey responded that she and her cooperating teacher do that for all of their students.

This excerpt demonstrates how beliefs about language can influence teachers' approaches of how to both assess and respond to students' writing. Lindsey's language revealed that she was still grappling with how to move beyond deficit thinking about

student language and how to enact equitable pedagogy in response to a language learner's needs. First, she struggled with how to characterize the student as "ESL" or "ELL" due to her sense that the student is "advanced." On line 17, Lindsey started to say "proper" and changes to "right"—this may be a response to her awareness that standard English is a socially constructed norm, though she recognized the need to "cut people slack" (line 13) for this kind of "deficit" (line 14) which she named as "not coming out of negligence" (line 20). Her comments work against the standard language ideology that errors in students' writing (in this case a language learner who expends effort) are a result of sloppiness or deficiency. Yet, her acknowledgement that "funny things" are happening revealed that Lindsey may have lacked specific language for naming the non-native English features in the student's writing.

As she asked me questions and referred to her cooperating teacher, Lindsey sought affirmation from other experienced practitioners for her approach to what she had started to understand about this learner's writing. While I know that at the very least Lindsey had instruction in this area during her methods coursework and even some practice with applying concepts of focused language feedback (i.e. using approaches from functional grammar to provide feedback to an English language learner's college essay), Lindsey did not draw on that shared experience explicitly. On one level, she signaled her acceptance of the cooperating teacher's view that the student's grade should not be affected but that corrections should be made on the paper. When my response to Lindsey's quest for affirmation contradicted the cooperating teacher's approach by pointing to the overwhelming nature of marking all errors in a paper, Lindsey positioned the cooperating teacher/student teacher duo as in alignment with this approach. She was using cues from experienced teachers for how to engage with LIP in this new situation.

To add more depth to this illustration, *Field Sketch 7: Eyes Opened* describes how four weeks later (the last week of student teaching) Lindsey "sees" another "ESL" student after assigning an in-class essay. Lindsey's discovery of this student's abilities seemed to have been blocked in earlier weeks by Lindsey's generalization of the student's English writing proficiency as based on the student's oral language and formal essays written outside of class.

Field Sketch 7: Eyes Opened (Lindsey, Week 14)

Last week:

As American Literature students take their test, one student asks to take more time. Knowing that this typically quiet student is thorough and diligent, Lindsey lets her stay after class to finish the essay. The student takes an extra hour and a half, and Lindsey wonders if she is going to end up grading a 10 page long test—“you know sometimes kids write novels.”

This week:

After Lindsey sits down to grade the exams, she is surprised as she reads this student’s exam—it was the exact same length as all the other students’ exams. For the first time, Lindsey sees all these mistakes, typical ESL errors, which she doesn’t usually see in the student’s writing. And it hadn’t occurred to her that the student would have these errors based on the way she speaks. Lindsey knows that the student usually works on a word processor, and she’s very meticulous about editing and grammar. “She tries very, very hard,” Lindsey asserts as she talks to Melinda:

1 So whenever I see her longer work, it’s been word processed and been
2 gone over a number of times or gone over by one of her friends, and this is
3 the first time I ever saw her rough draft and some of the grammatical
4 struggles she goes through. And I think that was really good for me,
5 because as much as I’ve heard that all along, and I know that that’s how it
6 works for ESL students, I just know that was good for me to see. And then
7 it also made me think, wow, those other papers that I’ve seen that are
8 perfect; I just think in my head I didn’t think of her as an ESL student.
9 She’s just another student because I’ve never seen this process that she
10 needs to go through to write. It really opened my eyes to how much work
11 she does go through, because this student in particular turns in impeccable
12 work.

Looking back:

In her final interview, Lindsey describes the ways her coursework preparation enabled her ability to analyze this student’s paper:

13 And then the preparation they gave us in Writing Center and in our multi-
14 cultural class and in methods about working with the ESL students, I think
15 prepared me to make a correct analysis of what was going on with our
16 student at the end of the term once I started looking at her paper.

Lindsey tells Melinda how this instance provides her with what she calls a new “empathy” for ESL students. She describes how she would not give the same test again and would consider what a “huge undertaking” some assignments might be for ESL students. This means she would ask herself: “Is this really necessary? Is this the absolute most appropriate, most efficient thing to teach this aspect of language and writing?” She describes how this new empathetic position includes focused feedback like she had talked about with Melinda in earlier weeks:

17 She’s **learning** and it kept me too from correcting every little issue. I
18 know that we talked about in methods, if a student’s going to look at a
19 paper that’s covered in marks, they’re not going to learn a whole lot.

In this illustration, Lindsey's realization required her comparison of the time a task took for a native English speaker to produce prose under particular circumstances with the time it took a student she hadn't thought of as "ESL." This situation debunked Lindsey's assumptions about language acquisition by showing her how the student's oral and written language abilities did not align. On the other hand, Lindsey did not describe this student's first language abilities and the potential affordances of these abilities, and Lindsey never indicated that she knows which language this student has access to as a first language and to what extent this language is academic.

In the words Lindsey used to grapple with this realization, she expanded the available subject positions for "ESL" students in her class beyond that of "not being on the same level" (*Excerpt 7*, line 20). She re-defined how an ESL student's work may be perceived: An ESL student's work can be "perfect" or "impeccable" but still may require an in-depth process of revision that is hidden from the teacher. An ESL student's writing may include non-native errors that are not revealed in classroom talk or even papers produced through the writing process.⁶⁸

In a connection back to teacher education coursework, Lindsey signaled that she had heard about principles of language acquisition and potential struggles for ESL students that provided a lens of noticing this situation in relation to linguistically informed principles, i.e. she "heard that all along" (*Field Sketch 7*, lines 4-5). By "that" Lindsey seemed to be referring to potential grammatical struggles for "ESL" students. Yet, it was not until she actually saw and applied these understandings that she recognized the challenges for her student in producing a specific type of written text. In this case, understanding of LIP was not a simple transmission process: Lindsey's specific teaching situation enabled her to take in and engage with what these principles meant to her as a teacher. Furthermore, in other comments, she accepted that her initial assumptions were inaccurate (i.e. she noted that some teachers might question whether this student had been cheating with earlier papers in the class).

⁶⁸ Interestingly, it seemed as though the student in *Excerpt 7* was being characterized as below the native level as a whole person, yet *Field Sketch 7* characterized the student's *work* as impeccable (rather than as a characterization of the student, even though she was also referred to as "thorough and diligent"). This slippage between student identity and student work, particularly when characterized with a deficit view, may have implications for LIP, specifically equitable ways for positioning students in relation to language use.

Overall, Lindsey's case exemplifies a larger pattern; participants did not seem to have a particularly complex understanding of "ESL" or "ELL" despite some coursework engagement with these concepts. None of the participants mentioned the possibility of having a Generation 1.5 student.

In summary: Understanding students' language abilities

These moments where Lindsey and William began to recognize the complexities of students' language abilities and challenges lead to the questions of how to introduce this complexity in teacher education and enable prospective teachers not to become immobilized by this complexity. Revealed in these illustrations are opportunities for addressing these complexities, including 1) understandings of the differences and intersections of oral and written language within contextual and/or genre constraints; 2) understandings of the links between language and racialized positions as well as ways to think beyond simplistic racial classifications for language use.

One way for addressing these complexities might be through providing preservice teachers with frameworks for understanding the intricacies of multilingualism and bidialectalism in practice (and acquisition). For instance, John Baugh offers a heuristic model to help move education beyond the "linguistic stereotype threat," by providing a way to consider heritage beyond racial background while also thinking about links between racial groups and language use (Baugh, 2009, p. 279). Using examples of black politicians from varied language backgrounds, Baugh uses the terms DL (dominant language), NSDL (nonstandard dominant language), and NNDL (nonnative dominant language) as a means for delineating between the language use of voluntary and involuntary immigrants' use of language. A heuristic like this one could enable prospective teachers to consider how to assess the complexity of language use for their students, particularly white students who may be seen as not "languaged" and African American students who they may hesitate to categorize. A heuristic like this one could be adapted with preservice teachers as a strategy to help them work with their students (i.e. having their students categorize themselves) to assess and better understand the complex range of language abilities present in their classrooms.

IV. Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC): Written/Oral Language

Intersections

This section focuses on unanticipated moments of language complexity in relation to computer mediated communication (CMC) and language variation, which only Lindsey briefly mentioned as a possible site of language variation in initial interviews. Three of the four student teacher participants assigned some kind of blog writing to their students (Aileen, Jessica, and Lindsey), and this surfaced as a site for language-related encounters as they grappled with how to apply technology in relation to English language arts subject matter.

For English teachers, increased demands to incorporate technology into classroom activities has led to a recent flurry of resources related to using blogs and other technology tools related to writing. Even recent discussions about young adult literature include discussion of “blended” texts, vooks (video books), and digi-novels that incorporate multiple varieties of online writing into written texts and how, when, and why to teach (or not teach) those texts (Groenke & Maples, 2010; Olthouse, 2010). While primacy of written language in traditional texts may be questioned due to the literacy challenges of a globalized, digitized world, as mentioned in Chapter 2 (Sperling & DiPardo, 2008), participants’ experiences reveal that written language remains a key site for engagement with online spaces despite the visual and aural components of these spaces. In particular, participants encountered questions about how to assess and respond to students’ written language abilities that were influenced by these spaces. Participants noted how unexpected features surfaced in students’ writing that seemed related to writing in online spaces. Additionally, they noted how use of digital tools like grammar checker shaped students’ typed and untyped writing and grappled with how to respond.

This section provides three illustrations in order to unpack the ways LIP and FBL related to CMC interactions in participants’ English language arts classrooms. The illustrations are sequenced to show a range of engagement with beliefs about oral and written language in these spaces, moving from Aileen’s case in which her initial planning was influenced by FBL about students’ monolingualism and the language demands of online spaces to Lindsey’s and Jessica’s cases in which students’ responses to assignments prompted teachers’ reconsideration of how students’ language use might

shape future planning.

A. Aileen's case: Encountering written and oral language intersections in blogs

In *Field Sketch 8*, Aileen's introduction of a blog assignment raised questions about the types of written and oral language intersections that can complicate writing instruction and classroom interactions related to online spaces.

Field Sketch 8: Written/Oral Language Intersections (Aileen, Week 10)

Today's lesson:

To break away from the constraints of the traditional paper, Aileen structures blog spaces for her middle school students' reading groups that are conducting a genre study of historical fiction. But, right away, instead of just posting their group discussion, students start using the blogs to make social-network style comments to each other, some of which are purely social and even potentially bullying. Aileen also notices that students are using different language than she expected. So, Aileen stops her original plan to make announcements about blog use.

She reminds students several times, "No texting language" and clarifies the purpose of the assignment: "You need to be using it for this and if you reply with this you're going to lose points and blah, blah, blah. This is the kind of a reply I'm looking for. If you see something and you are really moved to reply to it and you have something really thoughtful to add or you can answer a question that the group was having."

Aileen walks around the room, redirecting students, but notices later that she missed a bullying post between groups. She also notices that the posts have a lot of lower case or missing punctuation, so she reminds them, "Make sure you're capitalizing and punctuating when you need to."

After the lesson:

"How odd," Aileen notes as she reads the blogs, "My students struggled to add support to blog posts even though they did the same thing on a worksheet in an earlier class." Aileen responds to the posts with points for content and reminders about using non-texting language. As she tells the story of the day to Melinda, Aileen describes her amused, incredulous reaction to an ESL student who used texting language:

- 1 Yeah, I was like seriously, and she put "bell ring G2G."⁶⁹ I was like oh God.
- 2 Yes. Oh my God, so yeah, that was like seriously. But nothing – then this
- 3 same girl, I don't know what you would – I don't know if it would fall under
- 4 any of those categories, but she's like – English is her second language, so – I
- 5 think? She has a strong accent. You know, I never – I'm assuming it's her
- 6 second language. And she – you could definitely see that in her writing a
- 7 little bit, just with like– because she's a really intelligent, you know, gets her
- 8 work done kind of student. But then with her writing on that, where I think

⁶⁹ Or "bell rings, got to go"

9 she wasn't going back and editing or anything, you could really see how she
 10 just – I mean she was writing how she speaks and there were just some small
 11 things, which was fine. I mean it wasn't like it was really difficult to read, but
 12 you could definitely see a little bit of that.

Weeks 13-14:

By the final two weeks of student teaching, Aileen reaches a breaking point with working with students in the lab, partly due to what she describes to Melinda as exhaustion and holiday time. She talks about how maybe she should give up her “fight” against the traditional paper in the face of computer lab struggles using Google Docs, Pages, and Animoto, fielding technological questions, and other challenges of student dynamics. These struggles were challenging enough that Aileen recalls telling her friends after the lab day that maybe she should quit teaching. In her final interview, Aileen seems to have rebounded in her desire to teach and focuses on how she might teach grammar to students more explicitly, but she does not describe this desire in relation to her experiences with digital writing.

Field Sketch 8 describes the less familiar writing and interaction space of a class blog and the ways Aileen defined the language expectations for that space through her teaching moves in response to unanticipated struggles. This space also enabled Aileen to notice the ways students’ language use, including oral and CMC features, sometimes ran counter to her expectations of what writing should be like in that space.

What surfaces in Aileen’s description of students’ take up of the blog assignment is the blurry space between oral and written language that was different from what she encountered in other writing assignments during the semester. Aileen described how she had to clarify to students that this was an “academic” blog and model what she meant by this—both in specific language use, types of interactions with other students, punctuation, and capitalization. The expectations for “editing” were not as clear. As students conducted genre study of their historical fiction texts, they tested the boundaries of the blog genre in which they are being asked to respond.

While Aileen reacted with amused surprise to the use of informal language in the posts, a clearer expectation for the inevitable nature of these manifestations of students’ out-of-school practices incorporated into the school space might have saved energy for Aileen. Anticipation of the linguistic demands in this formal, yet online, space also could have helped her integrate students’ desire for social interaction into the assignment from the beginning. For the bilingual student Aileen described, the space might signal an even blurrier space between oral and written language. An assumption

that digital writing spaces provide an even playing field for students may also obscure the realities of the digital divide. This case further points to the need for English teachers to provide clear instructions about register (see Chapter 4).

B. Lindsey’s case: Encountering effects of CMC on handwritten texts

Lindsey also described intersections between written language and students’ experiences using computer-mediated communication, and Chapter 4 already described how Lindsey engaged with LIP in her response to this computer mediated language variation. The next illustration focuses on Lindsey’s experience to demonstrate how online spaces may be altering writing tasks, providing insights into how this also may alter teachers’ engagement with and scaffolding of these tasks. During her second week of student teaching, Lindsey noticed conversational “online writing or texting language coming through in their formal writing.” Although Lindsey had expected that students might show variation in their online writing or formal writing in her interviews before student teaching, as student teaching progressed, she noticed how some handwritten assignments in class included images in ways that she was not expecting.

Field Sketch 9: Pictures in Their Writing (Lindsey, Week 11)

It is Week 11 and Lindsey feels she is learning more about how to interact socially than teach English as she works to figure out what actually works with her students. Lindsey’s students have written several typed formal papers. Today she assigns their first in class handwritten assessment. When reading the handwritten papers, Lindsey notices that students use a lot of pictures in their writing. One girl draws angel wings around the word whenever she writes the word angel. Students also take the time to use smiley or sad faces when writing about Catcher in the Rye: Holden was angry ☹. Allie died ☹.⁷⁰

Lindsey tells Melinda that she doesn’t remember doing this kind of thing in her own papers, and this makes her think this is more of a new thing. She wonders if it is a maturity issue—drawing on your paper kind of thing. She thinks that students have an idea that this is not completely formal, but that it might be almost a natural part of conversation for them. She knows that when she writes online with certain friends there are natural points in the conversation where she’ll put smiley faces or sad faces,

- 1 and it just seems right. It just seems like it's an appropriate – it just seems
- 2 like it's the way you write. You sort of expect it as part of the flow of the
- 3 language or the tone of the conversation. So I could see them just doing

⁷⁰ As Lindsey tells Melinda, she explains that she is not sure if this fits the interview categories, after all this is not “ethnic” or “geographic” related language variation.

4 that almost naturally. But they also have this awareness that it's not right
5 for formal pieces. They know it doesn't belong in papers.

The next week, when students are writing online, Lindsey asks them to make it proper with standard text and no contractions.

Looking back:

At the end of student teaching, Lindsey revisits these manifestations of language in her class as one of the “big language” areas.

6 Yeah. So the big language things were, I guess, the difference between
7 speaking and writing. We talked I know a lot about informal English
8 versus formal English and how if something's word processed, we don't
9 automatically accept that as a formal piece of writing. There's a time and
10 place for that. Sometimes I don't mind, I just want – as long as they're
11 communicating the information, I'm pretty adept in text speak. So even
12 when they abbreviate and write smiley faces and do all these things that
13 they do texting and online it's fine, as long as **they** know, the differences.
14 So I would like them to have some kind of handwriting practices where
15 they have to write formally just so, so they **can** make that switch. This is a
16 note to your friend, this is an academic...

