TALKING BACK TO NEWT GINGRICH:
DISCOURSE STRATEGIES IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES

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To Steve,

with all my love
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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the discursive construction of language ideologies in public discourse on language education policy in the United States. The data examined consist of 20 national newspaper texts and an online discussion board from a news-sharing website (256 comments, ~17,000 words). The texts report and respond to a 2007 speech by Former U. S. Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, in which he equated bilingual education with “the language of living in a ghetto”, and his subsequent Spanish-language internet video apology.

Taking an interactional sociolinguistic approach and performing both distributional and sequential analyses, I investigate the use of three discourse strategies in reports and debates over Gingrich’s speech and apology. Analysis of person and language reference demonstrates that speakers use referring terms to position themselves and others interpersonally, geographically, politically, and epistemically with regard to matters of language policy. Constructed dialogue is shown to be an important tool in both the appropriation of contestation of authority, while it also creates involvement by drawing readers into the speaker’s perspective on what languages are implicated by Gingrich’s speech and the social consequences of multilingualism in the United States. Analysis of recurrent metaphoric themes that characterize language learning and education policies
are also examined, and interactional analysis of metaphor negotiation tactics
demonstrates that speakers may appropriate the same metaphors while manipulating them
for distinct rhetorical purposes.

This study contributes to sociolinguistic theory by demonstrating the interactional and
ideological functions of three discourse features in metalinguistic discourse, highlighting
how macro-level semiotic processes of language ideology are instantiated in emerging
dialogic interaction. Theoretical implications are discussed and practical applications of
the research findings are suggested.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1. Introduction

1.1. Language debates and sociolinguistic interest

1.2. The Newt Gingrich “ghetto” language debacle

1.3. The discursive construction of language ideologies: a triadic model

1.4. Overview of the chapters

CHAPTER 2. Theoretical framework

2.1. Introduction

2.2. Definitions and perspectives

2.3. Two models of language ideological processes

2.4. An interactional sociolinguistic approach

2.5. Self and Other

2.6. Three discourse strategies: a preview

2.7. Summary

CHAPTER 3. Sociohistorical context and data collection

3.1. Introduction

3.2. Historical developments in language education policy

3.3. Data “discovery” and corpus of texts

3.4. Summary

CHAPTER 4. Person and language reference

4.1. Introduction

4.2. Perspectives on reference

4.3. Referring to Newt Gingrich

4.3.1. Referring to Gingrich in the newspapers

4.3.2. Referring to Gingrich on Digg.com

4.4. Language reference

4.4.1. Language reference in the newspapers

4.4.2. Language reference on Digg.com

4.5. Conclusion

CHAPTER 5. Constructed dialogue and intertextual strategies

5.1. Introduction

5.2. The sociolinguistics of reported speech

5.3. Intertextuality as a method of analysis

5.4. Constructed dialogue and intertextuality in the newspaper texts

5.5. Constructed dialogue on Digg

5.6. Conclusion
Chapter 6. Metaphors for language, education and policy ..........................170
  6.1. Introduction .............................................................................171
  6.2. Defining metaphor ..................................................................172
  6.3. Interactional, structural and ideological functions of metaphor .........175
  6.4. A critical-interactional approach to metaphor analysis ..................182
  6.5. Common metaphoric themes ..................................................185
  6.6. Extended metaphor and analogic narratives ..............................201
  6.7. Metaphoric negotiation on Digg ..............................................205
  6.8. Conclusion .............................................................................218

Chapter 7. Thematic synthesis, implications, and directions .....................221
  7.1. Revisiting the triadic framework ..............................................221
  7.2. Other discourse strategies .....................................................223
  7.3. Theoretical implications .........................................................224
  7.4. Further directions .................................................................226
  7.5. Practical applications ............................................................229
  7.6. Concluding remarks ..............................................................232

Appendix A. Table of newspaper texts ...............................................236

Appendix B. Digg discussion board contents .......................................239

References .......................................................................................282
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 2.1. A model of the language subordination process.................................27
Figure 2.2. The positioning triad........................................................................37
Figure 3.1. Screenshot of Digg.com top political stories, 4/2/2008.........................63
Figure 3.2. Screenshot of initial Digg comments on linked CNN article reporting
    Newt Gingrich’s NFRW speech.................................................................64
Figure 4.1. Distribution of referrals to Newt Gingrich in the newspaper data..........82
Figure 4.2. Distribution of complex referrals to Gingrich in the newspaper data......84
Figure 4.3. Distribution of first-mention referrals to Gingrich on Digg...............91
Figure 4.4. Distribution of evaluative stances taken in referrals to Gingrich..........94
Figure 4.5. Distribution of language referrals in the newspaper texts..................102
Figure 4.6. Distribution of referrals to language by name on Digg......................108
Figure 5.1. Distribution of speech representation in the newspaper data by
    Grammatical type and quoted source.....................................................136
Figure 7.1. The Way I See It #290.................................................................235
LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1. Newspaper texts in data corpus by type and origin..............................67
Table 4.1. Distribution of simple name referrals to Gingrich in the newspaper data.....82
Table 4.2. Examples of complex referrals to Gingrich in the newspaper data...........84
Table 4.3. Number and percentages of first-mention referrals to Gingrich on Digg.....91
Table 4.4. The interactional and ideological roles of language references in (4m-r)...121
Table 5.1. Categories of speech representation coded in the newspaper data...........134
Table 5.2. Distribution of speech representation in the newspaper data by
Grammaratical type and quoted source.........................................................135
Table 5.3. Distribution of direct quotation in the Hunt article..............................140
Table 5.4. Distribution of direct quotation in the Vargas article............................148
Table 5.5. Distribution of direct quotation sources on Digg.com..........................156
Table 5.6. Syntactic transformations in reappropriation of prior texts....................159
Table 6.1. Textual metaphors FOR LANGUAGE AS AN ECONOMIC ASSET OR DEFICIT.....188
Table 6.2. Textual metaphors for LANGUAGE LEARNING AS MOVING FORWARD........191
Table 6.3. Textual metaphors for SINKING AND SWIMMING..............................194
Table 6.4. Textual metaphors for NON-ENGLISH LANGUAGES AS A NATIONAL
SECURITY THREAT. .......................................................................................198
Table 6.5. Types of metaphor negotiation in interaction........................................206
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Language debates and sociolinguistic interest

Since the inauguration of sociolinguistics as a distinct field of academic inquiry, researchers seeking to understand the social life of language have remained interested in a variety of political debates about language. Whether their work contributes to knowledge about the connection between language, literacy, and educational success, stigmatized nonstandard dialects and social disadvantage, endangered languages and minority rights, or multilingualism and national identity, sociolinguists have greatly contributed to our understanding of language and society. Many researchers have also made concerted efforts to share their research findings with wider audiences through educational and public interest projects (e.g. Adger, Wolfram and Christian 2007, Charity 2008, Reaser and Adger 2007, Wolfram 2006 *inter alia*).

Some of the great language debates within the United States that have received a wealth of attention from linguists and laypeople alike in recent years are the question of whether the United States should adopt an official language policy; the issue of what “Ebonics” (the blanket term often used for African American varieties of English) is and how it should be treated in educational contexts; and the utility and effectiveness of bilingual education versus English immersion programs for children who come to school speaking languages other than English.

My own interests in these language debates were sparked by my former work as a teacher and program administrator in an English as a Second Language (ESL)
department at a private language institute, where I constantly found myself questioning
decisions I made in my administrative role, knowing first-hand how my administrative
decisions played out in the classroom. Should I advise a new student with no prior
English experience to jump into the hi-beginner level group class and see if she sinks or
swims? Or should I advise the student to take private lessons until she catches up to the
level of the group class? If she enrolls in private lessons, should I hire the teacher who is
proficient in the student’s native language or should I hire the teacher who is not in order
to enforce an English-only classroom policy? Whenever I was faced with questions like
these, I would consult more experienced teachers in my department and higher-level
school administrators, and I often received conflicting opinions, backed by a host of
rationales. Some colleagues focused on the financial matters of the institute, others
emphasized their personal philosophies of teaching, and many discussions among the
institute staff revolved around practicalities of classroom space and institutional
resources.

During the period of my employment at this school, the state of Massachusetts,
where I resided at the time, introduced a ballot measure known as “Question 2” in the
mid-term elections of 2002, which proposed that bilingual education be replaced by
English immersion in public schools. There were many spirited debates regarding the
issue among my colleagues at the language institute. Some of these colleagues were
immigrants themselves and had learned English when they arrived in the United States,
some held advanced degrees or other certification in teaching ESL, and all of them had
many more years of experience in the field than I had. I was surprised that my superiors
could not agree on a political issue that was so intimately related to our profession, and I decided to research the topic independently.

When I came across the wealth of academic studies that had been conducted on these issues throughout the previous four decades in a variety of nations and cultural contexts, I realized that it would require more than a couple of weekends in the public library to get to the core of the matter. I decided to pursue a graduate degree in sociolinguistics to better understand not only what this body of research on language education and language policy had determined were the best educational practices and policies, but also to understand why public discourse on language education and policy rarely (if ever) made reference to this research.