This field sketch shows tensions between new features and “academic” expectations in writing. As a teacher, Lindsey expressed her desire to value these features while also making sure that students were using them purposely and consciously in particular kinds of writing. She was not completely willing to adapt the expectations for in-class handwriting or online writing and relegated these features to a note to a friend rather than academic discourse. Yet, Lindsey's response also worked against a complaint tradition that functions to keep standard language ideology alive (J. Milroy & Milroy, 1991). What seems to be missing, however, are Lindsey's actual strategies for being explicit about how she would make sure students have this awareness: Is this as simple for English language arts teachers as making an announcement in the computer lab? This raises issues of enactment of LIP in relation to FBL about oral and written standard Englishes, particularly as online spaces call for a range of intersecting linguistic practices and attention to issues of register.

C. Jessica's case: Scaffolding “professional” blogs with language variation concepts

Field Sketch 10: Hitting Two Birds describes Jessica's similar desire to make sure that her students know the differences between “academic” and other writing in blogs. She described how a connection between vernacular language discussions and blog

writing could have helped her clarify expectations for her students. As Jessica grappled with why some students didn't change features in their blogs, she shared her realizations of how students from varied language backgrounds or experiences may not even be aware of the features they included in their blogs.

Field Sketch 10: Hitting Two Birds? (Jessica, Weeks 2-14)

Jessica is disappointed by some of the seniors' final blogs. As early as the second week, Jessica felt tension between her cooperating teacher's conception of blogs "for school" versus a more casual approach that she had imagined taking when constructing a blog assignment. The cooperating teacher's more formal emphasis included following similar numeric grading guidelines as students' other formal papers.

As Jessica explains to students the formal nature of the blogs, one student responds, "Oh, it's like the vernacular that you brought up."⁷¹ Jessica tells Melinda that this student comments helped her realize that being more explicit about the differences in types of writing in the blog space would be useful:

- 1 I think it would have been helpful to talk to them about how they were
 2 writing on their blogs and how that was different. Because that – they
 3 were aware that there was things going on with their blog writing was less
 4 formal, that they were using a different variety of writing. And some of
 5 them were getting marked down more because it was – we did make – like
 6 on my rubric I wanted it to be an exercise in formal writing.
- 7 And so there were, like Vicki, and Elaine, my two students who kind of
 8 got upset during the rap discussion in first hour. They're– like especially
 9 Vicki was very comfortable writing in sort of – I can probably show you
 10 her blog. Like very comfortable writing in a sort of stream of like –
 11 unstructured but like – I think there was certainly features of AAVE in it.
 12 But it wasn't like – not just that it wasn't like AAVE, because it was on –
 13 that's not what I meant to say. But like, her like – she just had like this
 14 different thing going on that was sort of like texting but and there was sort
 15 of like grammatical features that were not standard.
- 16 And there was – it was more like journal-ey but like I really – and I
 17 noticed that throughout. Even though, like, maybe she didn't read the
 18 comments on her rubric or that I gave her because, Okay, that – it didn't
 19 change. And so I don't know if that was like a choice that she made that I
 20 want to blog this way and consequences be sort of whatever. Or that
 21 maybe she didn't perceive a –a difference. So that might have been – there
 22 were certainly things happening there that maybe weren't addressed. I
 23 didn't address them with a large – I mean I did make announcements like,
 24 "OK. You want to, like, focus on making that –that piece as much –

⁷¹ Chapter 6 describes these discussions in more depth.

25

polished as much as possible because it is being published.
Later, Jessica describes to Melinda how the concept of language variation (i.e. descriptive grammar) could be a means for better communicating the purposes and expectations of the blogs. She notes that the standard set was for students to use “academic writing” which she valued as practice that might help them in college. But she also wonders if having students engage in talking about the course concepts in a more comfortable sort of way could have been a good outlet. She questions herself, saying that the way it played out “hit two birds” in that the assignment had students “sharpening writing skills and talking to each other about the course.”

By the final week of student teaching, Jessica revisits this assignment and notes how hard it was for students to write in the “academic standard” required by the cooperating teacher when students weren’t used to writing that way in online forums where it is not natural for them to use “full standard features and complex sentences”. This, she felt, made the assignment more of a stretch for some students than others. Jessica asserts that she would focus on “professional” blogs like her cooperating teacher set up to help prepare students for college. But she poses some changes to how she might introduce the assignment:

26

I would have had more explicit conversations about it that maybe address –

27

because I would be in the lab making reminders and it was on rubric, but

28

really having a sort of, “here’s what I’m seeing and this is what I need you

29

to get to and here’s why”. That – so maybe looking at some professional

30

blogs. We didn’t really do that.

Jessica describes her own experiences with informal blogging and how she would want to show students models of different blogs for different purposes.

This field sketch shows how Jessica moved from valuing the expressive experience of blogging to seeing her role as modeling professional blogging for students, based on her experiences during student teaching. She recognized that simply telling students to write “formally” did not equitably produce the kind of “standard” text imagined by her cooperating teacher (and enforced by his strict rubric).

What was raised here by Jessica, and never fully explored, are the multiple ways students with differing vernacular and digital experiences may interpret what is “standard” on a blog since CMC may actually incorporate varied “standard” features from other writing, much to the chagrin of language mavens (Baron, 2008; Thurlow, 2006). What students were used to in terms of online formality may not have matched the cooperating teacher’s expectations for “standard” or “formal” language. These online forums, used for synchronous and asynchronous communication, may not mirror the highly edited academic discourse required by an essay. Furthermore, what Baron (2008) calls “Internet Language” may actually be characterized partly by its informality

(although she casts this as a potential threat to “writing” and part of a global “whatever” attitude of linguistic decline).

D. In summary: Understanding written/oral language intersections related to online spaces

The illustrations in this section point to the ways participants’ interactions with students related to online spaces for writing and responses to reading. Teaching equitably in relation to these spaces required sensitivity to ongoing issues of the digital divide as well as all students’ experiences outside of school. Students’ experiences included their engagement with language, such as intersections among their potential multilingualism, bidialectalism, and fluency in online registers. Engagement with LIP could provide support in this area, as understanding of language variation had implications for these spaces, yet persistent folk beliefs about written or oral language acquisition and monolingualism may have obscured participants’ awareness of a need for strategies for enacting LIP in these spaces. Jessica and Aileen’s cases both point the ways that language learners or bidialectal students in particular could be stigmatized or challenged by cursory announcements about teachers’ expectations for “formal” or “academic” language in digital spaces. This could be another problematic manifestation of colorblindness for an English teacher, feeding a rhetoric of invisibility and deficit thinking: “Yes, the argument goes, *we concede that your language is perfectly adequate and viable and equal. But, they continue, let’s put it (and you) over there, out of view, where unacceptable otherness can be ignored*” (Lippi-Green, 1997, p. 174).

Communicating expectations about what constitutes academic discourse in these new spaces being used in English language arts requires prospective teachers to ascertain how their particular students might currently use and interact in those spaces. Sensitivity to the variations in students’ familiarity with multiple registers in these spaces, students’ comfort with using digital composing tools, and students’ motivations for publishing their writing, might help teachers integrate online writing more fluently and authentically into their classrooms. Otherwise, what is often billed as a new and exciting site for writing or reading responses in English language arts classrooms could become a chore for students whose teachers feel obligated to police a narrowly conceived version of blogging.

V. Implications: Responding to Unanticipated Moments of Language Complexity

Participants' cases point to ways prospective teachers might benefit from exposure to a wider range of written or oral language uses and the complex ways that these uses manifest in different spaces. To do so, they would need guidance in assessing students' language resources and models of how to act on these assessments. This chapter raises questions about how teacher education might provide tools to help teachers anticipate how language can emerge in multiple forums: literature, assessments of oral and written language abilities, and online writing. Computer-mediated writing provides a useful site for considering the grammatical underpinnings of social and cultural ways of speaking and writing. For instance, the ways computer-mediated writing merges written and oral language might provide prospective teachers with a frame for thinking about linguistic complexity in addition to the underlying purposes for writing assignments and/or specific grading of features in written text.

I argue that the three categories of illustrations in this chapter offer possibilities for supporting more equitable engagement with language and language-related dilemmas in ELA classrooms. These illustrations demonstrate how teachers take up and enact linguistically informed principles in relation to their FBL, such as beliefs about language acquisition, colorblindness, and monolingualism. I am certainly not the first to suggest that prospective English teachers' beliefs about language, and actions based on those beliefs, intersect with their attempts to be culturally responsive or congruent (Ford, 2010). Yet, these illustrations provide insight into how to approach these ideologies in ways that account for the ways prospective teachers can become tongue-tied and frozen with trying to do the right thing. For instance, English educators might consider ways that cultural sensitivity training in universities may have the reverse effect of scaring some prospective teachers so that they don't raise the issue of race, particular in relationship to language, when it would be better if they did.

Furthermore, these illustrations extend past literature focused on white teachers: When white teachers tended to identify strongly with speaking standard English, they were less likely to value stigmatized varieties (Richardson, 2003), which might be due to a lack of experience with linguistically diverse speakers and with internalized deficit models. My study demonstrates the need to focus on more than whether or not white

teachers value stigmatized varieties. The participants all valued language variation to some extent, but they struggled with implementation related to this value, of connecting their revised belief systems to practices, particularly as they faced deeply entrenched practices in the field. These challenges led to their ambivalence about how to frame their planning and assessments, especially when they encountered new, unexpected teaching situations. Recent discussion of how to work ethically with white prospective teachers around issues of multicultural education also has pointed to the need to move beyond a model which casts white teachers themselves in a deficit view and ignores their experiences and ambivalent selves (Lensmire & Snaza, 2010). How do we instill the understanding of linguistic complexity and elasticity needed for effective teachers to “accommodate both the known and the unexpected”? (Cooper, 2003, p. 425). These illustrations point to ways that prospective teachers might develop elasticity in the face of unexpected language situations as well as tools for anticipating these situations.

Some tools already exist that are supported by participants’ incorporation of their own linguistic experiences, such as inquiry approaches that help preservice teachers see variation in their own in/formal and oral/written use. It may be helpful for teachers of a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds to relate their own experiences to writing in varied registers and to consider themselves as both teachers and language users. Then, it would be useful to help them consider their implicit expectations for students based on varied racial, cultural, digital, and linguistic experiences.

The practice of assessment must go beyond simply an insular focus on teacher as language user or on particular types of students as sites of language variation. An extension of this work might be to have prospective English teachers consider the complexity of written and oral variation of student language and practice using varied opportunities for assessment, such as varied genres within handwritten, digital, and oral language use contexts (or contexts which show the intersections of oral and written features). For instance, what are strategies they can use for initial and ongoing assessment that help them see the complexities of multilingual, bidialectal, and register-based language use? Additionally, this could include conversations about culturally congruent text selection (literary or digital) and the language affordances and challenges of those texts for a teacher’s interaction with a particular group of students. This attention to

teachers as language users might offer ways for teachers to move beyond an assumption that there is a one-way cultural or linguistic translation occurring.⁷² Clearly, even hands-on experiences with text selection or student writing in the methods course (as evidenced in Lindsey's illustrations) may not be initially applicable to new situations for all teachers.

Enabling prospective teachers to consider how to structure English language arts teaching in equitable, authentic ways may mean connecting their understandings of LIP with design of culturally congruent units of study. This means pushing against assumptions that there is no need to focus on linguistic diversity in "homogenous" classrooms with students who are perceived as not linguistically diverse (i.e. read by teachers as standard language users and/or white). This is not an argument accepted in relation to teaching multiculturalism and exposes an FBL about which classrooms or students require teaching focused on linguistic diversity in order to promote equity. Assignments, like a unit plan project, could ask prospective teachers to include nuanced descriptions of themselves and their students as language users and how this interrelates with their planning for instruction related to reading, writing, and speaking.

Extending this chapter's description of the complexities of language (and the dilemmas these complexities might pose), the Chapter 6 further explores the ways participants negotiated who they were as English teachers with the expectations (and FBL) of those around them and obstacles related to discussing LIP explicitly with students. Chapter 7 will further build on the illustrations in this chapter to address the power of personal experience for participants and possible scenarios to help prospective teachers bridge theoretical engagement with LIP and practice.

⁷² White teachers in particular may feel they have no culture (like the myth of having no accent) and hold a monolithic cultural view that there is "only one" (dominant) culture or they have nothing to offer to a cultural conversation (J. J. Irvine, 2003). Some people believe that it is possible to have no accent and that "a homogenous, standardized, one-size-fits-all language is not only desirable, it is truly a possibility" (Lippi-Green, 1997, p. 44). This belief is often held by teachers who do not examine their own language patterns and focus, without reflection, on the "bad language" of others.

Chapter Six

Standard Language Ideologies and Obstacles to Discussing Language: Negotiating Language-Related Dilemmas

This chapter provides illustrations of dilemmas that emerged for participants in interactions when they encountered the tensions between folk beliefs about language (FBL) and linguistically informed principles (LIP), particularly negotiating dilemmas related to standard language ideologies. These illustrative examples point to the resilience of standard language ideologies. Further complicating Chapter 5's discussion of participants' blind spots in terms of unanticipated moments of language complexity and colorblindness, this chapter looks at when and how participants addressed beliefs about language and the ideological dilemmas that arose.⁷³ The lens of ideological dilemmas enables analysis of participants' ambivalence and the contradictory nature of their positions in relation to their students and beliefs about language (i.e. FBL and LIP).

As evident from illustrations in Chapters 4 and 5, teacher and student positions; curricular and time pressures; and other constraints on the moment-of-interaction can define if, when, and/or how LIP are enacted. For instance, participants made choices of whether to raise issues of language in whole class or individual interactions. Whether these understandings of LIP were engaged in the middle of a class activity or in a side comment in the computer lab raised different challenges and affordances for participants

⁷³ Chapter 7 will include further discussion of how this work informs how *dilemma* has been used in multiple ways to theorize problems related to teaching, learning, and communication (Berlak & Berlak, 1981; Edley, 2001; Lampert, 1985; Pollock, 2004). For this chapter, I focus on *ideological dilemmas*, which I use to theorize conflicts between FBL and LIP that arose as participants engaged in teaching and research interactions. As discussed in Chapter 3, ideological dilemmas occur when “contrary ideological values” are brought into “argumentative conflict with each other” and both sets of values are managed by the speaker (Stanley & Billig, 2004, p. 160). This concept provides a lens for thinking about how FBL and LIP are not ideologically neutral, nor are they mutually exclusive.

and their students. These illustrations show how ongoing teacher and student interactions were shaped by curricular choices and class time foci, which communicate what is valued in a particular English language arts class. Furthermore, these examples showed the ways participants' enactment of LIP were influenced by story-lines about English teaching/learning reinforced by their experiences, experienced teachers, schoolwide structures, and students' beliefs.

This chapter further highlights the often invisible nature of FBL and explores how even participants who articulated strong commitments to language equity experienced difficulties and ideological dilemmas in the ways they chose to address these commitments with students. As Chapters 4 and 5 started to illustrate, there were gaps between what participants did and did not see in terms of power in their language-related interactions and descriptions of their interactions, such as FBL related to deficit-thinking, whiteness, colorblindness, language acquisition, and standard language ideologies. For instance, Chapter 5 described how William did not see language variety with white (unmarked) students, yet this contradicted his assessment of oral and written differences. Although William resisted some of the prescriptive discourses available to him at his field site, he did not replace this with a descriptive view due to his perceptions that students were white and monolingual. Similarly, in Chapter 4, illustrations showed the ways participants sought to resist deficit ideologies, yet they also struggled to reconcile this resistance at other moments, particularly in ways of addressing language's intersection with power.

To further elucidate this struggle, the illustrations in this chapter focus on the role of standard language ideologies as a source of ideological dilemma for participants as English teachers engaging with students' FBL in classroom interactions. These illustrations reveal how participants did not always know how to respond to the complexities of students' standard language ideologies, were ambivalent in their responses, and may have been constrained by multiple forces. The chapter focuses on two participants who worked to engage with LIP in practice, and their illustrations provide a detailed account of the manifestation of dilemmas related to enacting understandings of standard/vernacular Englishes and discussing language in relation to power with students in specific contexts. As mentioned in Chapter 4, all participants tried to implement

appreciative views of language variation on some level, yet as Chapter 5 notes, they did not all see power and language as relevant for addressing explicitly with their students (or the particular students at their student teaching field sites).⁷⁴ This chapter focuses on Aileen and Jessica who aligned themselves most strongly with this view: They were the participants who most overtly expressed passion for language equity and articulated their reasons for addressing and using LIP as teachers in interactions with students or in whole class interactions. *Case Chart: Chapter 6 Illustrations* shows where these illustrations (*Field Sketches 11/12; Excerpts 8-10*) were located in participants' cases and across the weeks of student teaching (see Figure 6.1).

The first section will focus on Aileen's one-on-one interaction with a student (*Excerpt 8: That's Racist* and *Excerpt 9: That's Proper*). These two excerpts show how a student's and student teacher's beliefs about language (LIP and FBL) complicated the teaching of writing. This illustration reveals the difficulty of enacting a descriptive approach in a prescriptive context as well as the complex interaction between talk, writing, language appreciation, and assessment. The excerpts serve to exemplify how participants, while they rejected overt deficit ideologies as discussed in Chapter 4, also encountered moments of ambivalence related to standard language ideologies. These excerpts highlight what can happen when participants juggle LIP and FBL in one-on-one interactions, specifically the ways students' FBL also shape interactions. Aileen's illustration also reveals her dilemmas related to how to talk about language in teaching interactions.

The second section in this chapter uses *Field Sketch 11: Dangerous Line*, *Field Sketch 12: Discussion Obstacles*, and *Excerpt 10: What Scares Me* to describe Jessica's attempts to incorporate whole class discussion about language variety and engage with LIP across the semester. Jessica was the participant who focused most explicitly on how, when, and if she should raise critical views of language in relation to power and race.

⁷⁴ Jessica went into student teaching with an explicit intention to engage with concepts of language and power. Aileen emphasized the value of LIP to her as a teacher but was not sure of how far her engagement with LIP would go at this early point in her career. William viewed this as general teacher knowledge or knowledge to be used with other populations than white, middle class students. Lindsey also viewed these concepts as a focus for other contexts (i.e. majority of urban or African American students).

FIGURE 6.1. CASE CHART: CHAPTER 6 ILLUSTRATIONS

Key:
 • FS: Field Sketch
 • E: Excerpt

	Weeks 1-2	Week 3-4	Weeks 5-6	Weeks 7-8	Weeks 9-10	Weeks 11-12	Weeks 13-14
Aileen					FS8: Written/Oral Language Intersections		E8: "That's Racist" E9: "That's Proper"
Jessica		FS11: Dangerous Line FS1: Shared Language		FS4: "That's Not Funny"	FS12: Discussion Obstacles		FS10: Hitting Two Birds? (2-14) E10: "What Scares Me"
Lindsey		E2: Not Blaming	FS2: "Face Saving is Huge"		FS6: Appropriate E7: "Funny" Things Happen	FS9: Pictures in Their Writing	FS7: Eyes Opened E1: What Counts
William	E4: All Talk the Same? E6: Assumptions			FS3: Expert E3.1/3.3: Pick Your Battles		E3.2: Pick Your Battles	FS5: Literary Language E5: Speaking/ Writing Differences

She also spent the most time of any participant in engaging students with LIP concepts in whole class activities or purposeful curricular engagement (rather than one-on-one or incidental engagement). The illustration's focus is on two discussions that Jessica reported as difficult and related to language variation. Jessica encountered misunderstandings and tensions due to classroom dynamics that may have been partly related to her positions as a white person and teacher outsider. The dilemmas that arise in Jessica's illustration also relate to content and classroom dynamics influenced by the larger site context. The illustration raises possible sites of obstacles to implementing non-deficit views and meeting language goals even when the teacher clearly articulates an ongoing desire to do so. Jessica's ideological dilemmas, consequently, arose in relation to her desires to address language and power and her difficulties in enacting these desires. These discussions highlight the implications of standard language ideologies and how practical moves (like writing on the board) have powerful implications. The discussions also illustrate how a beginning teacher may have anxieties related to addressing power dynamics for fear of having an "agenda" or crossing a "dangerous line." Further, this illustration shows how Jessica's goal to promote cultural critique in English language arts curricula raised questions for her as she also considered ways to achieve classroom authority and ally with students around language variation.

Lastly, this chapter's discussion section will consider the implications of these illustrations for participants' abilities to negotiate dilemmas and obstacles that arise in order to enact LIP in teaching moments and engage with students' unproductive FBL, particularly standard language ideologies.

I. Aileen and Brianna's Case: "But That's Racist...That Is Standard"

As mentioned in her profile in Chapter 3, Aileen often expressed her desires to foreground student-centered pedagogy and issues of equity over the year and a half that I worked with her. She expressed some unease with incorporating LIP at this stage of her teaching, due to a sense that she did not yet know enough about student language. In fact, thematic coding of Stage 1 data led me to anticipate in an early analytical memo that Aileen might pay attention to language variation on an individual level with students, but would not overtly address language variation and appreciation in whole class situations or

within her larger approach to teaching English language arts. While Aileen reported a short part of a whole class discussion that focused on culture in relation to historical fiction dialogue, she only referenced incorporating discussion of standard English code-switching in one-on-one interactions (she mentioned two other instances besides this account).

The two excerpts presented below are from the weekly debriefing conducted during the last week of student teaching. The text in brackets between the excerpts provides a summary of what happened in the weekly debriefing between the two excerpts. In this illustration, Aileen described a one-on-one teaching interaction in which she was working with an eighth-grade student, Brianna, an African American female, who was revising an “academic blog.” Brianna had been mentioned several times in earlier interviews as someone Aileen viewed as a challenging student who she wanted to affirm in order to encourage increased participation in class activities. Aileen prefaced her description by explaining that we had talked about Brianna in earlier interviews, since she was a student that Aileen had been trying to connect to and had wanted me to observe when I video-recorded her class.

Excerpts 8 and 9: “That’s Racist”/ “That’s Proper” (Aileen, Week 14)

In *Excerpt 8*, Aileen is responding to my question about whether any incidents related to language had happened over the last week. She responded that she had only one to share but that it was “really interesting.” This was notable since over the prior thirteen weeks, I often had to ask follow-up questions in order for Aileen to share “stories” related to language. She then described how Brianna reacted in a “surprising” way as Aileen was reading Brianna’s blog out loud to her while they were working on revisions (see Figure 6.2 for Color-coding Key and Transcript Conventions).

<i>Figure 6.2. Color-Coding Key and Transcript Conventions</i>	
<p>Color-coding Key:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aileen’s description of her actions • Aileen’s description of Brianna’s actions • Characterization of language use (<i>Excerpt 8</i>); specific feature of copula absence (<i>Excerpt 9</i>) • Sites of ideological dilemma 	<p>Transcript Conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bold underline shows emphasis • Period or comma shows falling intonation • Question mark shows rising intonation • : drawn out speech • [x] clarifying information

Excerpt 8: “That’s Racist”

1	<i>Aileen:</i> We were working on her blog post on the very last day of school, I
2	think, and I was reading her work to her and asking her how she [Brianna]
3	wanted to upgrade it because she didn’t do well on it, and we were walking
4	through it together. And so I would read it the first time and then we’d talk
5	about what was missing.
6	She’s like, “That sounds ghetto. That sounds sloppy.” And she’s laughing at
7	herself. And so then we talked about African American Vernacular versus
8	standard English. I don’t know if she completely? got it because she kept
9	saying like, “But that’s racist!” I talked to her about how it’s kind of trying to
10	work against that, but we talked through it kind of, but I’m not sure – she
11	definitely didn’t come to any revelations, but she’s like, “Oh, that’s so
12	interesting. I never knew that.”

Aileen and I talk more about the situation for the next several minutes of the interview. Aileen clarifies that Brianna did not seem “excited” by the new term, “African American Vernacular,” which surprises Aileen. She says that in the end Brianna didn’t “seem to understand.” Aileen talks more about how she didn’t expect Brianna to react that way, and that she had to explain more how the purpose of the term “African American Vernacular” was not to be “racist” as Brianna exclaimed, but rather to describe language use by giving it value rather than calling it “sloppy” and showing how it has “its own structures.” Aileen describes how she feels the conversation was over Brianna’s head and that she tried to emphasize that standard English wasn’t something anyone used perfectly—however that this was something students should “strive for” in their “academic blogs” and that there’s a “time and place” for different varieties. Aileen also explains how she used the metaphor of translation in their discussion by asking Brianna if she ever took another language.

Immediately before Excerpt 9 begins, Aileen talks about how Brianna mostly needed to add missing parts to her blog, and that this was the larger purpose for revision since many of the larger pieces of the blog needed to change to meet the assignment expectations. In Excerpt 9 below, Brianna refuses to change one aspect of the piece that Aileen has encouraged her to change.

Excerpt 9: “That’s Proper”

1	<i>Aileen:</i> I walked her through it and she changed some of it. One thing she didn’t
2	agree with. It would be like if you said, “ You smart ” or something like that, or
3	“ He smart .” Instead of like, “He is smart” or whatever.
4	And so I tried to talk to her about it– and she didn’t, she was like, “You can say
5	that in standard English . That’s proper . Blah blah blah.”
6	She was saying all this stuff, and I was trying to tell her. Well, she kept talking
7	about “proper” first of all, which I tried to explain to her wasn’t the right word to
8	use at all, but I don’t know if she understood any of it because she was still
9	saying it when we were done talking. But , maybe some day she’ll be like, “Oh,
10	yeah. Now I know what you mean.”

First, these two excerpts illustrate issues of language in teaching interactions, particularly how conflicts manifest in classroom interactions in relation to the FBL of interactants, whether they are teachers or students. This teaching interaction was notable to Aileen due to the way Brianna characterized her own writing as “sloppy” and “ghetto” (*Excerpt 8*, line 6). Brianna’s characterization of her writing as representing work worthy of mockery is a manifestation of *standard language ideologies*. In contrast, Aileen asserted that Brianna’s negative characterization would not be warranted if Brianna understood features of African American English (AAE).⁷⁵

Brianna’s reaction aligns with the ways some students internalize that their language practices are “bad” based on mainstream beliefs about “good” language. In *English with an Accent*, sociolinguist Rosina Lippi-Green (1997) describes this as part of the process of language subordination. Language subordination reinforces ideology in a process by which people learn to ignore or trivialize certain speakers based on common standard language ideologies. The internalization of language subordination, and other aspects of standard language ideologies, affirms Eagleton’s description of ideologies as “ways in which people come to invest in their own unhappiness” (1991, p. xiii). As a result of internalized standard language ideologies that subordinate stigmatized language varieties, students and teachers may react emotionally or defensively when encountering issues of language. The literature also has shown that ambivalence about AAE leads some bidialectal African Americans to defend or belittle their choices about code-switching or using certain features.

Another manifestation of deficit thinking linked to standard language ideologies is the “grammaticality myth.”⁷⁶ To some extent, this is what Brianna’s words signal in the yellow highlighted parts of *Excerpt 8*. Furthermore, Brianna’s assertion that “he smart” is “proper” in *Excerpt 9* might also reveal this FBL more subtly. In AAE, “he smart” (or

⁷⁵ For the practical purposes of the dissertation, I use the term African American English (AAE) to refer to what Aileen refers to “African American Vernacular” in this part of the interview. I recognize the complexities of the linguistic debate about whether AAE is a language or a dialect and the value laden implications of using any of the wide variety of available terms for this variety, such as, “AAVE,” “AAL,” “Ebonics,” or “Black English.” Furthermore, I do not claim to know the extent to which Brianna’s actual language use actually reflects features of AAE.

⁷⁶ Participants often resisted this FBL (i.e. see Chapter 4, *Excerpt 1*): This is the idea that if something is not standard English, it is not grammatical (Wolfram, 1998b, p. 108). This is the FBL related to standard language ideologies that sloppy people use sloppy grammar. In this case, Brianna had already internalized this FBL even when Aileen asserted the opposite.

copula absence) is a common grammatical feature (whereas in descriptions of standard English, this construction would require a form of *be*). Brianna's insistence that the copula absence is "standard English" revealed that she might have been interpreting Aileen's editing advice as suggesting that this usage is uncouth, or lesser, on some level rather than a systematic feature associated with AAE. This also may not be a grammatical feature that Brianna recognized as stigmatized or non-standard.⁷⁷

Secondly, ideological dilemmas emerge related to these FBL that informed Brianna's negative attitude about features in her writing and Aileen's response to Brianna (see *Excerpt 8*, green highlighted phrases). As part of the larger interview context, Aileen brought up this interaction in the interview as her attempt to affirm student language and to share her surprise that the conversation ended up somewhere unanticipated. Studies of effective teachers have shown that effective teachers value student language, casting student language as competence rather than deficit; however, in this situation Brianna's response showed her resistance to Aileen's attempt at affirmation. Aileen was surprised by how entrenched Brianna's views of language were in this standard language ideology or deficit FBL related to her language use. Yet, Aileen started by describing how the purpose of the teaching interaction was to "upgrade" (*Excerpt 8*, line 3) an assignment on which Brianna did not reach a certain academic standard. Although Aileen implied that her purpose was to affirm Brianna's language variety when she referred to talking about African American Vernacular "versus" standard English (*Excerpt 8*, lines 7-8), Aileen was also setting up a binary between the two varieties—which within this teaching interaction actually may have functioned to confirm Brianna's belief that what she already wrote in the blog was deficient or sloppy.

This ideological dilemma became salient for Aileen as she grappled with Brianna's response of "but that's racist" (*Excerpt 8*, line 9). As a white teacher talking to an African American student who has internalized certain features as stigmatized or deficient, Brianna's response may indicate that Brianna perceived Aileen as labeling features (that she sees as deficient) as inherent to being African American. In terms of FBL, this is not a surprising or new miscommunication. Linguists have argued about the

⁷⁷ Past work has shown that some features of AAE are more or less stigmatized (Green, 2002). Features that speakers are more consciously aware of are often the first to be style-shifted in more formal registers.

affordances and limitations of labeling AAE using “African American” due the historical roots of the language variety as well as myths that only (or all) African Americans use the variety. Wassink and Curzan (2004) posited that the multiple names for African American English point to ongoing ideological conflicts. Therefore, it is unsurprising that the term “African American Vernacular” might be perceived as racist by Brianna who had already expressed her derision for the features that Aileen was labeling with this term.

Lastly, the available subject positions in these excerpts show how standard language ideologies emerged in Aileen’s description of the teaching interaction. These positions included teacher as equitable/white (racist?)/language authority; student as knowledgeable/unknowledgeable. Aileen interactively positioned Brianna as not understanding the purpose of the conversation because of Brianna’s reference to “African American Vernacular” as “racist” (*Excerpt 8*, line 9) and when she described not knowing if Brianna “understood it” (*Excerpt 9*, line 8). In turn, Brianna’s reactions positioned Aileen defensively in that she felt she had to explain why her use of the term was meant to counteract racism. Notably, Aileen described the conflict in the interaction as about “it” or “that” (i.e. her assertions about language variety) being racist or misunderstood, instead of describing herself as a teacher or person who was being racist or misunderstood. Yet, Aileen did appear to be positioned within the teaching interaction as a white English teacher by Brianna’s reaction; her attempt to use the label of “African American Vernacular” from this position was rejected as racist by Brianna.

In the interview context, Aileen relied on her relationship to me as researcher to read the conversation of “African American Vernacular versus standard English” (*Excerpt 8*, lines 7-8) as one that countered racism and would counteract Brianna’s assessment of her blog as “ghetto” and “sloppy” (*Excerpt 8*, line 6). In earlier interviews, Aileen had already established that she saw valuing student language as important; therefore, as an interviewer, I did take up her response to Brianna’s laughter and self-denigration as a move on Aileen’s part to validate Brianna’s language use. Aileen’s response reflected her ongoing focus in her teaching philosophy on valuing students’ prior experiences, attitudes, and motivations: She consistently positioned herself as an equitable teacher.

In this interaction, however, Aileen negotiated this position of herself as *equitable teacher* who appreciates language variety in relation to Brianna's positioning of her as *white teacher* who interprets Brianna's work within a potentially racist framework. Aileen had stated in the past how understanding LIP had changed her teacher perspective of language variety by providing background knowledge for her as a teacher so that she would not hold prejudices toward student language variety (although she didn't see this as a type of knowledge she would actually enact in teaching). This situation forced Aileen to operationalize this knowledge and attempt to share her beliefs about language variety with Brianna in the teaching situation: "we talked through it kind of" (*Excerpt 8*, line 10).

The dilemmas that arose show the difficulties of "kind of" addressing language variety in a one-on-one situation; much more salient ideologies are at work in the positions available to Brianna as a student who uses a stigmatized language variety and to Aileen as a white English teacher. These dilemmas—inherent in the multiple positions Aileen enacted in this conversation about language variation—reveal how language in teaching involves issues of belief, community membership, and potential fears of inequity or exclusion. Even teachers like Aileen who bring understandings of LIP related to variation into classroom interactions may not recognize how their own positions as teachers, racialized persons, and other situational factors—such as the teaching context and the FBL of their students—influence those interactions.

These excerpts point to the specific challenges related to English language arts teaching. In particular, instruction related to language remains challenging due to the situated, ideological nature of learning about/in language. In the first excerpt, Brianna's reaction revealed the way her acceptance of standard language ideologies led her to denigrate her use of vernacular language as part of the writing process. In the second excerpt, she chose to not accept Aileen's advice for changing a feature not considered "standard" by her teacher due to her belief that the feature actually represented the "proper" use.