In my subsequent studies at Georgetown University, I became interested in sociolinguistic variation and the structure of African American Vernacular English (AAVE). During this time period, I also became more attuned to nonlinguists’ perceptions of this highly stigmatized language variety, mainly as a result of the many failed attempts at explaining what I was studying in casual conversations with friends and family. This led me to research the origins of many laypeople’s negative attitudes toward “Ebonics”, which I uncovered via a critical discourse analysis of the media coverage of the 1996 Oakland California School District Resolution on Ebonics (Sclafani 2008). In the spring of 2007, when I presented my initial findings from this study at the annual conference of the American Association for Applied Linguistics, I received several questions from audience members about the then-current media scandal regarding Don Imus, a radio talk show host and shock jock who had made racist and sexist remarks
regarding members of the Rutgers University female basketball team. In addition, many audience members asked whether I had considered looking at newer forms of media, including computer-mediated discourse, to gain insights on the content and structure of public language debates, since the trend in news production and consumption had shifted dramatically toward internet-based resources in recent years.

I returned to Washington, DC from this conference with renewed interest in analyzing the representation of current language debates in web-based forums. Just as I began to feel overwhelmed from clicking through the innumerable news reports, weblogs, video clips, and commentaries on Don Imus’s comments and professional fate, I came across another language debate that was also highly publicized at the time but faded from the media much more quickly than the Imus affair. This debate surrounded a prominent American political leader: former U.S. Republican Representative and Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich.

1.2. The Newt Gingrich “ghetto” language debacle

On March 31, 2007, Newt Gingrich, who was at the time still rumored to be considering a run for U.S. president in the 2008 election, delivered a speech to the National Federation of Republican Women (NFRW) in which he asserted that bilingual education should be replaced with English immersion “so people learn the common
language of the country and so they learn the language of prosperity, not the language of living in a ghetto”\(^1\).

Gingrich’s remark invoked a barrage of criticism in the following days, including reports and commentaries in major U.S. newspapers, radio and TV talk shows, and internet news forums. Many condemned Gingrich for his “racist” remarks, while others attempted explanations of what Gingrich “really” meant. Some degenerated into off-topic rants and offensive name-calling, while others contained thoughtful discussions and rationales for supporting or opposing bilingual education. Gingrich responded a few days later with a 3-minute video apology on the popular video-sharing website www.YouTube.com, which he delivered in Spanish with English subtitles, expressing regret for his choice of words at the convention while maintaining his stand on the issue of bilingual education.

Once again, Gingrich’s actions inspired a media buzz, through both institutional media outlets (e.g., CNN and FOXNews), and user-powered sources, including lengthy debates on news-based weblogs and discussion forums (e.g., www.digg.com), as well as video responses on www.YouTube.com, where users reflected on Gingrich’s comments and YouTube apology by either addressing Gingrich directly or parodying his apology in some way.

A subset of these texts (described in Chapter 3) form the corpus of data that I analyze in this study from a perspective that combines the traditions and methodologies

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\(^1\) The content of this quote was confirmed by a video clip of speech posted on [http://www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com) (accessed May 1, 2007).
of interactional sociolinguistics, critical discourse analysis, and linguistic anthropology.

The overarching questions I attempt to answer in this study are the following: First, how do people construct particular ideologies about language, language learning, and language policy in public debates about language? Second, what type of interactional work is accomplished through the discourse strategies participants employ in the constructions of such beliefs? Finally, how do these strategies work to constitute, reaffirm, or contest the place of language in the existing social order? By looking at texts from both institutional and user-powered sources, I also hope to reach an understanding of the process through which individuals take part in public debates on language. I do this by attending to how texts and discourses are circulated and appropriated by participants as they inform themselves on language matters in order to form their own opinions and beliefs about language.

The study of conceptions and beliefs about language, whether public, private, collective, or individual, has been taken up in various subdisciplines of linguistics, including variationist sociolinguistics, the social psychology of language, linguistic anthropology, interactional sociolinguistics, and critical discourse analysis. These disciplines have different paradigms and methods for locating (and in some cases measuring) people’s beliefs and subjective feelings about language, which are usually referred to as language ideologies (and sometimes language attitudes). I will discuss these paradigms, methods, and definitional differences at length in the next chapter, but I mention them now because they have all contributed to my approach for studying the discursive construction of language ideologies in interaction, which I introduce below.
1.3. The discursive construction of language ideologies

The concepts and strategies I present here will serve as the framework I use to investigate the discursive construction of language ideologies and is based on a *dialogical approach* (Bakhtin 1981, 1986; Kristeva 1980) to the study of language ideologies, which emphasizes the idea that beliefs and “common sense” notions about language are discursively constructed by individuals and understood by others in interactional contexts via processes of conversational contextualization and situated inference (Gumperz 1982). A dialogical approach to language ideologies thus takes into account both the *initiative* and *responsive* aspects of communication, which has been emphasized in other related sociolinguistic theories, such as work in communication accommodation theory (e.g. Giles, Coupland, and Coupland 1991) and various frameworks for the investigation of linguistic style (Bell 1984, Labov 1972, Rickford and Eckert 2001, Schilling-Estes 1998).

At the heart of the notion “language ideology” lies a connection between *people*, who may be characterized as “Self” or “Other”, and their respective *positions* in relation to particular *languages*, for instance, as speakers of “good” or “bad” language, as arbiters of “standard” and “substandard” language, and as embodying what is perceived as “natural” qualities of particular languages through the process of language iconization (Gal and Irvine 2000). These speaker-language relationships and subject positions can be indexed in a variety of ways using a variety of linguistic strategies. The three discourse strategies I analyze constitute three primary means of indexing the Self-Other distinction and its relation to language in discourse, specifically through the processes of
designations, embodied, and imagination. Each indexical means can be associated with particular discourse strategies.

The indexical process of designation can be characterized as placing the Self or Other in a particular category, by either invoking established and recognizable (although not necessarily agreed upon) social categories, or by creating new categories in discourse. The most salient way in which one does this is through the discourse strategy of reference. For example, by simply calling someone a “Spanish speaker”, we place the person in a category that may indicate a variety of aspects of their personal and social identity. In order to comprehend the ideological capacity of reference, we must keep in mind that from the referring term alone, we know very little about the person, only a language that they speak (which may be their only language or one of many). However, the way the referral is used in its discursive context and the way it is understood and taken up by interlocutors in a dialogical context can tell us much more: where the said “Spanish speaker” is from, what their educational background is, what their socioeconomic status is, or what their political beliefs are. In addition to telling us about the individual directly indexed (Ochs 1992) by the referring term, the referential act of designating a person in such a category also tells us about other people who belong to the same category. This is because when we refer to people as speakers of language, we index their social identity as speakers of a language, so we are at the same time indirectly indexing the group of people who share this social identity and saying something about the symbolic value of this language.
The second indexical means in the triad of discourse strategies is that of *embodiment*. In other words, the Self-Other distinction can be made in discourse when a Self speaks *as if they were* the Other, which is accomplished through the discourse strategy of reported speech, or constructed dialogue. When we try to capture the essence of either a specific Other or a representative of a particular group by reporting their speech in discourse, we are indexing not only a persona, but an entire social world in which that persona is situated. Constructed dialogue, a term coined by Tannen (1989), indexes the Self-Other distinction by both drawing the Other into the discourse and by distancing the Self from the Other by framing their speech as distinct from one’s own voice. Through this paradoxical process of representing another’s speech, we manage to construct an alternate subjectivity, an alternate way of viewing the world, and consequently, a particular positioning of the Self in relation to the embodied Other.

The third indexical means through which speakers index ideologies of language is through the process of *imagination*. One might think at first that imagination is a mental construct rather than a discursive one, but I will demonstrate that imagination is an act that can be accomplished through specific linguistic means, primarily through the use of metaphor and other types of analogic discourse strategies. Metaphor has been considered a major aspect of overtly persuasive discourse since the times of Aristotle, and it has been demonstrated in several strands of literary and linguistic research that the use of metaphor is pervasive in *all* types of discourse, from highly scripted and performed genres to extemporaneous and mundane ones. Studies on metaphor in the cognitive sciences, anthropology, classical rhetoric, and literary theory share the view that metaphor creates
conceptual connections between figures from different domains of meaning, thus highlighting similarities between two ultimately disparate things. In language ideological discourse, participants use metaphorical language to index a relationship between Self, Other, and language in order to bring out issues of power, identity, and beliefs about how languages should be learned and regulated in the educational and political spheres. In addition, the metaphors that individuals use to construct these relationships can be reinforced or resisted in dialogic contexts.

In the following chapters I explore each of these discourse strategies in more depth and begin posing more general questions about the nature of language ideologies. For instance, I have described my dialogical approach and focus on the contextualization of each of these strategies in ongoing discourse; does this imply that language ideologies are necessarily shared by participants in discourse, or might ideologies conflict? Once a person or language is “designated” in a category through the use of a particular referring term, in what ways can this positioning be undone? For what reasons would a participant embody the voice of an Other instead of describing what was said indirectly, and what characteristics about the Other do participants choose to describe through reported speech? How might metaphors that are used in institutional discourses on language education policy be appropriated or contested in an online news discussion board? How do participants contextualize language ideologies presented in the national news media and respond to them through language and action at a local level?
1.4. Overview of the chapters

I have just touched very broadly upon the types of questions I will be asking and attempting to answer throughout the following chapters of this work. Before we begin to address such questions, we need to go about defining many of the terms I have used so far, like “language ideology”, “mediated contexts”, and “indexicality”. In the next chapter, I define these and other terms and provide a more detailed theoretical background on which the assumptions of my approach are based. I discuss frameworks for the study of language ideological processes that have informed my own approach as well as foundational concepts in interactional sociolinguistics that are employed in this study. I also elucidate how the functions of reference, constructed dialogue, and metaphoric language in ideological discourse contribute to the construction of Self and Other, and underline why these constructs should be at the center of language ideology analysis.

In chapter three, I situate this study in a line of research on language ideologies toward multilingualism and English in the United States, spanning from colonial times until present day movements regarding bilingual education and English Only legislation. I summarize important developments in federal and state-level legislation regarding language rights and education and their relationship to various language-based political movements that have developed alongside such legislation. I also describe my data collection procedure and introduce the corpus on which the remainder of the study is based.
Chapter 4 focuses on person and language reference as a discourse strategy in the construction of language ideologies. First, I describe the foundations of the study of linguistic reference in other sociolinguistic work on discourse and identity and discuss the connection between referrals to individual, group, and social identities and language ideology. In the first part of my analysis, I perform distributional and sequential analyses of person reference in the texts, focusing on how certain individuals – especially Newt Gingrich – are referred to in context and how these references are both reflective of and contribute to the construction of speakers’ beliefs about language policy. I then track language references and compare the languages presented in the newspaper and discussion board texts, considering how language referrals represent divergent institutional and individually-defined ideologies of what languages are implicated in Gingrich’s comments about bilingual education. By attending to their sequential emergence in the discussion board texts, I also uncover how languages are discursively situated in local landscapes, social structures, and political and economic ideologies, noting how these beliefs are appropriated, reinforced, or contested in interaction.

Chapter 5 investigates the discourse strategy of constructed dialogue. In this chapter, I provide a background of the vast body of research that has been done on reported speech in sociolinguistics and media discourse studies and discuss the importance of Bakhtin’s (1986) notion of double-voicing in recent perspectives on constructed dialogue. I then analyze the use of constructed dialogue in my data, considering formal and functional features of the discourse strategy, and the different structures and functions it takes on in the newspaper and Digg discussion board texts.
Using distributional and sequential measures of analysis, I highlight the connection between quotation, footing (Goffman 1981), identity, and authority, and discuss the ways in which various types of double-voicing – supportive and subversive – serve to reinforce and undermine taken-for-granted assumptions about language.

Chapter 6 considers the use of metaphorical language in the corpus of data surrounding Newt Gingrich’s speech on bilingual education and subsequent apology. After reviewing various approaches to metaphor in different subdisciplines of linguistics, I describe in more detail the interactional, structural, and ideological functions of metaphor in language use. I then analyze metaphors in the data by describing four metaphorical themes that emerge in discussions about language education and language policy, demonstrating that despite congruities of imagery, users metaphorize a variety of subjects and construct very different stances toward language education policy. I then illustrate and analyze various types of metaphor negotiation in the dialogic forum of the discussion board, showing how interactional moves such as metaphor reappropriation, modification, rejection, and renewal function in the discursive negotiation of beliefs about the purpose, effectiveness, and implications of divergent models of education for English language learners.

In the concluding chapter, I bring the three discourse strategies back together and show that the indexical means of designation, embodiment, and imagination constantly work in consort with each other, even within a short stretch of discourse. I return to many of the questions I have asked above, and still others that arise throughout the following chapters, showing how this three-pronged approach for analyzing language
ideologies in discourse has helped elucidate many theoretical and practical problems that have arisen in prior studies on language ideology, and specifically the problem of connecting micro-level interactional linguistic practices to macro-level social processes. I also highlight the contributions that this study makes to the fields of language policy, computer-mediated communication, and the study of media discourse. I conclude by emphasizing that sociolinguists continue to approach the great language debates of our time with a critical lens and renewed interest in bridging the gap between specialist and lay theories about language, education, and political action.
CHAPTER 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Introduction

In chapter 1, I situated this study within a body of research that deals with language ideology, noting that the present study works toward developing a framework for the analysis of how particular discourse strategies contribute to the construction of discourse strategies of language ideologies in dialogic interaction. In this chapter, I provide an overview of the study of language ideology as it has been undertaken in sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology, highlighting common themes and points of contention between theories and paradigms. Upon considering the assumptions underlying prior definitions of “language ideology”, I offer my own definition of the term, tailored to the objectives of the present study.

I then discuss how two models of language ideology - those put forth by Lippi-Green (2001) and Irvine and Gal (2000) - attempt to theorize language ideological processes, and I identify how my own approach draws on and fills in some gaps in these models. In the next section of this chapter, I explain the discourse analytical approach I take, which has its roots in interactional sociolinguistics but has also been influenced by critical perspectives. I define the constructs of Self and Other, explain how they relate to language ideologies, and illustrate how they emerge as a structuring device of language ideological discourse through the analysis of reference, constructed dialogue, and metaphorical language.
2.2. Definitions and perspectives

One of the central questions that scholars of language, culture, and society have long been considering is how language users conceive of the structure and role of language in their lives and how they actively define themselves and their relationships with others through such conceptions of language. This topic of academic inquiry, the study of language ideology, spans across several subdisciplines of linguistics, each privileging certain definitions, approaches, and sites for data analysis. Coupland and Jaworski (2004: 16), for instance, consider studies within the diverse paradigms of linguistic anthropology, variationist sociolinguistics, language attitudes studies (i.e. the social psychology of language), interactional sociolinguistics, and critical discourse analysis (CDA) as all having a stake in “theorizing the ‘meta’ dimension of language use.” Although these paradigms are not necessarily in agreement on how to define language ideologies or how to go about studying them, I believe that considering the basic assumptions, preferred methods, and typical sites for the analysis of language ideologies in these fields will help sketch out a the general landscape of research within which the present study is situated.

Woolard (1998) provides a useful overview of language ideology research, identifying some common strands and points of contention between definitions and perspectives. She notes that most studies agree upon a definition of language ideology as referring to conceptual phenomena, involving beliefs or ideas about language. Additionally, it is widely agreed that ideologies are rooted in or reflective of the subjective lived experience and interests of a particular social position. Thus, language
ideologies and language practices can be understood as bi-directionally influential and mutually constitutive: preconceived notions about language influence actual language practices, while observed language practices form the basis for personal beliefs and generalizations about language.

A third common theme in definitions of ideology is its connection to power; in this sense, ideology is envisioned as discourse or other semiotic practices that work in the struggle for, acquisition of, and maintenance of positions of power. Finally, many definitions of ideology point to some aspect of distortion or illusion; however, as Eagleton (1991) points out, perspectives vary in how they construe this aspect of ideology: while some connect it to the maintenance of power, others view illusion in the sense of the subjective experiential aspect of ideology. While the former perspective tends to invoke the term “ideology” in a negative light, contrasting illusion with “truth”, the latter tends to view ideology in a neutral light, as a natural occurrence arising out of the socially embedded nature of cultural life.

Although it is consistently acknowledged that there is a relationship between ideas about language and the interests of dominant groups in the maintenance of power relations, this is one dimension along which definitions of language ideology tend to vary. While some researchers view the contestation of power as the central or only issue to be dealt with in addressing questions of ideology, others see it as one facet of a larger intersection of indexical practices. Woolard (1998:7) notes that in restrictive formulations of the concept, “[ideology] is the tool, property or practice of dominant social groups; practices of subordinate groups are by definition nonideological.” Others employ a less
restrictive definition of ideology, allowing for a multiplicity of ideologies within and across groups who have varying degrees of power in a society. Gal (1998: 320) also points out that “there is ample evidence that, like the social make up of dominant groups themselves, their ideologies are rarely monolithic, nor always stable,” undermining the assumption that ideology simplistically refers to the semiotic practices of singular dominant bloc institutions. I will reinforce this point in the following chapters by demonstrating that even the ideologies of dominant groups (i.e., the native U.S. English-speaking population participating in the debates on bilingual education following Gingrich’s remarks) draw on different aspects of power, call into question other participants’ displays of power, and sometimes explicitly subvert traditional notions of power.

On this note, I argue that placing such great importance on one aspect of language ideology (i.e. power) at the expense of others would be a mistake, especially if we take into account the complexity of the concept of power itself. This issue has been addressed in other areas of sociolinguistic research, especially in the study of language and gender – and more specifically, studies of language and masculinity. For example, in attempting to define the notion of masculinity, Kiesling (1997, 2004) has problematized the notion of power as a monolithic entity, revealing how many different types of power (of physical power, demeanor power, nurturing power) can variously emerge within a single stretch discourse. Kiesling also emphasizes that other ideologies determine the hierarchy among these different types of power within specific communities of practice,
highlighting the idea that we must also attend to local and micro-interactional aspects of context in addition to broader cultural discourses of power.