What is revealed in these two excerpts are the ways Aileen and Brianna faced ideological dilemmas related to language authority. In *Excerpt 9*, Aileen was unable to convince Brianna that Aileen knew the "right" words as the English teacher and that

Brianna should change “he smart” to a standard English form. For Brianna, “he smart” is standard, is proper. A dilemma arises in the interplay between Brianna’s understanding of “proper” and Aileen’s assertion of what is “right” in standard English. Brianna tried to align her use of language with what is “proper” and what she conceived of as standard due to her internalization of AAE structures. Adhering to her sense of proper use provided Brianna with a position of authority based on her folk beliefs about language use. Brianna’s beliefs about how language works based on her internalized language structures actually superseded her acceptance of Aileen’s position as teacher/authority. Brianna’s refusal to enact Aileen’s correction demonstrated her desire to be “proper”—an adherence to a standard language ideology which took precedence over her desire to make all of the changes that Aileen “walked her through” in the teacher role.

In the interaction, Aileen positioned herself as the teacher and someone who should be the language authority in the situation: while she tried to explain that “proper” is not the “right word” from a linguistic perspective, she also tried to get Brianna to “change” features in order to conform to the expectations for the “academic” blog. Here Aileen was trying to negotiate the dilemmatic position in which she, as an English teacher, is viewed as a gatekeeper who serves to safeguard (and define) standard English while also trying to communicate that understandings of “proper” language are socially constructed. Aileen’s description placed her in two available yet conflicting subject positions: 1) the equitable teacher who asks Brianna to question her use of the term “proper” as a value-laden term; 2) the English teacher who has the authority to define what counts in standard English.

The site of struggle around the copula absence feature highlights a common dilemma for English teachers, and some studies have shown how preservice teachers may seek to promote understanding of language variation but still maintain folk beliefs about language learning, such as oral correction or overcorrection of every written “error” in student writing (see Chapters 1 and 2). As participants in this study negotiated when and how to take up or dismiss aspects of LIP or FBL, they resisted this type of overt deficit language ideology (see Chapter 4), but conflicts around what to do in relation to standard English were much more complicated for them. This illustration shows how Aileen tried to focus not only on Brianna’s use of standard English, but also on helping her add

missing parts of the blog. Brianna's refusal to change "he smart" and insistence on her own definition of "proper" were what remained salient to Aileen: "I don't know if she understood any of it because she was still saying that when we were done talking" (*Excerpt 9*, lines 8-9).

This illustration points to another consideration related to blog writing and academic writing. As the participants' cases in Chapters 4 and 5 alluded to, an added complication is that, for many students, the blog genre is more conducive to vernacular uses of language. Participants encountered struggles when students from a wide variety of backgrounds wrote in new language varieties, or what they considered less-than-academic language, in blogging contexts. Yet, in her description, Aileen positioned Brianna as having a connection to a racialized language variety rather than having a connection to blog writing. When Brianna said, "that sounds sloppy" about her blog, there is a chance that she was actually noting a merger of oral and written language forms and applying standard language ideologies to these forms—there is no way of knowing what the triggering features were for her comments. However, it is apparent that Aileen understood the comments as referring to AAE, and her reaction initiated a discussion of language variety that triggered what Brianna perceived as a racialized position.

Implications of Aileen and Brianna's interaction: Dilemmas in one-on-one discussions

These excerpts illustrate the ways that beliefs about language (whether based on LIP or FBL) and use of language in a particular context can reveal ideological dilemmas that influence students' and teachers' engagement with English language arts content and their interactions with each other. In this illustration, Brianna's ability to persist in engagement with a revision task was inter-related with her beliefs about her efficacy in using language. In turn, Aileen encountered challenges related to how she and her student attempted to co-construct beliefs about language variety and enact those beliefs in their interaction with each other. What is at stake might be a genuine connection with school and literacy practices for students like Brianna. Brianna brings to school a systematic language variety that is stigmatized (by herself and others), yet features of this variety are so intuitive to her (or not consciously stigmatized to her) that they constitute standard language in her perspective. Without careful instruction, Brianna may struggle with

feelings of inadequacy and frustration about how to produce the kinds of work valued in school by code-switching purposely.

These excerpts demonstrate the complications of using language-related terms, like “African American Vernacular,” as well as engaging with interactants’ conflicting beliefs about language. Teachers like Aileen need ways to negotiate between the ideological dilemmas inherent in their positions of helping students to “upgrade” and define what is “right” in their writing while still working with students to critique standard language ideologies about “proper” or better language use. In some ways, Brianna’s reaction to Aileen mirrors the Oakland controversy on a micro-level: Their interaction reveals the underlying dilemmas in communicating about language variety and operationalizing equitable LIP. Aileen lacked preparation that enabled her to engage with “but that’s racist” reactions and interrogate the complexities of her own racialized position of authority.

Larger conversations about standard language also influenced this interaction. The context of the English language arts class and its conversations about language and identity informed Brianna’s beliefs about Aileen’s position and her reaction to the specific words Aileen used to talk about language variation. Brianna’s reaction and beliefs are interconnected with messages being communicated in the curricular context. First, the assignment structure prioritized “standard English.” Second, the overall curricular map did not include discussions of how AAE functions in valued ways.

The next section builds on this illustration by further exploring the ways power and FBL are at work in teaching interactions related to language variation. Moving beyond one-on-one interactions, the next illustration looks at whole class discussions related to Jessica’s planning and implementation of LIP.

II. Jessica’s Case: Encountering Obstacles to Discussions About Language

The illustration in this section focuses on two discussions: In the first, Jessica incorporated a comparison between vernacular and standard Englishes in response to a question students answered in response to an essay; she stopped the discussion short in one class because it seemed too uncomfortable based on how she perceived the classroom dynamics. In the second discussion, that took place several weeks later, students extended

earlier discussions to related to an argument about the value of rap music: This discussion focused on race, culture, and language—and became passionate and uncomfortable for some. Students’ expressions of standard language ideologies complicated these discussions, and these ideologies further challenged Jessica’s abilities to enact LIP in the ways she wanted to.

Field Sketch 11: Dangerous Line below focuses on the first discussion, which took place during Week 3 of student teaching: This was the “really hard week” also mentioned in Chapter 4. Ben, who was mentioned previously as a challenging student, emerges in this field sketch as one obstacle to Jessica’s facilitation of this discussion. This in-class discussion was also a pre-cursor to the swag game computer lab discussion (see *Field Sketch 1: Shared Language*).

Field Sketch 11: Dangerous Line (Jessica, Week 3)

First Hour:

Today seniors in Jessica’s first hour contemporary culture class have a really great discussion about vernacular. The discussion starts in relation to a question from Mirror on America, the college-level essay collection. The seniors were sharing their homework responses to an essay in which the author described how her teenage vernacular was unable to express a certain idea.⁷⁸ A lot of the students had focused on a related question in their written responses. Based on their questions, Jessica describes vernacular language:

- 1 Based on the rules of language, it’s all rule governed, not any different
- 2 from the standard, except for the standard has its labels that are picking up
- 3 prestige and all that. And that by nature of that, everything else is kind of,
- 4 in a lot of ways, given negative views.

Fifth Hour:

In fifth hour, Jessica anticipates this discussion and creates sections on the board for standard and vernacular. She writes “standard” on top and “vernacular” on the bottom. She realizes that she’s simplifying the concepts of standard and vernacular but she wants to “get there” with the fifth hour class. But, she also knows she has been having standoffs with a white male student, Ben, who talks loudly and off topic without raising his hand. Or, he just talks while raising his hand. The other students are frustrated.

In today’s discussion, Ben attacks the essay’s author, a biracial Arab-American author at great length. A biracial student, Clare, speaks from her own experience to defend the author’s perspective, and things get heated. Jessica doesn’t know how to stop Ben who is being loud and forceful. Even though Jessica knows that the fifth hour students want to talk about the same discussion as first hour, she cuts the discussion short:

⁷⁸ Lorraine Ali, "Do I Look Like Public Enemy Number One?"

5 I was just looking at Chris, who was sitting right up front. His face – I
 6 started talking about African American English, and like – and I just knew
 7 I had to put the brakes on this because of the way Ben was attacking
 8 people. Clare was, you know, on edge. The guys were coming to sort of
 9 her defense and saying like, “You can’t say it – think before you speak,
 10 Ben.”

11 I just couldn’t accomplish it with this class. They weren’t – many
 12 of the people in the class weren’t in a spot where they could be respectful
 13 to it, and no one in the class was really, like, that they could. We just
 14 needed to shift gears, because at that point – I was – I said like Chris’s
 15 face – he’s African American – like, I just got this sense from him – I
 16 couldn’t read his face, but I was just like – him kind of being like, “I am
 17 uncomfortable, and I want to – ” I may have just read that because I was
 18 uncomfortable. But, I was just like, this is making people uncomfortable,
 19 and it’s not being productive. It’s not doing what I wanted it to do, which
 20 is just call attention to stereotypes that we have, and here we are just sort
 21 of like getting mad at each other across the room.

Saturday:

On Saturday, Jessica tells Melinda that she feels frustrated and just exhausted something she had not been expecting so early. At lunch other teachers talked about her fifth hour class in lounge and noted that this class has a tough group of students: “Oh, god, I had them.” As she describes this week’s discussion, Jessica recounts her struggle this week with negotiating really difficult, sensitive issues and conflicts with her cooperating teacher’s advice and approach.

Since the fifth hour discussion got cut short, Jessica describes to Melinda how she thinks the ideas might be worked into the arc of the course: This idea of language being one main way that we mark our identity. Even her cooperating teacher noticed she gets excited when she talks about language and her passion came through in the discussion.

She tells Melinda that in hindsight, she thinks she should have flipped the sections of the board and put dialect on the top:

22 Or maybe I would do both so that you could see that we kind of think of
 23 the standard up here, but really, let’s think about them kind of all equal.
Jessica describes to Melinda how in reaction to the sections written on the board, a lot of the girls said, “like slang,” and she didn’t have a chance to explain slang in relation to the terms on the board: “If I’m right about this, like slang being an issue of formality, right, because we can have slang in the standard.” Jessica looks to Melinda for verification, and Jessica says she might explain this concept to her students because of their misunderstanding that slang was like a dialect, like a vernacular, and sort of conflating all those as one.

24 I wanted to pursue this further, but I don’t know how to figure out their
 25 prior knowledge, and I want to know, do they have the perception that
 26 AAVE or other dialects are less? Because I don’t want to just be
 27 preaching that they’re not less if they’re like, “Yeah, we know.”
 28 But, I don’t really know how much they know about languages. I’m
 29 assuming not very much, because it really took me two years at

30 Midwestern University before I encountered it in a course. So, do you
 31 think I'd be safe to assume that they **still** have maybe unquestioned ideas
 32 about sort of like what languages are – like – because there's – I'm trying
 33 to think of some, like just these ideas that like, "Oh, African American –"
 34 Oh, I think people in my family, I know it's not a – it's not – because it's
 35 not following these rules, it's less, kind of that idea. And I think probably
 36 most of the students, regardless of ethnicity, have internalized those things
 37 because it's so **predominant** in our culture.

Jessica asks Melinda if she had that sense with her high school students. Melinda affirms that in her experience a deficit view is often pervasive. Their conversation continues as Jessica describes a number of resources she relates to this discussion, such as a clip used in methods from American Tongues and How English Works, a text she used in a linguistics course.⁷⁹ Jessica also talks about wanting other resources like an urban dictionary and planning to learn from her brother about rap, which she sees as helping with the music/poetry part of her upcoming unit.

Jessica talks about running her ideas by her brother because she is afraid she is going to misinterpret aspects of hip hop culture. She describes listening to hip hop but being disconnected and not knowing a lot of cultural references – like the hip-hop culture because there's so many words that you just don't know if you don't know the culture. She thinks that music can illustrate certain points that she is trying to get at of

38 how language is or can be an in-group thing and it can serve functions of
 39 bringing people together in that way in a community sort of sense.

As she describes these future plans, Jessica talks about how the course was focused this week on segments of culture, i.e. cultural differences and cultural identity, but that at some point they will "kind of zoom out." But she wants to make sure they are not just representing this white standard sort of thing in the subject matter. Yet, Jessica tells Melinda that she is struggling with having an "agenda":

40 I – I do have an agenda. I have an agenda that I think that this is valuable,
 41 and I think maybe that's a dangerous line to walk, and I'm already sort of
 42 seeing that. It would be easy to just sort of look – do the discussions and
 43 read the essays and – because like my cooperating teacher admitted, he's
 44 like, "I usually try and shy away from these sort of heated discussions with
 45 them, because they don't have the skills, a lot of them, to have productive
 46 discussions," which was clearly illustrated on multiple days this week.

Jessica describes her worry that she'll be seen as a liberal teacher who lectures students. She pauses as she describes how she finds the study of language differences valuable, but questions whether she has the right to impose this on students.

47 The fact that I find this valuable, like, (.3) do I have the right to impose
 48 that on people even though I find it really valuable? It still is having an

⁷⁹ Jessica no longer owned this book. Jessica talked to Melinda about several curricular resources over the course of the semester, and borrowed some books mentioned in the "as methods instructor" parts of the weekly debriefings, but she never borrowed *How English Works*.

49 agenda, and it's – and my choice to emphasize language differences in my
 50 unit and in with how this course will go is I – probably the main thing is I
 51 need to have thought out the reasons that I would back – why I would
 52 back that up and have them be sort of well formed. Reasons that the
 53 average person, regardless of where they're coming from, can say, “You
 54 know what? There is value in – ” you know, practical value, not just
 55 ideological sort of reasoning, like motivations behind why I'm doing it in
 56 class.

Jessica tells Melinda she is still working on that reasoning, describing how her cooperating teacher called her attention to something she said in class. He wrote down that Jessica said, “I want to encourage you to think about the values that you give to languages and different varieties of languages.” In response to this discussion with her cooperating teacher, Jessica describes how her future approach may involve language study:

57 One way to do that is to try and remove the value from it and just look at it
 58 as like a system, and then that can have benefits for teaching standard,
 59 because it's not this untenable thing, same time, like, level the playing
 60 field, I guess, like that other – there's room for other varieties to have
 61 value in that, I guess.
 62 [*Jessica laughs as she continues*] These are like my like seedlings of
 63 thoughts about it. Yeah, it's a very complicated issue.

Implications of Field Sketch 11 for whole class discussions

In *Field Sketch 11: Dangerous Line*, multiple dilemmas arose for Jessica in relation to the class discussion about language variation. First, while Jessica wanted to incorporate language-related discussions into her course, she feared moving forward in fifth hour because of the ways students seemed to be positioned in relation to each other in adversarial, racialized ways. She also did not trust her ability to guide them in respectful ways from her position as teacher. She described putting the “brakes” on the discussion and shifting “gears” based on the discomfort she senses in an African American student and herself (lines 7; 14-19).

Secondly, Jessica described the power in how she talked about language, even the ways she positioned varieties on the board in relation to each other and how this positioning might critique or reify students' standard language ideologies. Yet, she also was conflicted about whether she should have an “agenda” (line 49) or focus on “value” (line 57) when it comes to language, which may have signaled her ambivalence about standard English and her role within the school and in relation to her cooperating teacher, a teacher who shied away from such discussions. Her cooperating teacher's comments

(lines 43-46) affirmed a story-line that discussions of language are inherently heated and potentially problematic in English language arts. These comments reinforced the belief system that affirming “nonstandard” varieties represents a “liberal” position.

While Jessica described her awareness of in-group possibilities for language, she also stated her need for resources in better understanding language in relation to culture. She recognized herself as an outsider on some level, but also seemed conflicted in whether she wanted to focus in the course on an all-as-one view of culture to focus on differences versus similarities. Although Jessica recognized, at least internally or in looking back, that she had encountered students’ standard language ideologies about “slang,” she was unsure of how to operationalize this knowledge effectively in the group discussion. She expressed discomfort with “preaching” if students already understood some concepts. One interpretation is that she interprets a teacher’s role as neutral whereas “preaching” (line 27) involves conversion to new beliefs. This wording suggests that dialect equality is a belief, not an observation about the nature of language (Wolfram, 1998a). This underlying belief that dialect equality is a belief system functions as a fundamental ideology that informed Jessica’s dilemmas. Her further concern about comfort and class dynamics seemed to suggest that she was wary to tackle concepts that might disrupt relationships between students (especially racial ones) or engender discussion that she felt she could not control as the teacher.

While Jessica described her need to prepare lessons explicitly to combat students’ FBL, she never found time to implement some of what she had hoped in her unit, in particular the focus on power or value related to language. This may have been partly because Jessica was conflicted about having an agenda in comparison to her cooperating teacher: This is a “dangerous line” for her to cross. In many ways, Jessica aligned her teaching with the overall school climate and her cooperating teacher’s advice about tackling an ideological issue. Her fear of having a liberal teacher agenda—which she may be interpreting as meaning she is not equitable—drove her choices and she felt like she needed a rationale and to be able to communicate her reasons for focusing on language variation. She described needing to have reasons that show the practical (rather than ideological) value (lines 54-56) and suggested that perhaps a focus on language as a system would be less controversial (lines 57-58).