If we look in a similar way at how the connection between language and power emerges in debates on language education policy, we find a multiplicity of types of power: economic (“knowing English guarantees professional success”), security (“being bilingual will help protect our borders from terrorists”), and national identity (“English is the language of the country, and knowing it goes hand in hand with being a full-fledged citizen”). Thus, in order to understand how issues of power play into beliefs about language, we must expand our definition to include other types of discursive practice. As Woolard (1998: 8) emphasizes, “If by ideology we mean signifying practices that constitute social subjects, surely we should also attend to, for example, affiliation, intimacy, and identity, all of which are complexly imbricated with but not directly and simply equitable to power”.

So while power – the acquisition, maintenance, and wielding of it – is undoubtedly important, addressing questions of identity is also crucial to understanding the nature of commonsensical, socially naturalized beliefs about language. In fact, metalinguistic discourse (i.e. explicit talk about language) can be seen as an identity practice itself, where Self and Other are distinguished by symbolic isoglosses, and “imagined communities” (Anderson 1991) are constructed through a shared linguistic code. In this respect, explicit talk about language can be understood as both a relational practice,

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These quotations are not directly taken from the corpus, but are characterizations of typical lines of argumentation in the texts. Specific instantiations of each of these views will be discussed in the analyses in the following chapters.
where Selves construct alliances with certain Others through the bond of language, and one of *differentiation*, where social differences between Self and Other are naturalized as result of language differences, or as iconically represented through language differences.

Another central point of contention among scholars of language ideology is the appropriate site and level of analysis for locating language ideologies. Some researchers look to explicit talk about language to gain insight into the nature of language ideologies and understand how they are situated in relation to other aspects of social structure and processes. For example, research on “perceptual dialectology” (Niedzielski and Preston 2000, Preston 1989, Preston 2004), a genre of language attitude research in which subjects are provided with geographical maps and are asked to demarcate and describe the varieties of language spoken in various regions of a country, is one method that relies on explicit characterizations of language. From studies like this, we learn what people’s beliefs of “good” and “bad” language are, and which regional varieties they esteem to be closest to the mythical “standard” language, based on their *overt* spoken and written assessments of geographically based linguistic variation.

In addition to the analysis of *explicit* talk about language, other researchers, especially those working in the social psychological tradition, access people’s beliefs about language through the use of perceptual tests, often employing the matched-guise technique (e.g., Agheyisi and Fishman 1970, Fasold 1984, Lambert et al. 1960; see Garrett, Coupland, and Williams 2003 for a recent overview of the use of this test in language attitudes research). This method isolates language by controlling for external variables (e.g., speaker, content, voice quality) to gauge attitudes toward the use of
different language varieties, which are accessed via questionnaires that ask subjects to rate speech samples on scales of the speaker’s perceived intellect, professional competence, social attractiveness, and other qualities. This method is considered indirect because subjects believe they are rating the personal qualities of different speakers on each occasion when they are actually rating the same speaker discussing the same topics in different linguistic “guises”. Results from such tests have provided us with ample concrete data attesting to language-based group stereotypes (e.g., Giles and Powesland 1975) as well as evidence for the practice of language-based discrimination (Baugh 1999, 2000b). Although research in this paradigm does not use the term “language ideology”, employing instead the term “attitude”, I consider this body of research to constitute language ideology research because it investigates the taken-for-granted assumptions about language on which people build their beliefs about individuals and social groups, and which they use as a motivation for action (e.g., in deciding whether to hire a candidate for a job).

On the other hand, some researchers locate ideologies within the *implicit* regimentation of naturally occurring talk, through the analysis of contextualization cues (Gumperz 1982), framing devices (Goffman 1974), conversational presupposition (Levinson 1984) and implicature (Grice 1975), and other linguistic indicators that entail certain naturalized understandings of language structure and use. For instance, Gumperz (1982) examines interethnic conversational encounters between British and Indian participants by transcribing and performing close discourse analysis of these interactions, finding that certain linguistic cues, such as intonation contours and other prosodic
features, can signal different meanings to people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. He finds that Indian and Pakistan workers tend to use final rising intonation in sentences, which is interpreted by native British English speakers as conveying agitation or petulance. In this case, a conflicts in language ideologies among the interactants provokes cross-cultural miscommunication; that is, their divergent culturally-based experiences and beliefs about language lead them to imply and infer different meanings from the same linguistic cues.

Additionally, some researchers locate language ideology in language structure or through the analysis of indicators of language change. An example of this approach to studying language ideology can be found in the work of Silverstein (1985), who looks at structural change in the English pronoun system in the seventeenth century as a reflection of language ideologies. During this period, the English pronoun system underwent a structural change in which the second-person T/V distinction for signaling deference and intimacy (though polite ye/you versus familiar thee/thou) was dropped, resulting in the categorical symmetrical use of the V form (ye/you). Silverstein explains that this change was a result of both an ideological shift toward the value of “plain English” and a social reaction to the language practices of Quakers, who used the T form (thee/thou) in all situations for religious and philosophical reasons. Non-Quaker speakers began using the V form categorically to avoid indexing an affiliation with Quakers, and as Quakers constituted a minority of the English-speaking population, the T form was eventually dropped from the English pronominal system.
Another example of research that has located ideology in language change is the work of Don Kulick (1992, 1998) in the Papua New Guinean village of Gapun, whose bilingual Taiap-Tok Pisin community was undergoing a language shift to the use of monolingual Tok Pisin (the official language of Papua New Guinea; an English-based Creole) among the younger generation. Kulick documents this shift through an analysis of code-switching in interactions between parents and children, finding that the loss of Taiap (the indigenous community language) in the community can be attributed to a complex constellation of language ideologies and socialization practices involving the association of Tok Pisin with the expression of maturity and participation in the supra-local economy and the association of Taiap with a childish and feminized expression of an immature self.

Both Silverstein’s and Kulick’s work demonstrates the far-reaching effects of language ideological conflict in specific communities of practice; in the case of English, this resulted in a structural change within the language, and in the case of Taiap, it has resulted in language moribundity. The methods employed in these studies and in those described previously (perceptual dialectology, matched guise attitude tests, discourse analysis) have relied either on experimental methods, ethnographic investigation, and/or the recording and analysis of naturally occurring talk to uncover commonsense beliefs about language that govern people’s perceptions of language and consequently their own language use. As a whole, these and other studies of language ideology have made important contributions toward an understanding of how both individual and collective beliefs about language constitute, reaffirm, and have the ability to transform the social
structures in which language is situated and even affect changes in language structure over time.

The goal of this study is similar to the studies described above in that it attempts to capture language ideological conflicts in action through the analysis of discourse, which can be considered the locus of both linguistic and ideological change. It is also my hope that this study works toward developing what Blommaert (1999) has termed “a historiography of language ideologies”, or a systematic account of how widespread subjective beliefs about language are created, strengthened, manipulated and how they evolve over time in public discourse. It has been suggested by Blommaert that in undertaking such a study, using language debates as a site of inquiry is a useful starting point, since the origin of debates “presupposes the existence of language ideologies, and debates often graft new priorities and directions (e.g. radicalization, the highlighting of particular aspects) onto existing language ideologies” (1999: 10). This quotation also highlights the idea that ideologies are dialogically constructed and fluid, undermining the assumption inherent in some approaches that ideologies are stable and uncontested entities (as is assumed in many methods associated with traditional language attitudes research).

In addition, the use of language debates privileges a conflict model of ideologies, where competing conceptions vie for dominant positions in the social order. As Gal (1998) remarks, dominant ideologies are dominant not because they are held by dominant groups in society, but because “their evaluations are recognized and accepted by, indeed partially constitute, the lived reality of a much broader range of groups” (321). Thus,
taking a dialogic view to understanding language ideologies allows us to uncover the emergence and contestation of power in discourse and provides us with insight into the dynamics of the much broader sociopolitical landscape in which these discourses converge. This perspective also reveals how people choose and use linguistic resources for positioning themselves and others in persuasive discourse as they construct voices of authority and establish intersubjective agreement on particular conceptions of language.

Following from previously offered definitions and approaches to language ideology and the research goals I put forth in Chapter 1, I provide my own definition of the term:

**Language ideologies** are individually or collectively held beliefs about language, which are expressed both explicitly through talk about language and implicitly in language structure and use.

This definition synthesizes broader points of agreement between prior definitions and allows for the location of ideologies at different levels of language use, including implicit manifestations in the framing of talk as well as explicitly expressed beliefs in the content of talk. By combining these perspectives, I believe we arrive at a concept with more analytical force because can see how ideologies expressed at one level are mirrored at other levels of use.

### 2.3. Two models of language ideological processes

Although the term “ideology” is used quite frequently in studies regarding beliefs about language, language ideology as a *process* has been less often explicitly theorized. However, there are a couple notable exceptions to this pattern that are worthy of
summary here, including Lippi-Green’s (1997) language subordination model and Irvine and Gal’s (2000, Irvine 2001) discussion of the three semiotic processes of language ideology. While on the surface these models seem to take very different approaches in explaining how ideologies are enacted in discourse, they each provide a useful lens for viewing the ways in which identity and power intersect in discursive practice and have the capacity to enact linguistic and social change.