In some ways, Jessica's avoidance of the ideological mirrors that of sociolinguist Walt Wolfram, who has suggested that sociolinguists might be better off by "flying under the ideological radar" in their efforts to raise the public's awareness of and appreciation for language variation (Wolfram, Reaser, & Vaughn, 2008). Over his years of dialect awareness work, Wolfram developed principles for public engagement with oral language variety, such as avoiding hot button topics, providing personal relevance, starting with people's interests and tendency to notice language differences, and framing language diversity positively. His dialect awareness curriculum, *Voices of North Carolina*, is implemented in social studies and focuses on multiple aspects of language variation before it brings in community perspectives on AAE. Jessica's added challenge, however, is that English language arts discussions emerge based on varied aspects of language variation. For instance, participants' cases in Chapter 5 also show how issues of power and language emerged in discussions of literature and complicate a strategic focus only on oral language.

In the weeks after this discussion, Jessica made some attempts to engage with language variation in a couple of ways. During Week 4, Jessica picked up on themes she mentioned, raising questions about language when telling students to write their blogs in academic English. During Week 5, she incorporated a lesson about vernacular *like*, based on the worksheets in David Brown's *In Other Words*, a book used in methods.⁸⁰ As mentioned in earlier chapters, even though Jessica was not satisfied completely with her integration of LIP into her unit plan, she was able use her awareness of students' FBL in relation to planning for teaching the class novel. As a "Caution" on early lesson in the unit (Week 6), Jessica wrote her rationale for in-class reading of the novel: "So that students receive the message that reading the text is valuable. Some students hold negative fixed notions about non-standard dialects. It is important that they make the effort to understand the chief's language so that they become better readers and more well-equipped to live in our multi-dialectal world."⁸¹ Without the events of Week 3 (*FSI; FSII*), Jessica might not have had this awareness. Yet, as Chapter 5 describes

⁸⁰ In Ford (2010), Tina, an African American student, discusses how acting white includes using "like". Similarly, (Bloome & Clark, 2006) provides a description of discourse-in-use as situated process in which "like" is constructed as a feature of talking white.

⁸¹ As Chapter 5 illustrates, this area was a difficult one for students, and Jessica still was not prepared for some of the resistance that she encountered.

(FS4), Jessica encountered ways that language and race surfaced in the novel, and she scrambled to rethink her focus, reflecting later that her unit should have taken more time in this area. During Week 9, Jessica talked about how she had wanted to use the conception of “language as a social, civil right from coursework” but explained that she hadn’t fleshed this out in her unit.

Jessica’s case shows the complications of a beginning teacher’s attempts to engage with language and reframe what counts as text or critical learning in English language arts, as has been suggested by “New English Education” (Kirkland, 2010). Even with Jessica’s stated attempts to incorporate this kind of critical learning about language, the expectations for graded assignments in the class did not prioritize this theme. The grading rubrics, conceptions of academic blogs, and even Jessica’s attempts at language-related discussion still underscored more traditional views of standard English’s priority in English language arts. Furthermore, Jessica’s cooperating teacher’s response to the situation also may have shaped her future plans: He noted that language variation was an area she was passionate about, which may have influenced her focus on this area; and he noted the complications of her approach, which may have heightened her sense of dilemma. This interaction may have served to close down Jessica’s sense of the opportunities available to address language, as she may have taken to heart the cooperating teacher’s cautions about the nature of these discussions as heated, something to potentially shy away from.

Extending this illustration of the ways larger conversations in a school or class influence language-related discussions, *Field Sketch 12: Discussion Obstacles* highlights a second all-class discussion that took place during Week 10 of student teaching. Jessica recounted this discussion as one that was connected to language and discussions of power and authority. In conjunction with *Field Sketch 11*, *Field Sketch 12* illustrates the missed opportunities Jessica identified and the obstacles that arose to the discussion she wanted to have.

Field Sketch 12: Discussion Obstacles (Jessica, Week 10)

First Hour:

During first hour, Jessica is being observed by her Field Instructor⁸² as she

⁸² This field instructor was an experienced English teacher hired by Midwestern University.

conducts a class discussion. Students are writing an essay about rap and today's discussion is about the value of rap music. The rap discussion gets really intense when Vicki and Elaine, two African American female students who hardly ever participate, become passionate in their argument about whether current rap music has less violent imagery.

Jessica asks, "Are you sure there's no violent images now? Because I think we could find some for sure."

In a split second Vicki perceives this comment as an attack on her, an attack on her people. Vicki links her reaction to the overall school policy to not play certain music or very little rap music at dances.⁸³

Jessica is surprised that the students are assuming that she is criticizing their music. It was so odd to Jessica because she considers herself a member of the hip hop generation, that it's 90 percent of her music, and suddenly students are perceiving her as saying, "Your music is bad for these reasons."

When she tries to explain this, one of the students says, "No, you're on the teacher side now."

A white female student connects this discussion to their earlier discussions about vernacular: "It's like the vernacular, what you were talking about before. It has value and all of that."

Between the first and fifth hour discussion, a student reports that first hour students were "yelling" during the discussion. Jessica isn't sure how her Field Instructor will respond and wonders if she will see the discussion as appropriate or out of hand. Jessica is relieved when the Field Instructor says, "That was great. They were excited about the story and they wanted to talk about it."

Fifth Hour:

Jessica notices that Chris, the only African-American student in fifth hour, just didn't have anything to add. She wonders if this has to do with the dynamics of his three goofy white friends in the class that take liberties who had the issues with the drawing.⁸⁴ She doesn't know if he feels he'll be teased or judged by them, even if it's not malicious. She wonders why Chris is very quiet in most discussions but is not quiet in the halls.

Looking Back:

Later that week, Jessica tells Melinda that it was really cool that the students made connections about the vernacular although she really should have drawn upon that in hindsight as a teachable moment. She could've elaborated and reminded people about the differences between vernaculars and standards, but she didn't go there. Now in hindsight she really wishes she had. But, she tells Melinda that time has been a pressure and she hasn't been able to incorporate all the mini-lessons she would like as she is juggling grading and planning:

- 1 In many ways it feels like driving blindly in the dark and then you look
- 2 back and you're like, "Oh. How did I get here and what stops did I
- 3 actually make.

Jessica describes her concern for students' comfort level in the discussion:

⁸³ Jessica revisited this interaction during the Week 11 debriefing. Vicki is the same student referred to in Chapter 5, *Field Sketch 10: Hitting Two Birds*.

⁸⁴ See Chapter 5, *Field Sketch 4: "That's Not Funny"*

4 I would need to structure that and if I could do it again, I don't know
 5 how it could just make that more comfortable for people so that people
 6 could – more people could participate and it wouldn't have felt like –
 7 had this pocket of white girls and the girls in the back that were feeling
 8 like they're on the attack because they perceived that people were not –
 9 were criticizing them.

She talks about rooting future discussion in looking at the text, as a skill students need and a concrete way to talk about intangible things rather than who argues the loudest and the strongest.

At the End of Student Teaching:

While Westlake seems proud of its diversity, Jessica describes how it feels like this doesn't always make for open, easy discussion in the classroom the way you would expect. On one hand, she feels like the message is "Great, we have all these different backgrounds and it's going to make expressions really rich." But often she feels that discussions are hard, although she admits to Melinda, "A lot of times maybe it's just me being really, really nervous and not wanting anyone to get offended; it sort of makes it hard I think. Well, especially in my fifth hour where I have such combative personalities." She attributes this partly to how the conservative students say they don't have a voice and that readings are liberal. She feels the emotional immaturity in the fifth hour class may be another reason it is "difficult to have respectful discussions in a diverse setting without it getting silly, without it getting to the point where it's not serious and it's not productive."

As the trimester ends, Jessica visits other classes. When she asks a teacher about effective ways for working with African American students at the school, the teacher jumps to the conclusion that Jessica wants to talk about lower performing students. Jessica tells Melinda how this interaction made her worried to draw on stereotypes by even asking questions about race or culture. During observations in her last week of student teaching, Jessica notices that there are no African American students in some AP classes and a lower percentage in others. Even though Jessica describes how she has considered talking to the school's African American principal about the racial dynamics at the school and strategies as a white teacher for acknowledging race and culture in her teaching, Jessica feels she can't ask him for advice for fear of being misunderstood.⁸⁵

Implications of Field Sketch 12 for whole class discussions

This illustration points to ways that students positioned Jessica as a language critic and teacher authority rather than an ally, which created dilemmas for how to approach her engagement with LIP. While Jessica saw herself as part of the “hip hop” generation, students saw this position as incompatible with being a teacher. This incompatibility may stem from understandings of English teachers as gatekeepers or

⁸⁵ After this comment, Jessica described how excited she was to work with Spanish speakers the next semester. This seemed to imply that she interpreted this as a more accessible field site for her to have discussions about language and culture.

simply the school's larger story-lines about race and representation. Furthermore, Jessica described how an African American student interpreted Jessica's question about violent images in rap as an "attack on her people." Jessica positioned herself as a white teacher (whose motives were misunderstood) in relation to this student. Students' positioning of Jessica as teacher made her unsure if they saw her as an ally in discussion. She also described how the conversation fed into a larger us vs. them mentality in the school in which teachers and administrators restricted the expressions of students. In this discussion, the students' defensiveness about their valued music cast their teachers as authority figures who dismiss them as violent or deviant (a position which interrelated with the school's policy of restricting certain kinds of music and clothing like hoods or head gear).

Jessica's case shows how she was unable to enact her commitments to language equity within the trajectory of the discussion. She recounted how she felt she missed a teachable moment about language and was not sure how to incorporate students' passions in a way that felt appropriate. Her concern with comfort levels continued, and Jessica vacillated between attributing this discomfort to her nervousness about offending someone or to the unsafe or immature classroom dynamics. She appeared concerned about various levels of discomfort in the discussion: 1) white students who might feel attacked or criticized; 2) African American students who might feel unsafe; 3) herself as a teacher who is misinterpreted (due to language, age, or race) and as a teacher who is unable to control the discussion so that it is not "out of hand."

In terms of enactment of LIP, this illustration also points to Jessica's desire to address student language and culture while being unsure of support in the building from other teachers and administration. This field sketch describes the way Jessica missed an opportunity to emphasize "differences" in language variety, but she didn't "go there," and this ambivalence may have been related to her cooperating teacher's advice earlier in the term. While Jessica focused on differences between varieties, which could reinforce standard language ideologies, the way she used "vernaculars" and "standards" as plurals shows that Jessica acknowledged the multiplicity of varieties and resisted reifying standard language. This missed teachable moment serves to illustrate how Jessica may

have lacked ready strategies to enact LIP and engage with students' FBL. Specifically, she grappled with dilemmas of when and how to address standard language ideologies.

Beyond her cooperating teacher's advice, institutional conversations about race/culture/identity seemed to matter and influenced students' responses in the discussion as well as Jessica's ability to explore the implications of race at her field site. When she encountered deficit thinking about race across the school, Jessica seemed silenced in her quest to explore how to best meet the needs of students. In some ways these experiences simply affirmed that she was pursuing a "dangerous line" by trying to talk about power, race, and language. For instance, Jessica described how she was unsure of how to raise questions about culturally responsive teaching moves without tapping into institutional story-lines that focus on deficit ideologies related to race. As a further case in point, Jessica recounted how Westlake was compared to Eastlake ("the white, rich kids' school up the road") during professional development about the ACT and the achievement gap between the schools. She interpreted this presentation as one example in which people at the school saw Westlake's more diverse student populations as deficient even though she also wondered if score disparities were based on income differences.

Part of Jessica's quest for further discussion about race at her field site stemmed from the ways she grappled with the potential differences between students and her desire to be an equitable, culturally responsive teacher. Yet, as *Field Sketch 12* shows, Jessica's experiences with other teachers led to a fear of being misunderstood. This fear further silenced her and kept her from talking more to the school's principal for fear that she, as a young white teacher, would be misinterpreted as having a racist, deficit view of African American students.

Excerpt 10: What Scares Me further illustrates how Jessica ended student teaching with questions about whether she was doing enough to reach African American students in the middle achievement range and about how to enact her understandings of LIP in order to do so without inadvertently feeding into divisive or unproductive FBL and broader deficit ideologies about African American students.

Excerpt 10: What Scares Me (Jessica, Week 14)

1 There's certainly a possibility that I'm not doing enough to reach them and
2 that there's more elements of their culture of learning styles could be

3 incorporated. This is what scares me, is I don't mean to say that — they're
4 sort of different! That's really scary to single somebody out and make a
5 broad generalization about it. That's probably the area I'm most unsure
6 about. I have noticed-- I think I mentioned one of my focal students that
7 she had a difficult time with the vernacular standard worksheet that we
8 had done but everyone else was able to decipher real quickly the
9 differences. So then maybe there with the language difference, I would try
10 to use more bridging features.

This excerpt signals the ways Jessica understood some complexity in terms of race and language, in that she hesitated to make any “broad generalization” (line 5). Yet, she noticed some differences and language difficulties that she felt need to be addressed. She asserted, “they’re sort of different!” (lines 3-4), and yet showed her discomfort with identifying differences or singling anyone out. While she began to formulate some of her response to difference by using “bridging features” (line 10), her enactment of LIP was not rooted in particular teaching moves. Based on Jessica’s representations of her site, it is hard to imagine that she will have an open conversation with others at her school. Even though the area of cultural responsiveness was one that she was “most unsure about” (lines 5-6), it was also an area which Jessica stated she could not broach with others at her school. Issues of difference “scare” her because she worried about not being able to teach equitably, yet she also expressed fear about how she should address this difference in conversations with other teachers. In relation to English language arts subject matter, which includes languaged tasks that can often veer from vernacular use, this concern of equitable instruction is particularly relevant.

III. Discussion: Illustrations of Standard Language Ideologies and Obstacles to Discussing Language

Aileen and Jessica’s cases in this chapter show the dilemmas that arise in the moment of teaching in relation to power, language, race, and standard English. Due to the discomfort and challenge of these dilemmas, new teachers like Aileen and Jessica may start to avoid discussions of language variety—whether these discussions are one-on-one with a student or part of a whole class conversation. These cases show the ways critical discussions about language can easily become silenced or sidelined due to conflicts that arise in relation to ideologies of race, language, and culture. By providing a micro-level

view of these dilemmas, these illustrations may shed light on how to provide preservice teachers with ways to respond more effectively to students' defensive responses (like "but that's racist") or structure strategic discussions related to power and language in English language arts.

English teachers need preparation that keeps them from walking away frustrated or bewildered by students like Brianna who bring their own deeply held beliefs about language to teaching interactions. Participants' cases begin to show why it might be hard for preservice teachers to engage with LIP. For instance, these examples illustrate how links between FBL and identity can have important consequences for classroom interactions, especially interactions related to writing instruction and discussions about language variation. Interactions between students and teachers call upon potentially racialized links.⁸⁶ Beliefs about whose language counts, and where it counts, are internalized at a young age, and these beliefs influence students, both in secondary schools and teacher education, differently depending on how they are positioned. Teachers need tools for thinking about how they engage in classroom interactions to negotiate and construct understandings of language and identity. I posit that attention to standard language ideologies in particular provides opportunities for addressing colorblindness and other stereotypic beliefs that can prevent English teachers from engaging in effective teaching interactions. Furthermore, standard language ideologies help describe FBL that are particularly salient for English teachers due to the potential dilemmas that may arise.

My findings show how, in relation to race and language, participants were not necessarily aware of how they were positioned racially (i.e. Aileen and Jessica) until the moment of teaching in which they struggled to articulate and enact equitable linguistically informed principles. These findings echo aspects reported in "A Visibility Project," in which Gere, Buehler, Dallavis, and Haviland (2009) described how new English teacher candidates brought a "raced consciousness" to teacher education that

⁸⁶ Preservice teachers and teacher educators may grapple with similar competing ideologies. For instance, a study of preservice English teachers confirmed this negotiation: "In class discussion, instructors drew on linguistics to argue that facility in Black English should be seen as a resource and that students should be taught code switching rather than see Black English as "wrong." Brent, along with other students of color, pushed back, testifying to the emotional and real-world stakes attached to using Black English" (Gere, Buehler, Dallavis, & Haviland, 2009, p. 832).

“surfaced in the ways they positioned themselves in classroom interactions and interviews” and “gave students a heightened awareness of how they were being read racially by others” (Gere et al., 2009, p. 827). In my study, there were also multiple ways participants were being “read” by their students (as raced, as teacher, or as insider/outsider due to age). On some level these readings were also the participants’ readings of themselves as they thought through their weekly experiences—this awareness could have been activated as participants planned for how to engage with language discussions. For instance, as an experienced teacher, Bob Fecho realized much later in his career how important it was to acknowledge his position as a white teacher of African American students as he raised issues of language and identity in the classroom (Fecho, 2004). In terms of language, this awareness could be much more useful at the outset of a teacher’s career.

Such an awareness, and how to operationalize that awareness, could have helped Aileen and Jessica anticipate students’ responses to them in discussions and might have sensitized them to potential language-related dilemmas. Teachers like Aileen might benefit from understanding how bidialectal or bilingual students like Brianna internalize deficit and standard language ideologies and, subsequently, how they might respond to discussions of variation based on these and other FBL. Even when teachers like Jessica do recognize the pervasive nature of students’ deficit and standard language ideologies, they might benefit from considering how their own positions—as teacher authority or language user—also intersect with race and identity. On the other hand, this awareness needs to avoid paralyzing new white teachers like Jessica by providing ways for them to conceive of themselves as equitable white teachers and language users.

The illustrations of Jessica’s “uncomfortable” discussions raise further implications for how larger school and curricular forces might also influence new teachers’ abilities to enact understandings of race and language variation in particular contexts, especially when larger institutional discourses about race focus on deficit models. It is notable that participants in this study did not struggle with overcorrection of students or fears that students would think “nonstandard” English is “correct” if they talked about language variation. They did not denigrate dialect in literature. In fact, participants’ cases show their overt attempts to do the opposite, yet both participants

struggled with how to best communicate the linguistic complexities they were attempting to share with students. Studies do show that teachers' attitudes towards AAE affect pedagogical practices and often these attitudes can foster negative expectations, which leads to negative performance (Green, 2002). Yet, this study shows that even beyond a positive attitude towards AAE, a teacher like Aileen would benefit from clearer ways to articulate the rule-governed aspects of AAE. Jessica would benefit from ways to approach questions of value and the ideological aspects of language learning in a whole class setting.

Both Aileen and Jessica's illustrations raise questions related to operationalizing equitable linguistically informed principles. For instance, the interaction between Aileen and Brianna raises questions, such as: Is it possible for teachers to affirm student language variety in one-on-one interactions, especially if this is not part of a more extended aspect of the classroom learning? When a white teacher like Aileen knows about and values AAE, how should she respond when a student reveals internalized deficit models? How can she both value variety within that situation and help a student see patterns that are useful when editing writing? How might issues with teaching students how to code-switch between language varieties also intersect with students' use of computer-mediated-communication in which oral and written aspects of language often merge?

Furthermore, Jessica's illustration raises questions about how to support new teachers (or help them find support) and the need for recognizing the value of multiple communication styles as a valued aspect of English language arts study. Geneva Smitherman describes the stakes for all students: "Ultimately, *both* black and white students must be prepared for life in a multilinguistic, transnational world" (Smitherman, 1986, p. 219). While not all participants took up this call (particularly Lindsey and William), Jessica claimed to want to achieve this goal. These cases may provide some clues for how to support teachers like Jessica and all prepare teachers to negotiate dilemmas that arise and work against obstacles to powerful learning about language.

Chapter Seven
Leveraging Language for Equitable Teaching:
Future Research and Implications

At the heart of this study is the quest to promote equitable teaching for all students. My goal is to address this without pointing at my student teaching participants as a problem, but rather to consider ways that teacher educators can help future English teachers grow into equitable, effective teachers in relation to language understandings. By providing a detailed description of participants' experiences, the rich and robust data in the results chapters offer implications for English education and teacher education more broadly. This chapter explores the claims I am making about all four participants and how these claims were illuminated in the three results chapters in which illustrations from participants' cases were placed in the background or foreground to highlight different purposes. First, I will revisit the nature of the problem or phenomenon being studied, as introduced in the introductory chapter. Next, this chapter will explore the overall claims in relation to framing the problem. The discussion will include an analysis of the affordances and constraints of the study in relation to the problem and considerations for reframing the problem. I will explore understandings of dilemmas as a way to theorize future educational and research applications. Finally, I will conclude by describing a rationale for generating scenarios from the study's field sketches and how these scenarios could be connected to future application and research.

I. Revisiting LIP and FBL

The original impetus for this study was to provide research on how preservice teachers understand linguistically informed principles in relation to folk beliefs about language, particularly as they make practical teaching decisions. My framing of the problem of how preservice teachers negotiate conflicts between three categories of

linguistically informed principles (LIP) and folk beliefs about language (FBL), posited that English teachers encounter multiple problem sites related to language, such as anxieties about grammar instruction, technology-based writing, and the needs of English language learners and bidialectal students. The goal of the study was to look at the nature of this struggle in order to understand better why preservice teachers are often unable to enact productive, linguistically informed principles that counter unproductive folk beliefs about language.

Now I return to this original way of defining this problem in English education and describe how this study contributes to understanding and reframing the problem. This study has illuminated various anticipated problem sites and addressed the complicated ways that participants described their enactment of LIP. Participants' cases revealed language ideologies, myths about language acquisition, and issues of race, which led to dilemmas related to story-lines about being an English teacher. There was some evidence that discourse analytic and sociolinguistic concepts may have facilitated enactment of equitable dispositions. As noted in the results chapters, all participants engaged with some aspects of the three categories of LIP relevant to English teaching, which they learned about in teacher preparation: principles of 1) language equity, 2) descriptive approaches to grammar, and 3) consequential language choices in classroom interactions (see Appendix A, column 1 for more details). In relation to each category of LIP, concepts emerged in participants' descriptions of their interactions with students that appeared to help support enactment. FBL also emerged in relation to each category of linguistically informed principle and created tensions in the enactment of LIP. Key practices and sites of enactment also emerged in the study results and raised further questions. For instance, in Category 1 (language equity and variation), the ways teachers framed online writing and talked about race emerged as areas of enactment, raising questions: Why did participants not anticipate the challenges in these discussions or plan purposely to incorporate these concepts into curricula? What is happening in relation to race that complicates engagement with LIP? (Appendix B lists additional sites of enactment and questions raised in each category.)

In order to determine the implications as I revisit the nature of the problem given the study results, it is crucial to question whether or not the tension between FBL and

LIP is useful in teacher education applications. My original organizing study questions assumed tensions between FBL and LIP. This framing relied on a view of the effects of FBL as primarily negative and LIP as primarily positive. Unsurprisingly, the study results present a much more complicated picture. Sometimes LIP, because of the ways they are engaged with or taken up, could be seen as actually having a negative effect. For instance, knowledge of these principles may have had the power to stymie or tie the tongues of participants, limiting their ability to act. In particular, the complexities and assumptions about race and language may have complicated participants' abilities to communicate appreciation for language variation and enact descriptive approaches in prescriptive contexts. Furthermore, FBL also can be conceived of in positive ways. For instance, some scholars have used folk linguistics and language ideologies to refer to a wider range of beliefs about language, such as beliefs about the benefit of a variety or ability to speak multiple languages.

Given this complicated picture, is it useful to continue to define the tension between LIP and FBL as a problem? The three results chapters do shed light on the powerful and sometimes commonsensical nature of deficit ideologies, colorblind/monolingual myths, and standard language ideologies. These FBL certainly lived in tension with LIP as participants attempted to engage with linguistic concepts in practice. Interactions between LIP and FBL often emerged due to contextual tensions, such as different manifestations of conflicting ideologies in different situations or at different times, blurred in the same situation as revealed by participants' language. Yet, LIP also helped participants resist unproductive ideologies and in many cases participants looked for beliefs from others' experiences to support or counteract these ideologies. My suggestion is not to completely dismiss or abandon this initial frame, as it is one that can highlight key tensions between domains of understandings about language.⁸⁷

The implication for English education is that the “problem”—or dilemmas related to helping new teachers enact linguistic principles—is located in multiple domains: Dilemmas reside in the English language arts content/field and in *how* specific

⁸⁷ One could argue that it may not be the framework of LIP that is limited but rather the challenge of engagement with new understandings; LIP clearly may not be the primary factor in stifling talk about race, as more general anxiety might be at work. In fact, LIP may provide opportunities to engage with these anxieties and may provide an understanding about where teachers might look for further support for future engagement with LIP.

teachers work with English language arts (ELA) content with a range of students in particular schools. My future research can continue to redefine and work with this problem. Given that FBL are present in the field—held by cooperating teachers, students, and participants at different times and configurations—how then can this dissertation provide insights into how to prepare future teachers so that they will not become overwhelmed by language-related challenges?

The next sections will explore possibilities for how to use the results of this study to consider ways to prepare teacher candidates for common challenges and further elucidate generative future research. I consider the implications of the study to posit that we would benefit from more meta-awareness about how we approach language-related domains in teacher education, specifically considering why race and “grammar” remain challenging areas. As I theorize the main understandings of the study in the following sections, my purpose is to consider uses for practical application while exploring the complexities inherent in this problem in relation to practical application. I suggest the need for additional research in some areas of language understandings as well as some tentative sites for application of understandings from the study. I also discuss the design of research for potential follow-up studies of applications that I have suggested.

II. Supporting Movement in Response to Language-Related Dilemmas

Ultimately, this study can provide insight into how to help beginning teachers move past unproductive positions or the places in which they might become stuck in relation to language. My goal here is not to focus on beginning teachers’ deficits, but to suggest potential interventions to how teacher educators might better work with these preservice teachers so that they can, in turn, more fully nurture the learning of their students. I posit that the study results contribute to teacher education conversations about *how* preservice teachers negotiate coursework, pre-existing beliefs, field experiences, and ongoing practice. Given these results, how can we best help new teachers leverage linguistic understandings in order to encourage equitable learning? What are some possible concepts or approaches that would keep them from taking up inflexible or immovable positions in relation to race and language?

In the end, the complexity of teaching situations means that ELA teachers need a flexible, adaptable approach to engaging with LIP in their teaching. Findings show participants' need for affirmation and ongoing access to resources. I posit that attention to language-related dilemmas as well as generative positions and story-lines (about language in ELA teaching) could be useful. The discussion that follows addresses the larger matter of how to help preservice teachers avoid immobilization in the face of dilemmas that arise in practice. Based on the study results, I argue that the application of and study of purposefully framed dilemmas in relation to LIP and FBL in coursework and field sites could extend past perspectives of dilemmas as an aspect of teaching practice.

A. Equitable positions and story-lines about language in English education

The obstacles participants faced in negotiating their dilemmatic positions as English teachers with the expectations of those around them, such as Jessica in Chapter 6, provide potential contributions. As a tentative implication, this study confirms past work and affirms that *how to act* or *what to do* related to language is important to equity and gives some clues to what this should or could look like.⁸⁸ Across the three results chapters, multiple positive positions of students and teachers emerged, such as students as knowledgeable and teachers as equitable, student-centered, or appreciative. Other less generative positions also emerged, such as students as deficient; teachers as authoritative, racist, or all-knowing. These positions influenced the ways that participants enacted LIP and story-lines that interrelated with these positions may offer ways for English educators to frame prospective teachers' engagement with specific story-lines related to language. Although these positions could be seen as fairly generic for all types of teachers, such as psychologist Carol Dweck's concepts of fixed or growth mindsets,⁸⁹ I argue that my

⁸⁸ James Gee (1989) describes how publicly oriented secondary Discourses—like the identity kit of being an English teacher—can engage (and exist in tension) with initial Discourses. For instance, these tensions emerged in this study as participants began to examine their language use and racialized positions as they engaged with language conversations as teachers. Additionally, they may have encountered multiple secondary Discourses about what English teachers should know about what Gee refers to as belongingness or knowing *how to act* or *what to do*. For instance, participants' new D/discourses from teacher education coursework arose as they coped with tensions that arose during teaching. In some cases, they encountered competing or affirming Discourses at their school sites. Their multiple positions as teachers interrelated with the socially enacted ways that multiple Discourses functioned across contexts.

⁸⁹ A fixed mindset conceives intelligence as static, which can lead to giving up in the face of obstacles and avoiding challenges; whereas a growth mindset welcomes challenge and learns from failure (Dweck, 2006).

study provides detailed description for how to think of these positions in relation to English teachers.

Understandings about what it means to be an English teacher, for example, raise different language-related dilemmas than those associated with being a social studies or another type of teacher. These differences make conversations about language in ELA difficult to have without addressing powerful ideologies that may be racialized in the U.S.; consequently, English teachers have to consider when it is pedagogically useful for them to explicitly address power in relation to language and race. My work pushes back against Wolfram's concept of working "under" an ideological radar⁹⁰ by suggesting that in some ways English teachers can never work below the ideological radar; they have to choose which ideologies (and how) to put on the table. While Wolfram's concept is useful for considering ways that some triggering events, i.e. discussions of "Ebonics," may have more weight than others, this study points to how these events may not be obvious to new teachers. Conversations about race and language can emerge due to the situated nature of classroom interactions, depending on the positions of students and teachers as well as how language in texts can signal ideologies. Wolfram's metaphor does provide a starting point for considering how English teachers might navigate issues of race that link to more loaded conversations in ELA. Because these conversations are never "under" the radar in some sense, teachers need to be aware of their potential and strategic about what to prioritize in curricula and classroom interactions. This study further points to the ways that the shift from student to student teacher may complicate this issue, as professional acculturation adds another layer to how new teachers may approach (or avoid) these conversations.

Because I suggest that the ways power and race intersect with language in ELA make it challenging to pinpoint ways to talk about these topics without potentially triggering the "radar," I posit that teachers need tools for understanding how they might work with defensive reactions by considering how and when to address these issues as part of the overall curricula, considering as well how whiteness may function in relation

⁹⁰ This phrase is from sociolinguist Walt Wolfram, who has suggested that sociolinguists and educators might be better off by "flying under the ideological radar" in their efforts to raise the public's awareness of and appreciation for language variation (Wolfram et al., 2008). Flying under the radar entails avoiding defensive, racialized reactions to linguistic understandings of language variation.

to language. For instance, English teachers are expected to know about language in different ways than other secondary teachers. They often are expected to know and enforce prescriptive grammar rules as well as how to teach students to read and write “properly” based on larger circulating FBL and curricular priorities. Participants in the study internalized these ideologies about English teaching (along with ideologies of valuing student language) and they talked explicitly about pressures to know language well in order to teach it, such as knowing how to correct spelling or mark prescriptive grammar. In some cases, like with Aileen, they had access to LIP that enabled them to reject limiting prescriptive ideologies or curricular foci, pushing back against whether or not this kind of correction should be a priority. Prescriptive expectations in the field put a burden of responsibility on novice and experienced English teachers to approach language in certain ways. This could actually steer new teachers away from equitable practices of teaching all students to be critical and effective readers and writers and could steer them towards default (often deficit) ideologies promoted by inservice teachers.

As a case in point, this study points to a potential gap in the available experiences for participants during student teaching. Figure 7.1 shows how participants lacked experience with cooperating teachers (CTs) who explicitly used descriptive strategies in the field that would enable them to incorporate more systematic language study or assessment without adopting a prescriptive model. Therefore, it is unsurprising that this was an area where they felt uncertainty about their abilities to engage with these practices or did so in a limited way only after an issue arose. Notably, it does not appear that any of them used descriptive approaches in conjunction with grading, even though all of them did use prescriptive grammar to some extent in grading. Despite training in functional grammar approaches, this knowledge was not immediately accessible in assessing student writing; for instance, Lindsey needed an explicit conversation with her cooperating teacher in order to start identifying English language learning patterns in student work.

These findings have relevance for sociolinguists who are interested in finding ways to engage in public conversations about language variation and appreciation. In particular, results show the specific challenges faced by beginning English teachers and raise questions about the level of usefulness for “flying under the ideological radar.”

Although the participants' engagement with understandings or resistance to these understandings in one context may not be the whole picture, institutional and mentor teacher support appears salient. Participants tended to take on the approach used at their field sites in which the immediately accessible curricula, approaches, and assessment tools influenced their choices.

Figure 7.1. Documented Focal Language Study Practices During Student Teaching

1. Spelling correction
2. Error editing (student papers)
3. Identification of patterns in student language
4. Identification of English language learner patterns
5. Identification or explanation of formal and informal features
 - a. Essay
 - b. Blog (“academic”)
 - c. Parable or creative writing
 - d. Other handwritten assignments
6. Discussion about language variation
 - a. One-on-one or small group
 - b. Whole class
 - c. Appreciation focused
 - d. Correction focused
7. Incorporation of language study (prescriptive)
 - a. In grading
 - b. In lesson planning and implementation
8. Incorporation of language study (descriptive)
 - a. In grading
 - b. In lesson planning and implementation

Key: ~=partial implementation; ?=uncertainty about extent; **bold/italic**=TC did to please CT

<i>Participant</i>	<i>CT's Approach</i>	<i>Own Approach</i>
Aileen	1, 3, 4(?), 7a~, 6ad	3, 5bc, 6abc, 7a~, 8b~
Jessica	1, 2, 7ab	1, 2, 3, 4? , 5b, 6a (oral), 6bc (oral), 7ab , 8b
Lindsey	1?, 2?, 3, 4, 5a, 6ac~, 7ab	2? , 3, 5abcd, 7ab
William	1, 2, 7, 6ad	1, 2, 3, 5c, 6ac (oral), 6b~ (written), 7ab, 8b~

Yet, beyond the positions of grammar maven or red-pen perfectionist, there *were* other accepted ways to construe the English teacher's responsibility for working with language that emerged in the study, such as the social constructionist or student-

centered view promoted in coursework and in some field sites. There were models of how an English teacher can read a book for the first time with students and model what a first time reader does. A similar approach could be taken with language—this approach would make it appropriate for English teachers to say they don't know every grammatical term or history of English language and still be a good English teacher. However, due to the strength of story-lines about language and English teaching that are still ever-present—especially in light of new technologies—new English teachers may take on this burden of responsibility and assume a mantle of language police without considering the equitable implications. English educators may gain leverage by providing resources or models that describe how very experienced teachers work with student language, supporting access to new uses and varieties while rejecting authoritative or language maven positions.