Rosina Lippi-Green’s (2001) language subordination model is presented within a monograph on language ideology and discrimination in the United States, in which she takes on issues regarding the negative stereotyping of nonstandard American English varieties (e.g., African American, Chicano, and Southern English) and other languages spoken within the country. In this work, she also describes how such stereotypes are reinforced by the media and educational and legal systems. Defining ideology in a way that relates only to the “the promotion of the needs and interests of a dominant group or class at the expense of marginalized groups” (64), Lippi-Green delimits her focus to an investigation of “standard language ideology (SLI)” (originally coined by Milroy and Milroy 1991), which she defines as follows:

…a bias toward an abstracted, idealized, homogenous spoken language which is imposed and maintained by dominant bloc institutions and which names as its model the written language, but which is drawn primarily from the spoken language of the upper middle class.

This definition of language ideology is useful because it highlights a number of intersecting ideologies that contribute to prescriptivist discourses on language more generally, including beliefs about literacy, education, socioeconomics, and categorical homogeneity. Indeed, these issues often arise in debates on immigration and language
policy, and are intertwined in complex ways. Lippi-Green goes on to describe and illustrate her model of the language subordination process, which is reproduced below:

**Figure 2.1. A model of the language subordination process**

- Language is mystified
- Authority is claimed
- Misinformation is generated
- Nonmainstream language is trivialized
- Conformers are held up as positive examples
- Explicit promises are made
- Threats are made
- Non-conformers are vilified or marginalized
  (Lippi-Green 2001: 68)

While this model is perhaps useful in outlining the number of ways in which dominant institutions collaborate in the denigration and marginalization of non-standard language varieties, it is rather rudimentary in that it does not provide any order, chronologically, hierarchically, or relationally among the elements. In this sense, Lippi-Green’s model reads more as a list of discourse or social practices rather than as a device for schematizing empirical evidence or for explaining particular phenomena.

Certain elements within Lippi-Green’s model seem to describe specific *speech acts* in ideological discourse, such as those regarding “threats” and “promises”. One may wonder, however, how threats and promises might be related to each other. This relationship is somewhat clarified in her illustrations of how each element occurs in her data: under promises, she gives the example, “Employers will take you seriously; doors will open,” and under threats, “No one important will take you seriously; doors will close” (68). The parallelism between these two examples, and Lippi-Green’s later statement that promises are “usually merely implied”, while “threats are more openly
made” (69), indicates an observed pattern between explicit instantiations of these two speech acts in discourse that I suggest is worthy of deeper investigation and theorizing. For instance, a promise may be considered a subcomponent of a threat; alternatively, the illocutionary act of a promise may be perceived as a threat (the perlocutionary effect) in conversational practice (Austin 1962, Searle 1969). Additionally, threats and promises may be considered subcomponents of other speech acts, such as complaints or apologies.

Another two components of this model that seem to be related to each other are “Conformers are held up as positive examples” and “Non-conformers are vilified or marginalized”. First, creating a distinction between those who conform and those who do not sets up a benchmark for identifying members of each category according to a set of mutually exclusive affiliations which are likely much more complex than those who speak the language of the “upper-middle class”, as Lippi-Green puts forth in her definition of language ideology. When we begin to consider how these two components actually play out in the language subordination process, many questions remain unanswered: How are model language speakers raised on pedestals in discourse, and what are these pedestals made of? Through what means are non-conformers constructed as such? Is there a common rhetoric of “othering” those who don’t speak the valued language variety? How are such means used by dominant groups and resisted by those marginalized? Finally, how are the margins defined, and how are shades of gray that exist between the black and white distinction of “conformers” and “non-conformers” dealt with or erased? I believe that by conducting a more fine-tuned discourse analysis of texts in which these acts are accomplished, we can begin to connect them together and
understand how the strategies collectively work to construct social environments in which subordination and marginalization are constructed as a result of commonsensical, just, and morally sound human action.

In addressing these questions of how to connect micro-level linguistic analysis to larger scale social processes, it will be useful to recall Irvine and Gal’s (2000, see also Irvine 2001) theory of language ideology. They identify three semiotic processes involved in language ideology: iconicity, recursivity, and erasure. *Iconicity* is a process whereby the relationship between a linguistic feature and the social identity with which it is associated is transformed from an *indexical* signifier-signified relationship to an *iconic* one (cf. Peirce 1991[1906]), in which the linguistic feature is viewed as depicting the natural essence of the group of people who use it. In Irvine’s (2001:33) terms, “their connection thus appears to be necessary, perhaps even ‘natural,’ because of the supposedly shared qualities. In this way iconization entails the attribution of cause and necessity to a connection (between linguistic behaviors and social categories – of people or activities) that may be only historical, contingent, or conventional.” An example of this semiotic process is the stereotype that speakers of Southern English are intellectually “slow” because they speak with a drawl.

*Recursivity* is the process whereby oppositions that are salient at one level of representation are projected to other levels, and dichotomies related to intergroup differences inform intragroup variation, or vice versa. To illustrate this process, let us take an example from the relationship between language and gender, in which ideologies of difference are especially pervasive. In this case, individuals of each gender are
socially evaluated against a hegemonic ideology of masculinity and femininity, and the extent to which any given individual deviates from these prototypes is perceived as an allegiance toward the other gender. It is for this reason that gay men are often referred to as “effeminate” even if they might be perceived as masculine with regard to many aspects of their behavior: in cultures where heterosexuality is “compulsory” (Cameron and Kulick 2003, Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003), men who are not heterosexual are likened to women, just as men who do not conform to conventional norms of masculinity are deemed “gay” (Armstrong 1997, Cameron and Kulick 2003). Another example of recursivity involves ideologies of difference between African American and European American varieties of American English. Despite the fact that there exists a great deal of linguistic diversity among African American English speakers, pervasive stereotypes of African American English lead speakers to rate African Americans whose speech patterns do not conform to stereotypes of the speech of urban working-class African Americans (often characterized as “Ebonics” or “ghetto language”) as “sounding white”. This example also demonstrates how Gal and Irvine’s semiotic processes work in tandem with each other; that is, features of African American English become iconically representative of a “Black essence”, and those who do not conform are not considered “naturally” or “inherently” Black.³

The third semiotic process that Irvine and Gal identify, erasure, occurs when one dimension of distinction becomes so powerful that it “simplifies the sociolinguistic field” (Irvine 2001), or ignores apparent differences at other levels. Through this semiotic

³ This is evidenced by derogatory terms like “Oreo”.
process, intragroup heterogeneity is imagined away and social groups are essentialized as homogeneous. The process of erasure is pervasive in discussions on language education and bilingualism in the United States, especially in discourses of nostalgia for past generations of immigration, where images of Polish, Italian, German, and other European immigrants of the early twentieth century are held up as paragons of the success of the sink-or-swim style of English language immersion education. These discourses “erase” the experiences of many immigrants who may have “sunk” during the era of this language education policy, not completing secondary schooling and not acquiring literacy skills. Discussions on language education policy today tend to only refer to immigrants of past generations who succeeded in achieving the “American Dream” (Johnson 2005).

Another example of erasure is the assumption that bilingual education only serves students who are illegal immigrants, despite the actual array of national, ethnic and immigrant backgrounds of students in these programs.

All three of the processes that Irvine and Gal identify are apparent in the discourses I examine in the following chapters. This model sets the stage for a consideration of the multiple discursive resources through which iconization, recursivity, and erasure are accomplished in dialogic interaction, and can also be seen as a macro-level counterpart of Lippi-Green’s language subordination model.

In summary, I take these models of language ideological processes proposed by Lippi-Green and Irvine and Gal as a theoretical base for my own investigation of language ideological discourse. Lippi-Green’s list of speech acts through which the standard or dominant language is held up as a paragon while other varieties are
marginalized is a useful starting point for categorizing how beliefs about language are espoused through discursive action. However, there is room for finer-tuned theorizing of how these acts relate to each other at a broader level, and for questioning whether these are in fact primary units of language ideological processes or are composed of smaller discursive building blocks. Irvine and Gal’s semiotic processes are explanatorily robust at the macro-level of discourse representation, but they do not consider the particular discursive strategies that lie at the origin of these processes. By combining these two models, we can connect processes of different scales with each other.

I propose that by looking at one particular language ideological debate through a variety of data types, including texts emanating from institutional sources (e.g. newspaper articles and television broadcasts) as well as responses to these texts in user-driven forums in computer-mediated environments, we can begin to locate correlations between many of the processes listed in Figure 2.1. We can also compare particular discourse strategies across text types order to see how institutional discourses on language are taken up, promulgated, and contested in less regulated environments, which adds a sociocognitive and perceptual dimension to the aforementioned frameworks that focus on social production.