In this way, the study results offer alternative ways to think about English teacher knowledge and could provide a starting place for thinking about educating other prospective teachers in ways to prevent them from being immobilized by the complexity of language. Chapter 4 provides examples of positions of English teachers that could help them move beyond the “stuckness.” By incorporating positions and story-lines related to equitable teaching and offering ways for new teachers to find support, English education could better address teacher candidates' anxieties about teaching “grammar” and provide more applicable ways to incorporate more systematic language study. English education also could promote positions that enable prospective teachers to keep growing rather than reaching the place where they don't read certain books or don't ask certain questions due to discomfort with the complexities of race and language.

Equitable positions and story-lines —Possible next steps and limitations

Future research in English education could extend this study to document salient positions related to language in English teaching and/or explore the ways a range of prospective teachers engage with language-related dilemmas in relation to these positions and story-lines at varied field sites. For instance, what positions and story-lines enable poly-lingual teachers to work effectively with students? What positions and story-lines support bidialectal or multilingual African American teachers working with

monolingual or multilingual students? White, monolingual teachers working with a majority of multilingual or bidialectal students? Future research could also explore the reasons why new teachers seek or access particular linguistic resources and perspectives of other teachers and for what purposes; how do the interrelated story-lines about language in ELA teaching communicate value to other teachers and/or to their students?

B. Language as a lever for equitable engagement with language-related dilemmas

Ways of enacting LIP, as this study shows, interrelate with positions of English teachers and these positions' relationship to power. What it means to be an English teacher, and story-lines about policing language, complicated the ways that participants positioned themselves or were positioned by others. These positions have implications for equity. So, how might these equitable positions for English teachers be more effectively developed in English education? One finding from the results chapters is the way particular language (about language) and concepts can be useful for helping preservice teachers name and understand examples of complexity in language. Participants' cases raise the profile of particular concepts as certain understandings emerged repeatedly and were taken forward with them into the classroom. These concepts provide potential leverage in movement towards equitable teaching. I use leverage as a metaphor here, noting that any "lever" requires careful attention to the design and effectiveness of the fulcrum (i.e. attention to the situated classroom interaction) that supports movement in any particular context.

By exploring language in teaching interactions and ways of teaching language-related content, the results chapters point to both the complexity and familiarity of language-related dilemmas. The results chapters further illustrate how a framework that recognizes language as ideological, dilemmatic, and situated might provide ways of thinking about challenges for teachers who attempt to enact language understandings in equitable ways. In this section, I argue that language serves as a key tool for addressing language-related sites in English education.⁹¹ For instance, a pedagogical approach to

⁹¹ Here it is important to note my research view of culture in relation to other linguistic research. While on one level, I see the value of a social science view of discourse that assumes that "all communication is based on underlying ideology through which individuals interpret the world" (Busch, 2009), I argue, along with a constructionist approach, that "culture and its influence on interaction are constituted in different

LIP in teacher education that incorporates *language ideology, dilemma, and subject positions* could be used as a tool for identifying (or possible addressing) crucial areas of prospective teacher learning, like their ability to enact racial and linguistic understandings in a variety of contexts. There are limitations of this approach, such as the complexity of these terms—yet a distillation into key curricular principles could help solidify this knowledge for teachers. Study possibilities could include tracking participants in such a program and describing how participants engage with these concepts in practice.

As a case in point, specific language about language, or teaching-language concepts, emerged as potentially useful across the chapters. The study shows *how* engaging with language concepts happened and this engagement filtered through the ongoing experiences of the four prospective teachers. In Chapter 4, concepts like *code-switching, style-shifting, saving face* and *positioning* enabled participants to name and enact positive ways of positioning students as active and capable learners. On the other hand, Chapter 5 showed ways that participants were unsure of how to talk about their experiences and students' language abilities. They were uncertain about how to discuss language with students, encountered unanticipated sites of language complexity, and needed affirmation of their approaches or understandings from others (cooperating teacher, past instructors, field instructor, other teachers/peers), often struggling to put their experiences into words. Chapter 6 demonstrated how prospective teachers' language use can reveal and elicit dilemmas. Furthermore, the chapter showed how concepts related to *vernacular, standard, and AAVE* led to dilemmas and need for participants to access more resources for how and when to address standard language ideologies.

These results signal ways that teacher educators might use language strategically and conceptually to help teachers operationalize principles in relation to practice. In the study, some enactment issues related to equity centered around “grading” or assessment, including how to gather information about students' language abilities; respond to students orally and in written comments; and utilize rubrics and lessons that work with students' strengths and learning needs. This kind of enactment requires both

ways within a given situation.” This means moving beyond a view of cultural knowledge (in this case language knowledge) that pre-supposes that intercultural communication is simply a matter of learning new cultural knowledge and applying it.

noticing language variety and knowing how to incorporate these understandings into larger curricular goals. Being explicit about the ways particular concepts (and related practices) inter-relate with equitable positions might be one area that could support teacher enactment in planning and assessment. For instance, how teachers might analyze their assessment choices could be an area in which language principles could be highlighted in relation to equity.

Participants' cases also highlight the ways language functions as a tool in the moment of teaching to establish effective interactions with students. This study provides a useful window into power dynamics that are inherent in available ELA teacher positions, such as equitable teacher or classroom authority. Language provides one tool to help examine and unpack these positions, particularly in relation to power, colorblindness, and whiteness. Although this study focused only on white teachers, and may not have direct implications for teachers who do not identify as white, it does highlight the salience of race in relation to language in schools for both teachers and students in the United States. Teachers have to be able to communicate their goals in meaningful ways with students both individually and collectively while understanding teachers' multiple positions as a language user, authority, and racialized person.

Furthermore, I argue that this study points to helpful discourse analytic tools that might help unlock the black box of classroom management, especially for new teachers. Clearly, I am not the first to suggest this (see Ford, 2010; Rex & Schiller, 2009). More traditional views of classroom "management," such as teacher as managing authority or disciplinarian, surfaced in the results chapters. However, participants questioned this view of the teacher, offering more interactional or non-adversarial approaches. These findings raise key questions: What is the added value to this more interactional, language-aware approach to thinking about authority for student teachers? Do interactional approaches, and language to name these approaches, help new teachers persist with more equitable positions when faced with other teachers' confrontational teaching approaches?

Language as a lever—Possible next steps and limitations:

Primarily, this study produced tentative understandings that need further research or application and systematic study to see whether they are useful or not. Based on the study results, my future research might include comparison of students who have explicit discourse analysis training in classroom interaction to those who have not: Does this kind of training enable teachers to approach classroom interactions differently? What affordances and disadvantages might arise? Are there variations related to being in different field sites, such as suburban, rural, or urban sites? Are there key interactional concepts that consistently help unlock the black box of classroom “management” for a range of new teachers in a variety of schools?

For instance, study of discourse analytic concepts could take place on a larger scale—comparison between teachers of various backgrounds, subject areas, or school environments would be one way to frame a larger study. Another way to study this could be through developing and studying assessment of teachers in this area, such as a clinical assessment in which teachers engaged with this knowledge and were asked to describe a student’s achievement in a simulated parent/teacher conference or talk to a student about writing. A post assessment reflection could surface how tacit or purposeful a teacher’s response is when trying to enact a stance of language appreciation or positioning students positively and equitably. Video-recording and using discourse analysis to analyze the range of student teacher responses could help teacher educators determine how to best support new teachers in engaging with equitable language concepts in new situations.

Although the study results point to the potential for explicit conceptual knowledge as a tool to support new teacher enactment of equitable linguistic understandings, it also points to limitations of this approach. Calling upon complex concepts in the moment of teaching can have unexpected results. The study results show the pressure around language that participants experienced: They may take up views of English teachers that mean that they have to assess and understand language perfectly rather than applying a frame of student-centered or student inquiry. While teachers need to have some linguistic knowledge to facilitate such inquiry, there is clearly not time in teacher education to mould beginning teachers into mini-linguists. Participants’ quest for affirmation about linguistic concepts (from me and others) reveal the ways that, even

after some focused study of LIP in coursework, enactment is often difficult and linguistic concepts are not solidified or accessible months later.

While this study does offer some insight into key or durable concepts that might help participants name and understand linguistic phenomenon, it more importantly points to productive positions that enable teachers and students to interact more equitably and effectively. Clearly, English educators, teacher educators, and educational linguists want to do more than raise prospective teachers' awareness of language to the point of triggering anxieties about the complexity that they do not completely understand. Chapter 5 shows the moments of surprise, the anxiety, and the second-guessing that can happen for prospective teachers. As a useful lever to move beyond the moment of surprise or a tongue-tied acknowledgement of complexity, I argue that a useful goal is not necessarily for teachers to have the perfect language to label what is happening linguistically. Beyond naming "ESL/ELL/bidialectal/LEP" students accurately or precisely, conceptualizing effective positions could help prospective teachers create structures in which their students (and they) are empowered to investigate language. Like Lindsey and William (Chapter 4), prospective English teachers might benefit from questioning the position of English teacher as an all-knowing expert about language—a position that causes anxiety and locates linguistic power in the authority of the imagined standard English using teacher. Instead, a more generative position could enable new teachers to build understandings of students' strengths and identify areas for support and future learning. It would be further useful for teachers to take on this position along with understandings about bidialectal and multilingual students (i.e. the multiple ways that students may come to English from another language), as the power relationships differ in the differing and complex domains of what participants referred to as "language diversity."

Next steps also could include work that looks more explicitly at how to enable prospective teachers to take on multiple positions and flexible views of language that enable them to engage with language complexity in equitable ways. This work would focus on supporting teachers in understanding language in order to promote effective learning for those who historically have been disenfranchised in the educational system. For instance, further study could involve designing field-based teacher education

interventions focused on practices related to language complexity. This agenda would expand my work to a larger and longitudinal scale in order to study ongoing enactment of linguistically informed principles: What practices enable teachers to incorporate these principles into their classrooms in powerful ways over time? This line of work would inquire into both preservice and inservice English teacher learning in a wide variety of schools, with an extended focus on how this learning interrelates with student access to learning.

Ways of learning in/about language: Being and becoming languaged teachers

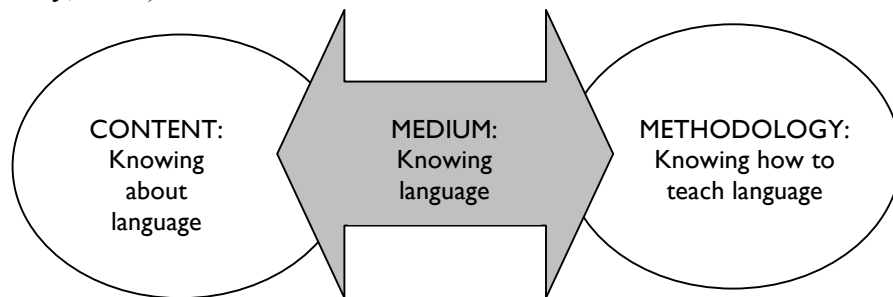
The study's results also complicate cognitive views of new teacher learning. Participants' experiences did not fit neatly into a stage-process model, and they had different ways of engaging with past and current experiences. The illustrations from participants' cases in Chapters 4, 5, and 6 speak to participants' ongoing interactions with experienced teachers and how willing they were to accept these teachers' strategies as the most effective and equitable ways of teaching ELA. When participants sought affirmation and asked for my view on certain practices that were discussed extensively in methods, it became clear that prospective teacher learning about language is not an all or nothing phenomenon.⁹² This might be explained by Bloom's work by saying that participants could be moving up a hierarchical scale: remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, or creating (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001).

However, participants' movement back and forth on this scale demonstrates the recursive, contradictory, and non-hierarchical characteristics of learning about language in/for teaching. Yet, as their use of specific course language might imply, language concepts may provide a lens (or the words) in which to identify a phenomenon they encountered in coursework and then start to engage with this in their teaching. The compartmentalization of language understandings in aspects of English education can

⁹² It also is important to address how implicated participants' coursework experiences were in what they noted as language-related, effective, or surprising. Participants' work with me in methods surrounding language and in their other language-related coursework might shape what they were able to even recognize as a language-related incident that surprised them. Would participants have identified these surprising moments if they hadn't had exposure to language in my course and others? They may not have identified these surprising moments without this exposure to language in coursework. In some cases they were attempting to engage with lenses from methods, such as the variation between formal/informal writing, differences in spoken and written language, discussion of online writing, myths and facts about language acquisition, and ELA as a languaged subject.

create further complications; to understand the complexity teachers may need language concepts to ground how they respond to dilemmas. To consider the multiple intersection sites of language concepts, or language “knowledge,” it is useful to consider the emergent view of language knowledge for/in teaching that Freeman, McBee Orzulak, and Morrissey (2009) applied to assessment in second language teacher education (see Figure 7.2).

Figure 7.2. Emergent View: Language Knowledge for/in Teaching (Freeman, McBee Orzulak, & Morrissey, 2009)



One possibility is to use this model as a frame for principles and positions that might be of use to English teachers. This view helps uncover the multiple goals in assessing prospective English teachers’ ability to enact language understandings that promote equitable ELA teaching. English educators could draw insight from using a model that intersects aspects of languaging in ELA teaching. This model could help with solidifying English education goals for what ELA teachers need to know about language (Content, i.e. LIP), what they should know about using language (Medium), and what they should know about teaching language (Methodology). As argued in the emergent view, separating the dancer from the dance is not necessarily useful. Therefore, enabling prospective teachers to investigate their own positions as languaged teachers could help across these three areas.

Sharing understandings with teacher candidates of how these three areas work in concert might promote greater understanding and flexibility. The scenarios described in the next section might help elucidate the ways these areas intersect in a teaching interaction. Focused *Content* investigations (and subsequent assessments of their learning) could include how teachers’ experiences and understandings relate to their

choices for how to focus on language at a structural or curricular level. This sort of investigation could help them locate potential minefields related to FBL. *Medium* investigations could focus on their abilities to use teacher language effectively (and awareness of how this functions in interactions with a range of students and in response to language-related dilemmas). *Methodology* investigations could mean understandings of assessment of language ability and how to create meaningful interventions and connections related to language, despite potential dilemmas.

C. Engaging with dilemmas to prepare for complex contexts of teaching

Beyond identifying specific concepts to create a workable meta-language about language in ELA teaching, this study offers unique insight into understanding the challenges and dilemmas that new teachers face in the complex contexts of teaching. I argue that this study offers insight for teacher education regarding the nature and usefulness of dilemmas. For example, findings show the complications related to planning and assessing in ways that support effective student/teacher interactions. Findings also demonstrate the ways that engaging with race and power complicate language-related classroom interactions and planning.

On one hand, overemphasizing dilemmas in teacher education might be counterproductive—any teacher educator knows how much new teachers want to be told what to do and how to do it. Yet, beyond scaring future teachers with all the possible tensions, complexities, and dilemmas that might face them as teachers, working with language-related dilemmas might be useful and have practical applications in teacher education. I suggest ways of thinking about and working with dilemmas in relation to this study that could provide less overwhelming ways to engage new teachers with applicable language knowledge. First, I will explore the nature of dilemmas in relation to teacher learning, this study, and past work on *dilemma*. Then, I will describe possibilities for using scenarios that might make dilemmas visible—to an extent—in order to inoculate prospective teachers to engage with future sites of tension.

Implicit in the results of this study, in relation to dilemmas, are understandings of learning processes. Theories related to dilemmas are extremely useful because they shed insight on the difficult problem of teaching, learning, and enacting linguistic principles.

Specifically, I argue that my results expand ways to engage with *dilemma* in English education. *Dilemma* has been used in multiple ways to theorize problems related to teaching, learning, and communication: as an ongoing conflict that must be managed by teachers in the practical work of teaching (Lampert, 1985), as located within a person (Edley, 2001), as located in cultural contradictions, institutional sites and structures of social change (Berlak & Berlak, 1981), and as unavoidable in race talk (Pollock, 2004). By using these scholars in conversation with each other, my study extends this concept in order to consider ways to provide leverage in language-related teaching. In relation to this study's results, I argue that *dilemmas* were located simultaneously in the ELA content and the participant; these dilemmas also were informed by the larger school context and ways of engaging with race.