2.4. An interactional sociolinguistic approach

Having defined the goal of this study as understanding how language ideologies emerge in both explicit talk about language and through the implicit framing and contextualization of this discourse, the analytical approach I take is rooted in interactional
sociolinguistics, and incorporates frameworks for the analysis of meaning-making as it occurs dialogically in interaction, especially those of sociologist Erving Goffman and linguistic anthropologist John Gumperz.

The seminal work of Goffman (1959, 1967, 1974, 1981) has shed much light on the complex ways in which social actors organize their experience in relation to other individuals and the institutional structures and social order within which they carry out their daily activities and interactions. In his early work on the presentation of self (1959), Goffman uses the theatrical stage, with its front-stage and back-stage regions, as a metaphor for the distinctions that social actors make and react to in public and private interaction. Although Goffman’s work is not strictly linguistic but rather more broadly grounded in sociological analyses of behavior, his analogy of social interaction as a performance has been greatly influential on subsequent work in sociolinguistics, as it initiated a paradigmatic shift from theorizing language use as a reflection of social structure to a conception of social identities as socially constructed through language use. Goffman (1959: 9) also emphasized that meaning relies neither solely on the producer or the interpreter of an utterance, but is a collaborative effort between the two:

> When we allow that the individual projects a definition of the situation when he appears before others, we must also see that the others, however passive their role may seem to be, will themselves effectively project a definition of the situation by virtue of their response to the individual and by virtue of any lines of action they initiate to him (1959: 9).

Goffman remarks that participants are ordinarily “sufficiently attuned to one other” and that although this agreement may not necessarily felt by participants, participants are expected to keep up a “veneer of consensus” (1959: 9). He takes up this
theme in more detail in *Frame Analysis* (1974), a collection of essays on how individuals attune to each other in interaction based on their respective definitions of the situation at hand. Goffman defines a frame in terms of what individuals attend to in their current situation; in other words, a frame is the answer to the question “What is it that’s going on here?” (1974: 8). Of course, the answer to this question depends on the scope of “here” and participants may bring to the interaction different frames of expectation. Thus, frames can interact in a number of ways, possibly resulting in the miscommunication of intention. Frames can be embedded within each other: for example the frame of “a lecture” might be embedded within the frame of “teaching”. Frames may also be derived from or “keyed” off other frames, in which a primary framework is recognized but is understood as not being seriously evoked: for example, Schiffrin (1984) describes how in Jewish American culture, discourse that appears argumentative on the surface can be interpreted within a frame of ritual “sociability”. Additionally, certain utterances or actions may indicate different frames to individuals engaged in joint interaction: as Tannen (1990) illustrates in her work on gender differences in language use, if a wife asks her husband many questions about the details of his day, he may interpret the speech act within a frame of “nagging” while she may intend to be engaged in a frame of “caring attention”. When this type of frame misalignment occurs, participants may explicitly draw attention to the frame to which they are attending and explicitly negotiate the normally unstated social rules of interaction at hand. In Goffman’s terms, this requires participants to “break frame” (1974: 345-377) and establish a new frame for contesting the prior frame (cf. Tannen’s (1990) concept of “metacommunication”).

34
In *Forms of Talk* (1981), Goffman develops his theory of framing by focusing more specifically on linguistic aspects of interaction. One of his most notable contributions in this book is his discussion of footing, which he defines as “the alignment we take up to ourselves and the others present as expressed in the way we manage the production or reception of an utterance” (128). Goffman emphasizes that shifts in footing are commonly language-linked and often indicated by codeswitching or paralinguistically marked contextualization cues. In explaining the various stances speakers can take toward their utterances, he breaks down the traditional concepts of “speaker” and “hearer”. A speaker might be the “animator” of an utterance, solely voicing or quoting the words of someone else, either genuinely or parodically (cf. Bakhtin 1981 on “unidirectional” versus “varidirectional” types of double-voicing); the speaker may or may not be the “author” of the words he/she voices, or the one who “has selected the sentiments that are being expressed and the words in which they are encoded” (Goffman 1981: 144); at another level of production is the person or institution whose beliefs are represented through the talk, or the “principal”; and finally, a speaker can “figure” into the words of his/her talk, for example through the personal pronoun “I”, which is a distinct role than that performed by the speaker *qua* speaker (either animator or author). Goffman illustrates this subtle distinction quite succinctly: “When we say, ‘I’m speechless!’, we aren’t” (148).

On the other hand, the role traditionally referred to as the “hearer” can also be broken down into several categories of participantship: a hearer may or may not be the direct “addressee” of the speaker’s utterance (usually evoked through second-person
reference); at another level, there are often speakers that are not directly addressed but are “ratified” as hearers of the utterance (such as the carbon-copy recipient of an email); unratted participants also have a bearing on the reception of talk, both those who do so purposefully – “eavesdroppers” – and those who do so inadvertently – “overhearers”.

Goffman’s concepts of framing and footing are central to the interactional sociolinguistic method of analyzing discourse in general because they allow us to articulate how situated identities that are constructed through talk and play a part in forming the social context in which individuals conjoin in sustained talk. However, in his discussion of footing, Goffman pays significant attention to alignments individuals take up to their talk, neglecting somewhat the alignments participants take up to each other.

Another framework that has been influential in the study of discourse and interaction is positioning theory (Davies and Harré 1990; van Langenhove and Harré 1999). Oriented in the tradition of discursive psychology, positioning theory offers a more dynamic alternative to the concept “role”, and schematizes the ways in which individuals take up situated identities or “positions” in interaction, and how they attribute identities to or “position” others through talk. A position in a conversation is defined as “a metaphorical concept through reference to which a person’s ‘moral’ and personal attributes as a speaker are compendiously collected” (van Langenhove and Harré 1999: 17). The positioning process is schematized as a triad (reproduced below in Figure 2.2.) in which subject positions are constructed within a particular “storyline”, or a cultural script defining the norms of interaction and distribution of speaking rights and expectations, and the “social force” (or illocutionary force, using Austin’s term) of
utterances is in part determined by (and plays a part in determining) the location and
differentiation of positions within the given storyline.

**Figure 2.2. The Positioning Triad**

![Positioning Triad Diagram](image)

Figure 2.2. The Positioning Triad (van Langenhove and Harré 1999:18)

Several analytical distinctions are drawn in positioning theory in order to
illuminate how positions arise and change in unfolding discourse. The first distinction is
that between “self” and “other” positioning: since positions are complementary to each
other within a given storyline, when a person positions him/herself in discourse, he/she
also positions his/her interlocutor(s). And conversely, any speech act which directly
positions the other in a storyline simultaneously positions the self.

Positions can emerge naturally in discourse and be accepted by all participants, or
they may be questioned and/or resisted by one positioned, thus causing a repositioning.
Van Langenhove and Harré label this distinction as one between “first-” and “second-
order” positioning, respectively. Another distinction that will be relevant to the analysis
of language ideological discourse is that between “moral” and “personal” positioning:
moral positions are defined according to the institutional roles that individuals take on
within the accepted storyline of the interaction, while personal positions occur at points
when there is some degree of deviance from these expected roles. For example, if a
homeowner tells her hired gardener to water her petunias every morning, this first-order positioning is of the *moral* brand, since the speech act is within the accepted storyline of the homeowner-gardener relationship. However, if the homeowner instead performs a speech act asking the gardener why her petunias have not been watered as she requested, the gardener must provide an excuse, or create a storyline that accounts for his deviance from his expected role as the hired gardener, constituting a move of *personal* positioning.

In the corpus of data analyzed in this study, the distinctions between moral and personal, and first- and second-order, positioning are important because a variety of moral orders are invoked as storylines and provide a justification for participants’ political and personal allegiances and beliefs about language, education, and policy. When resistance to such positions occurs, it often draws on speech acts that enact an alternative storyline (second-order moral positioning) or a personal positioning of past first-hand experience, which serve in the construction of particular ideologies of language. In order to better understand the rhetorical dynamics of these debates on language, we must attempt to understand how these different types of positioning strategies are taken up and reacted to in ongoing discourse.

While the terms “frame”, “footing”, “position”, “alignment”, and “stance” tend to be used in some current work as if they were interchangeable, other researchers have attempted to delineate nuances in meaning between these terms and consider the relative advantages of the slightly different perspective each framework offers to discourse analysis. Schiffrin (2006a: 208) distinguishes between 1) footing, which deconstructs a speaker’s production format in relation to talk; 2) position, which deals with the identities
that speakers take up, impose on others, and impugn in interaction and in the storyworlds of recounted experience and in larger ‘master’ discourses (cf. Bamberg 1997); and 3) stance, which describes assumed levels of knowledge that speakers posit in relation to their speech. Schiffrin demonstrates through a detailed analysis of retellings of one Holocaust survivor’s narrative that Self and Other emerge within various embedded frames of the narrative, having implications for the construal of personal and vicarious experience in the storytelling process, thus illustrating the inextricability of footing, positioning, and stance and their emergence through different linguistic structures in narrative texts.

Ribeiro (2006) questions whether “we are talking about the same thing” when we invoke the terms footing, positioning, and voice in discourse analysis by using each of these constructs in a discourse analysis of a phone call between two brothers who are discussing care for their parents. She also concludes that footing and positioning theories offer unique and equally valuable perspectives for analyzing discourse, defining the difference chiefly in terms of dimension: while footing captures the more moment-to-moment identities that arise via the speaker’s alignment to his/her talk, which is dependent on the complex, shifting, multilayered frames of discourse, positioning constructs more stable identities throughout stretches of talk that can be more overtly asserted and contested. Positioning also establishes relationships between participants as well as their relative knowledge, authority, and expertise.

It is clear, based on the theoretical questioning and applications of Schiffrin and Ribeira, that discourse analysis stands to benefit from framing, footing and positioning
theory, as they deal with subtly different aspects of constructing and negotiating meaning and identities in interaction. Following past research, I will use the term “position” to discuss how speakers overtly ascribe identities to themselves and others in discourse, which can be accomplished through a variety of linguistic means, among them via changes in “footing”, or the relationship they take up to their own utterances, as principal, figure, author, or animator. I use “stance” to indicate both epistemic positions and political positions taken by participants in the debates.

2.5. Self and Other

The constructs of Self and Other are central to the framework I propose for typologizing ways of indexing language ideologies in metalinguistic discourse, since it is ultimately the positioning of these two subjectivities in relation to various storylines surrounding language education that form the central premises of these debates about language. That is, when users articulate a definition, conception, belief, or attitude about language policy, they tend to construct a boundary between Self and Other, positioning each with respect to a particular image of a given language or theory of language learning. Before we begin to analyze the specific speech acts and discourse strategies that accomplish this positioning, the constructs Self and Other should be defined in turn, since they have been invoked in theoretical frameworks across disciplinary boundaries, in the social and psychological sciences as well as frameworks for the sociocultural linguistic analysis of discourse (Bucholtz and Hall 2005, Davies and Harré 1990, Ochs and Capps 1996, Said 1994/1978, Schiffrin 1996, 2006b). My definitions of these
constructs build on and integrate the assumptions of prior frameworks that invoke these terms in the representation of socially constructed identities.

Briefly, a Self (with a capital “S”) refers to the identity an individual ascribes to himself or herself in discursive interaction, with particular attributes, behavioral tendencies, and a history shared with certain other individuals as members of a social or cultural group. This view of a Self incorporates both psychological and social aspects of identity, which are often viewed as separate phenomena. In their introduction to positioning theory, for instance, Harré and van Langenhove (1999) distinguish between these two types of self:

There are kinds of identity which we attribute to people, and that we refer to by the word ‘self’. There is the self of personal identity, which is experienced as the continuity of one’s point of view in the world of objects in space and time. This is usually coupled with one’s sense of personal agency, in that one takes oneself as acting from that very same point. Then there are selves that are publicly presented in the episodes of interpersonal interaction in the everyday world, the coherent clusters of traits we sometimes call ‘personas’ (7).

While Harré and van Langenhove use the term “self” to refer to only the former of these types, and reserve the word “persona” to refer to the more socially oriented “self”, I believe these two facets of identity are more difficult to distinguish in practice than in theory. We need only think about how and why certain types of personal identity and subject positions are constructed in interaction to see how these two facets of the Self are interrelated. For example, we may locate instances of interpersonal communication that involve taking a particular social position in order to defend one’s personal identity (when one is charged with the character flaw of hypocrisy, for example). Conversely, one might also assert his or her personal identity to defend a particular social act or
display of persona. In other words, it is not uncommon for participants in social interaction to be involved in a negotiation over the coherence of the personal/moral and social acts of the Self. Therefore, I use the term Self to refer to the nexus of these aspects of identity.

Similarly, the Other is also an important figure in language ideological discourse, for the Other not only stands in opposition to the Self, but reinforces the existence of the Self because its presence requires the boundaries of the Self to be explicitly drawn and justified. In the construction of language ideologies, Self and Other may be separated by language through an “ideology of distinction”, in the terms of Gal and Irvine (1995: 969), who reconsider the nineteenth-century process of European nation-building through the lens of linguistic construction and differentiation. They remark:

Although it is now a commonplace that social categories—including nations, ethnic groups, races, genders, classes—are in part constructed and reproduced through symbolic devices and everyday practices that create boundaries between them, this analysis is only rarely extended to language. Despite a generation of sociolinguistic work that has persistently provided evidence to the contrary, linguistic differentiation—the formation of languages and dialects—is still often regarded as an asocial process (emphasis mine).

Gal and Irvine refer to the “other” in the sense of Edward Said (1994[1978]), the most influential theorist to have interrogated the construction of the “other” in his writings on Orientalism, in which he documents the discursive, literary, academic, and cultural production of the “other” – the East (Orient) – in Western (Occidental) epistemologies. For Said, the Oriental “other” is a necessary complement for the idea of European selfhood: “European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self” (3). On the other hand, the European discursive construction of the Orient is also at the heart of the justification of
imperial domination of the East. Said’s “other” is related to the Other I employ here in that it is tightly intertwined with ideology - that is, it plays a role in the discursive maintenance of power – and it is intricately involved in constructing a distinction between social groups. In my framework for outlining the ways in which language ideologies are indexed in metalinguistic discourse, the Other refers to the identity of a person or group that is positioned in relation to the Self, oftentimes through the construct of language; therefore, Self and Other may be positioned vis-à-vis each other in an oppositional relationship, like Said’s “other”, but they may also be positioned in various other relationships – of alliance, dominance, proxy, and so on. I will illustrate how some of these relationships are constructed in the next section, where I introduce the three discourse strategies.

2.6. Three discourse strategies: A preview

The focus of Chapters 4, 5, and 6 will be the analysis of three discourse strategies that I believe are primary tools for the expression of language ideologies in dialogic interaction – namely, reference, constructed dialogue, and metaphor. This is certainly not to say that these are the only strategies involved in the construction of language ideological discourse; it will become clear as the data are revealed that there are a number of other rhetorical devices involved in the debates analyzed that contribute to discursive constructions of beliefs about language. Some other discourse strategies that appear frequently in these texts and other overtly persuasive discourse are repetition, rhetorical questions, speech acts such as threats or promises (as represented in Lippi-Green’s
model), not to mention the strong presence of unmitigated personal insults. The three strategies chosen were selected at the expense of others for both data-driven and theoretically informed reasons. That is, in the initial analyses of the data, these strategies appeared quite frequently across the different text types (albeit in different modes at times). Additionally, these strategies have been widely studied in past sociolinguistic research that points to their ideological capacity either explicitly or implicitly. It will thus be useful to sketch out a general picture of how reference, constructed dialogue, and metaphor are conceptually related to each other before delving into in-depth analysis of each strategy in turn. Accordingly, I now provide a brief overview of the strategies and illustrations of how they appear in the debates responding to Newt Gingrich’s comments on bilingual education.

The act of referring can be thought of as a discursive process of categorization, distinction, or differentiation. Reference has been studied not only by sociolinguists, but by psychologists, cognitive scientists, semanticists, and philosophers of language. While some of these perspectives will be elaborated on in Chapter 5, the approach I take to analyzing reference in the texts builds most immediately on the work of Schiffrin (1987, 1996, 2006a, 2006b), who has rearticulated many of Goffman’s ideas on the presentation of self in a more explicitly linguistic perspective. Schiffrin (2006a, 2006b) illustrates how linguistic reference and repair construct situated social identities in excerpts of the oral histories of Holocaust survivors and in sociolinguistic interviews. She explains:

Who I am “here” and “now” is not only a result of interaction with a co-present “other.” It is also a result of interactions among displaced “others”, all evoked by reference, from the “then” of different times and the ‘there’ of different places (2006b: 130; emphasis added).
This statement highlights the indexical capacity of reference in discourse to reach beyond local referential and interactional context, which is crucial in the construction of language ideology because it allows the speaker to draw connections and distinctions between individuals and groups on the basis of shared or disparate language practices.

Reference performs the same function in other types of discourse as it does in oral history narrative, including the rhetorical discourse of language debates. By referring to languages and individuals in particular ways, speakers constantly index Self-Other, here-there, and then-now distinctions that position themselves as particular types of people, in particular types of places, and in particular types of social configurations. Take for example the following instance of personal reference from the Digg.com discussion, which was one of the first comments to be posted in response to the linked CNN article reporting Gingrich’s speech. The user, RadiantBeing, advocates teaching immigrants the “ways” of American society, implying that one of these “ways” is the English language:

"Teaching immigrants our ways is how we welcome them into our society. It is only in the interests of separatists and politicians to create separate linguistic classes."\(^4\)

RadiantBeing’s statement represents a case of personal reference constructing a Self-Other distinction in relation to language through the use of “Us” and “Them”-type referrals (in bold), constructing the issue of language differences as one of U.S.-born English-speaking citizens versus non-English-speaking immigrants, thus “erasing”

\(^4\) In all excerpts from the Digg data, original spelling, grammar, and punctuation have been maintained.
(Irvine and Gal 2000) a wide array of lived linguistic experience in the United States. RadiantBeing also constructs the position of those on the other side of the debate (i.e. those in favor of bilingual education), by referring to them as “separatists and politicians” – as agents creating this separation between linguistic “classes”. By contrast, this reference positions Gingrich, through his insistence on English immersion, as a non-political unifying agent, evoking the rhetoric of “one nation, one language” that has circulated in American political discourse at least since the Americanization campaign of the early twentieth century (Ricento 2000). Finally, this Digg user constructs differences of language as an economic issue by referring to speakers of different languages metonymically as “separate linguistic classes”. This referral constructs the support of bilingual education as a means of hegemonic control which amplifies socioeconomic gaps between speakers of English and other languages. Radiantbeing’s Digg comment is just one example of how person reference can index relationships that extend beyond the immediate interactional context in social and discursive space and time.