This view extends Magdelene Lampert's (1985) view of teacher as dilemma manager. Lampert conceptualized dilemmas as an argument with oneself (the teacher) that can't be won. The teacher brings the self to managing the dilemma, such as his/her own experiences in school. As the teacher works to be the person he/she wants to be, he/she has to submerge conflict in a workable way and cope with, rather than solve, the dilemma. According to Lampert, this conflict is something teachers must accept as an ongoing condition that is useful to the work. While my study confirms this type of active negotiation in many ways, it also extends Lampert's work by offering potential strategies by which participants cope with the unsolvable or dilemmatic aspects of language in English teaching. One such resource is having a way to name the dilemma or aspects of the dilemma, particularly in relation to other confirming or disconfirming forces. Another resource may be ways for the teacher to consider positions in relation to others at the site of the dilemma and how these positions are mutually constructed through language. As I posit later, another useful resource in supporting the dilemma management of new teachers may be ways that other experienced teachers model the negotiation of dilemmas.

Specifically, the study results may offer some insights into ways that whiteness, colorblindness, and language raise potential dilemmas for beginning English teachers. Across all three chapters, we can see how participants experience the uncertainty of being a new teacher as well as how to engage with race. For instance, Chapter 5 documents

Lindsey's reluctance to talk about race during interviews. This reluctance to talk about race or culture in relation to language in some ways kept her from affirming the bidialectal abilities of her students. Similarly, researchers Love and Kruger (2005) found that successful teachers of urban African American students can sometimes express conflicting ideologies of colorblindness while also holding race and culture to be important. These teachers' efficacy, despite problematic ideology, shows how lived ideology may function in complex ways. Their study illustrated, nevertheless, how effective teachers incorporate linguistic and community understanding by recognizing the nuances of their unique teaching contexts. What is key here is that the teachers did not completely shut off their engagement with race and language.

This points to a key way in which my original framing of LIP was limited by not being explicit about intersections with race. It is possible for concepts, such as register shifting to be generalized in ways that do not account for race or promote desired culturally responsive pedagogies. New white teachers, in particular, need awareness of how their language experiences may both intersect with and diverge from those of students from different backgrounds; race can be a factor in U.S. schools. Ford (2010) noted, "For White teachers who are native speakers of general and standard English, this involves appreciating that shifting between an informal register among friends to a formal register among work colleagues, as they may do, is very different than a person of color shifting dialects according to different audiences and situations. While understanding how language use shifts according to context is necessary, an understanding of how those shifts are situated within and reflect racialized power dynamics is more aligned with culturally relevant and responsive pedagogies" (p. 329). When teachers like Lindsey adopt a colorblind stance out of fear, this motivation shuts off potential for further understanding of the racialized power dynamics.

So, what are the implications from my study about *how* English education might approach discussions of "racialized power dynamics" in ways that avoid simply scaring preservice teachers so that they don't raise the issue of race, particular in relationship to language, when it would be better if they did? The study shows how linguistic training and learning about the complexity of language (such as, not all African American students speak African American English) can lead to a type of silencing. Teachers like

Lindsey could become tongue-tied because they don't want to assume that students have certain linguistic ability, even when they suspect intersections between race and language are at work. Additionally, fears of making a racist misstep can inhibit teacher learning, such as the way Chapter 6 shows Jessica's silencing within her school, due to both other teachers' deficit views of race and her fear to talk about race due to fear of being misinterpreted as racist.⁹³ While this is certainly an issue that may be bigger than LIP, engagement with language-related dilemmas might provide ways to address underlying issues of race, power, and silencing.

Integrating practical language-related dilemmas in teacher education may mean focusing attention on how we frame talk about race and language in teacher education. Mica Pollock's *Colormute: Race Talk Dilemmas in an American School* (2004) offered analysis of race talk dilemmas that may be useful in response. This work showed how discussions of "all" students and suppressing race labels—especially in teacher/student relations—can lead teachers to reproduce "racial patterns by not publicly dismantling them" (209). In some ways Jessica's private conversation with me about race and language mirrored Pollock's results of teachers' talk in private versus (lack of) public engagement with questions about academic performance. Pollock pointed to the need for schools to set aside sufficient time for compassionate conversations about race amongst teachers that engage with the complexity of race talk dilemmas.⁹⁴ Yet, this is simply not the reality at most field sites and is an area that might be initiated in teacher education.

Participants' dilemmas related to race and discomfort with talking about race and language can be informed by Pollock's work. Pollock's study described ways that when high school students analyzed the racial label "white," it served to "expose racial classification as a system of differentiating 'peoples' in order to distribute power" (p. 39).

⁹³ I am not trying to suggest that participants should have always talked about race and language. There are cases where the best approach may be to not talk about these topics. For instance, in Jessica's first discussion, she stopped the discussion about race and language because she did not have a respectful class environment. I am not trying to imply that this was the wrong move. A more responsive environment for students may certainly be necessary given the larger racial and social dynamics—yet how will Jessica move in this direction if the other teachers' feedback is that these conversations are simply beyond the emotional maturity of students at the school?

⁹⁴ Pollock provides several examples of race-talk dilemmas: "We don't belong to simple race groups, but we do," "Race doesn't matter, but it does," "The de-raced words we use when discussing plans for racial equality can actually keep us from discussing ways to make opportunities racially equal," "The questions we ask most about race are the very questions we most suppress," or "Although talking in racial terms can make race matter, not talking in racial terms can make race matter, too" (p. 214-17).

As demonstrated in the participants' interactions with their students, students are aware of whiteness in relation to their teachers' positions and their assumptions about language use. Their teachers need ways to conceptualize their own positions.

To enable beginning teachers to move beyond color-muteness on one hand and colorblindness on the other, English education might provide safe spaces for prospective teachers to engage with these understandings. Pedagogical spaces need to provide ways to help students "speak without fear within the contexts of their own specific histories and experiences" (Giroux, 1997). For Giroux, this means connecting Whiteness with ethnicity. In cultural studies, discussions of whiteness offer insight into how to consider "Whiteness as a shifting, political category whose meaning can be addressed within rather than outside of the interrelationships of class, race, ethnicity, and gender" (Giroux, 1997); I add language to this list. Even more compelling is Giroux's call to pedagogy that allows students to "air their positions on Whiteness and race" regardless of the potential messiness: In his view it is better for white students to attempt these conversations and make mistakes rather than be silenced (and, one imagines, clean up these mistakes if necessary). Certainly, teacher educators or linguists do not want to educate a generation of white teachers who are petrified to say or do anything related to race and language.

The practice of dealing with language-related dilemmas, particularly those related to race, is to see that there are multiple ways for looking at those dilemmas and moving forward. My study suggests that to provide equitable learning, new ELA teachers may need the ability to speak back to other positions of ELA teaching based on linguistic dispositions and knowledge. In moments where participants were able to enact linguistic understandings, they demonstrated their need to affirm their choices through access to resources, such as experienced cooperating teachers' methods, past course materials, emotional responses related in their own experiences or empathetic responses to others, and verification from me during research interactions. It is also clear how uncertainty sometimes led to their avoidance of language-related issues.

Engaging with language-related dilemmas—Possible next steps and limitations:

One next step might be to use scenarios generated from this study to help preservice teachers recognize potential moments of uncertainty or tension that might arise

for them in practice. By using actual preservice English teachers' perspectives and dilemmas, these scenarios could offer insight into how to better support preservice teachers in enacting linguistically informed principles that promote equitable learning. These scenarios could help new teachers consider ways to push back against ineffective FBL or unexamined practices at future teaching sites. The study provides moments that are recognizable in teacher education and could provide a more detailed and useful account of situations that participants were in when dilemmas arose. For instance, dilemmas emerged when teachers engaged in one-on-one conversations with student writers, dealt with issues of standard language, graded writing or speech, and presented information about language variation; these scenarios would be grounded in these specific situations.

However, I make a caveat here that any use of the study for generating scenarios involves consideration of what is of use for application, what needs more study before application, and *how* to carry out any future applications. One immediately transferable understanding could be ways that dilemmatic scenarios could help new teachers operationalize concepts (like showing the relationship between language and literature as applied to a discussion, student language ideologies in writing conferences, formality and style of language related to technology, or decisions with blog rubrics). In other cases, there may not be immediately transferable understandings from the study for direct application. For instance, while the dilemmas related to white teachers seem salient, there would need to be further study to make claims since this study only focused on four teachers in one teacher education program. Furthermore, none of the teachers were placed in a classroom in which they were the cultural or linguistic minority (and only Aileen was an ethnic minority).

While I can imagine how this study could inform scenarios that might be useful to teacher learning, it is important to consider what these scenarios would make visible as well as how they might be limited. The scenarios could be useful for introducing multiple aspects of language-related dilemmas in the classroom. Yet without attending to how preservice teachers might think about these particular scenarios and providing access to viable resources for attending to the complexity presented in the scenarios, the scenarios could be counterproductive. In no way would teacher educators want to suggest

that these scenarios represent the range or limit to the possibilities for enacting language understandings. Rather than serving to offer one right answer, these scenarios might provide useful questions that preservice teachers could use as diagnostic tools or heuristics for reflecting on a difficult or surprising situation. These tools might help them “reframe” their initial responses and provide a reminder of their own particular worlds and positions that they bring to teaching practice.

As a site for exploration, these scenarios could be integrated into teacher education using multiple perspectives of linguists, experienced educators, students, and new teachers to frame potential responses. Here are some tentative scenarios that could be developed from this study’s descriptive field sketches:

- “Holden talks” (an African American student rewrites a literary scene using features of AAE and the student teacher responds to and assesses language ability during a class presentation)
- “But that’s racist” (a white teacher works one-on-one with a student’s writing and encounters a bidialectal student’s internalized deficit thinking about her writing)
- “You’re the expert” (a teacher helps a student save face and builds on writing strengths)
- “Red pen equity” (a student teacher works with a traditional, prescriptivist teacher and has to develop his own way of assessing grammar/writing)
- “Smiley face, sad face” (teacher encounters online features in student writing and plans a blog assignment and grading rubric)

Possible questions in relation to these scenarios:

- How do teachers’ words and actions position students as writers/language users?
How/when does race matter?
- What does this situation reveal about teachers’ opportunities to engage with students’ multiple language resources? What does the situation reveal about beliefs about learning and language?
- What are equitable and productive ways to assess writing and language use, or “grammar”?

- If we understand language (spoken, written, and online) as a site for exploration, what do we learn from this situation about how language works in different ways for different purposes with different audiences?

The goal with any scenario used in teacher education would be to present dilemmas and tensions in ways that they are not overwhelming, providing prospective teachers with ways to position themselves proactively and productively in relation to those dilemmas. One possible research agenda could be to investigate whether there are more productive ways to present the nature of language-related dilemmas in ways that provide useful, applicable information. This study provides some insight into ways teacher educators might enable dispositions for helping prospective teachers avoid reaching a place in which they are stuck.

III. Leveraging Language to Avoid Blaming the Lettuce

My hope is that my work will continue to offer potential language levers that could be useful for teachers so that they avoid becoming stuck in a colormute, colorblind, or language-indifferent stance. I argue that equity is at stake if we ignore race in relation to language. This study offers insights into when or how it might be pedagogically useful for teachers to explicitly address power in relation to language, i.e. address the ideological radar for race and language: When and how might teachers strategically acknowledge the radar for specific pedagogical purposes? For instance, this work might prepare future prospective teachers to engage with defensive student reactions and language beliefs at their sites. Findings might help teacher educators better understand ways that preservice teachers activate knowledge through experience and the need to help preservice teachers question the limitations of their experiences. The results might help generate a more effective range of assessments and experiences related to language or show ways that language could play a role in how preservice teachers are assessed as adaptable in complex situations.

I end with a quotation used in participants' initial teacher education orientation by a professional development consultant who presented affirming ways for teaching students with exceptionalities:

"When you plant lettuce, if it does not grow well, you don't blame the lettuce. You look for reasons it is not doing well. It may need fertilizer, or more water, or less sun. You never blame the lettuce.... Blaming has no positive effect at all, nor does trying to persuade using reason and argument. That is my experience. No blame, no reasoning, no argument, just understanding. If you understand, and you show that you understand, you can love, and the situation will change."

— *Thich Nhat Hanh, teacher, peace activist and Buddhist monk*

This teaching from a Buddhist monk takes us outside of the traditional research genre; however, I end here to recognize that sometimes a parable or lesson from a different genre can capture an intangible that research may not. The quotation provides a reminder that leveraging language for equitable teaching, for both preservice teachers and English educators, involves a stance that avoids blaming the lettuce—that resists focusing on language in deficit ways and reifying deficit views of students. In some sense I am equating lettuce to the phenomenon in which we know teachers have struggled to engage with linguistic principles in their teaching and resist deficit beliefs about language use. In another sense, lettuce could be seen as linguists' struggles to share linguistic understandings with educators. The lesson embedded in this teaching points to the need to step back from what can be cast as ongoing (and intractable) challenges in order to better understand the nature of the problem and attend to the common goal of growth, or effective teaching and learning in relation to language.

The goal of this study was to move beyond conversations about what preservice teachers and their students do not know about language and, rather, to provide understanding of *how* language knowledge intersects with life in classrooms. By describing the complex phenomenon of engagement with linguistically informed principles—and the dilemmas related to enacting these LIP—this study offers a starting place for designing experiences and assessments that provide fruitful intersections among language-related domains, such as the teaching of writing and reading, language study, and culturally responsive classroom interactions. In this way, my work moves towards suggestions for how English educators might better work with new teachers so that they can, in turn, more fully nurture the learning of their students.

IV. Appendices

Appendix A. LIP and enactment tensions with FBL

<i>Linguistically Informed Principles (LIP)</i>	<i>Enactment Tensions with Folk Beliefs about Language (FBL)</i>
<p>Language equity: awareness and appreciation of language variation—the inevitable nature of language variation, the links between identity and variation, and student language as competence rather than deficit. This includes critical understandings of standard English as one variety among many.</p> <p><i>Supportive concepts:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positioning • Face saving • Code-switching/Style-shifting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Folk beliefs about written/oral language interfered with enactment in some cases. • Racial identities and variation emerged as a challenging area. • Communicating appreciation was difficult to negotiate given the persistence of underlying deficit ideologies, the standard English myth, and language subordination.
<p>Descriptive approaches to grammar: understandings of “grammar” beyond prescriptive grammar, including functional approaches—descriptive approaches as necessary to supporting language development, including understanding the relationships between oral/written language/registers and alternative views of what it means to teach “grammar.”</p> <p><i>Supportive concepts:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code-switching/Style-shifting • Language study (not “grammar”) • Register • Vernaculars/standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideologies of prescriptivism and red pen equity were still salient in schools and supported by some cooperating teachers. • Schoolwide approaches to grammar as “prescriptive grammar” overrides descriptive grammar terminology or use of “grammars.” • Awareness of descriptive approaches enabled some recognition of student language abilities and beginning assessment of oral/written language. • No clear models emerged as an approach to “grammar” that would easily replace a prescriptive one; functional grammar approaches were not taken up.
<p>Consequential language choices in classroom interactions: the ways discourse in interactions can shut down or open up opportunities for student learning; teachers can choose how they use language and their choices have consequences for what students can do or how they are positioned as literate, critical individuals</p> <p><i>Supportive concepts:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positioning • Face saving • Power (i.e. circulation of power) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of effective teacher talk may have enabled rejection of deficit ideology. • Some discourse concepts may be commonsensical, like face saving, which could obscure the specific worlds of teachers/students (i.e. race or language communities). • Choices of literature and other languaged text also have consequences. Yet, these may be chosen for teachers based on school curricula and other forces.

Appendix B. Questions raised related to LIP enactment sites and practices

LIP	Sites and Teaching Practices for LIP Enactment	Questions Raised
Language equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher-to-student (one-on-one) discussion of student writing • Whole class discussion of language in a text • Whole class response to bidialectal student's creative writing • Teacher response and framing of online writing • Teacher descriptions of students' abilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why did participants not anticipate the challenges in these discussions or plan purposely to incorporate these concepts into curricula? • What is happening in relation to race that complicates enactment of LIP?
Descriptive approaches to grammar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Framing of and adjustment of blog writing directions • Rubric development • Responses to unexpected features in students' language use • Identification of students' writing strengths • Framing of translation between varieties of English (in literature) • Validation of students' language knowledge (one-on-one) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is it so challenging for student teachers to enact views about descriptive grammar rather than replicating the approaches at their sites? • How does a lack of institutional support serve as a barrier to imagining grammar in practice in non-prescriptive ways? • How might the concept of register obscure understandings of race and language, yet also be important to understanding slang and levels within a variety? • How do a range of assessment sites of student language raise opportunities for enactment?
Consequential language choices in classroom interactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of what happened and why to frame classroom interactions • Approach towards "difficult" students and students with varied resources and abilities • Rejection of other teachers' deficit views or approaches to classroom interaction • Adoption of other teachers' non-threatening approaches to classroom interaction • Ability to reframe students' views of themselves in positive ways • Identification of language in literature as controversial or generative in classroom context • Ability to create effective ways for students to engage in relation to each other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How might the idea of "consequential" choices be seen as an FBL (i.e. some students bring sloppy, disrespectful attitudes and the teacher's way of communicating is best)? • Does this imply that preservice teachers need to go beyond teacher-based discovery around language, such as moving towards co-discovery model in which students learn about language? • How does students' language use position teachers and other students in ways that has consequences for equitable learning?

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