While reference may be the most straightforward way of strategically indexing Self and Other in relation to language in discourse, it is not the only means through which this indexical work is performed. Through reference, the Other is often directly indexed through referring terms (noun phrases or pronouns) that describe or designate them in specific categories. Compare this process to the indexical work accomplished through the discourse strategy of employing reported speech, in which one embodies the voice of the

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5 Among those whose experience is erased are the 21.5 million native-born U.S. citizens who speak a language other than English at home, comprising close to half of the total U.S. population who speak a language other than English at home (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000).
Other in order to appropriate or contrast the voice with that of the Self. I employ Tannen’s (1989) term “constructed dialogue” to describe reported speech because it emphasizes the fact that what is going on – that is, “framing an account of another’s words as dialogue” (Tannen 1989:110) – is not the reporting of someone else’s speech but the *creation* of dialogue by the speaker.

There has been a prolific amount of sociolinguistic work done on constructed dialogue (reviewed in more depth in Chapter 5) that emphasizes the interactional and identity work it performs, but as Rampton (1999) has pointed out, the use of constructed dialogue generates “symbolically condensed dialogues between self and other” and that “the production and interpretation of these acts nearly always draws on more settled ideologies of language and group value” (Rampton 1999:422). To illustrate the function of this stylistic resource for constructing language ideology, let’s take the example of another Digg user, Detritus, who expresses his views on the best way for immigrants in the United States to learn English:

> When I'm in a Chinese restaurant I'll try to chat up the people behind the counter just to give them an opportunity to practice English beyond the mechanized “What you order? Ok, pickup or delivery?” They’re usually very grateful for the opportunity, and I’ve seen a dramatic improvement in the accent of one such new found friend.

In this excerpt, Detritus voices an employee at the takeout counter of a Chinese restaurant. Here, we can see that making the distinction between constructed dialogue and reported speech is crucial: the speech that is reported in this segment – “What you order? Ok, pickup or delivery” - is an example of what Tannen (1989:111) has called “dialogue as instantiation”, or dialogue constructed to illustrate an utterance that occurs
repeatedly. Notice that Detritus uses indefinite and vague references prior to the constructed dialogue (e.g., “a Chinese restaurant”, “the people behind the counter”, “them”) in order to give the impression that this type of interaction happens quite frequently with a number of employees even though source the speech reported is singular.

So how do the example above and constructed dialogue in general capture an aspect of the Self-Other distinction that is central to social interaction? In its function of creating involvement, this discursive strategy draws the interlocutor into an illustration of the lived social world as the speaker sees it. Detritus brings a vivid picture of the Other – a Chinese immigrant - into the conversation by embodying the voice of this person, or type, through the use of constructed dialogue. As Clark and Gerrig (1990) have highlighted, reporting the speech of others places the reporter and the figure whose speech is represented in a dialectical relationship: while the speaker brings the figure closer to the interaction by “demonstrating” rather than describing the figure’s voice, the speaker’s act is at the same time distancing him/herself from the figure by performing a “nonserious” act; that is, by framing the speech as not belonging to him/herself through the use of quotation marks (in written texts), intonation and phonation shifts (in spoken discourse), deictic shifts, and language, dialect, or register shifts. In sum, through constructed dialogue, speakers negotiate the Self-Other distinction as they construct language ideologies by voicing the Other to either draw together or contrast a “them” and “there” with an “I” and “here”, and in some cases even a “then” versus a “now”, thereby constructing particular communities of language speakers.
The third primary discourse strategy that indexes language ideology in metalinguistic discourse is metaphor. In contrast to reference and constructed dialogue, metaphoric language allows people to imagine themselves, others, or complex processes in a particular way by painting a picture of some other familiar referent or process that they and their interlocutors can readily access, allowing (or forcing) interlocutors to draw the analogy between the two ideas. Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980) foundational work on metaphor from a cognitive perspective has effectively captured the ideological role that metaphors play: “The very systematicity that allows us to comprehend one aspect of a concept in terms of another… will necessarily hide other aspects of the concept” (10). In other words, when metaphors bring to the forefront a similarity between two entities or processes, they cover up other important distinctions between the two; they hide nuances and details of the object being depicted (cf. Gal and Irvine’s semiotic process of “erasure”). To demonstrate how metaphors complexly interweave images of language, Self, and Other, let us take the following video clip which originally appeared on the Jimmy Kimmel Show but was reproduced on Youtube. This clip contains the original apology by Gingrich in Spanish, but the subtitles are altered for humorous effect, often employing extended metaphors. (In the transcript below, the top line in plain text contains the spoken Spanish, the second line in italics contains the original English subtitles, and the SMALL CAPS represent the altered subtitles as they appeared on the Jimmy Kimmel Show and in the Youtube clip.)
If we read the altered subtitles as a metaphorical translation of Gingrich’s attempt in his apology to connect with Spanish speakers by using language they are familiar with, we can see the ideological work this strategy is performing. First, the reference to the piñata evokes an image of Spanish speakers as a generally festive and relaxed people rather than serious and hard-working. The donkey, on the other hand, conjures up stereotypical images of Latinos as backwards or less sophisticated (because the donkey is an older, less efficient mode of goods transportation), annoying loud (like the donkey’s bray) and wild, hard to control, and possibly violent (like the animal’s powerful kick). The discourse function of such imagery and the use of words of Spanish origin can be likened to the function of Mock Spanish as described by Hill (2005: 114), in that they carry “a presupposition, a ‘deep background’, a fully naturalized set of understandings of persons in Spanish-speaking populations”, which is required in order to appreciate the humor of the language play.

Bringing the three strategies back together, let us summarize the indexical processes through which each strategy functions as a resource for constructing language ideology. Personal reference may serve as a differentiating device, creating and naturalizing social distinctions between speakers of English and other languages, between
opponents and proponents of bilingual education, between divisive and unifying social forces. In sum, reference creates distinctions between Self and Other by designating individuals as members of categories, in particular places, with particular attributes, and most importantly, speaking particular languages. By contrast, through constructed dialogue speakers evoke the Other through the process of embodiment, displaying their likeness through their words, accent, and syntax, whether sincerely or mockingly. Finally, the use of metaphoric language positions Self and Other with respect to language though the process of using language to imagine the Other in calculated ways, highlighting similarities and hiding differences between the non-literal images and their intended referents as well as addressees.

It should be noted that although I have treated each of the three discourse strategies as distinct practices and have used different examples to illustrate each practice, these are not in reality as distinct as I have presented them. It would be difficult, for example, to perform a complete analysis of Detritus’s response on Digg.com without considering the references to himself and others that frame the constructed dialogue. Similarly, referential strategies are implicated in the example of metaphor above, and in all metaphor, for that matter. In fact, metaphor might be considered a subset in a battery of referential strategies if one were to categorize these strategies according to different criteria. On a similar note, the altered subtitles in the Jimmy Kimmel clip are in fact constructed dialogue themselves! It should be stressed that the purpose of this approach is not to divide language ideological discourse into three distinct practices, but to
examine it from three different *angles*, each focusing on a different means of indexing the Self-Other distinction in relation to language.

While the excerpts from the Digg comments and Youtube video provided concise illustrations of the three strategies, it should also be reinforced that these examples have been extracted from their original contexts - the larger dialogues in which these resources co-occur and integrate each other in complex ways. In order to understand the degree to which the language ideologies constructed in these brief expressions are shared or in conflict in unfolding discourse, we must also take into account *how* such statements are responded to by other users (recalling dialogicality in Bakhtin’s first sense). For instance, as there are many Digg users who self-identify in the discussion as immigrants or native-born U.S. citizens who speak first languages other than English, how do they respond to the Us-Them distinction RadiantBeing sets up in (1), which places these users in a nebulous third space? Do they accept the role of “Us”, “Them”, or do they contest these alliances by reconfiguring the identity boundary lines? On another level, we need to consider responses across text types; that is, how did the institutional media respond to these internet-based discussions? We may want to look at Newt Gingrich’s appearance on the Fox News Channel’s political talk show *The O’Reilly Factor* a few days following the dissemination of his Youtube apology: Whose criticisms did he respond to? Are his arguments consonant with his two prior public statements, or have the responses he received on forums like Digg, Youtube, and in the newspapers made him reframe his position on bilingual education? It is through detailed analysis of this type of discursive action that we can reach a better understanding of the dynamic life of ideology in the
construction of linguistic common sense in various forums for language-oriented debate. Such research will also allow us to conceptualize how language debates contribute to the construction of social and political alliances, official declarations of language and education policy, and regulate linguistic structure and practice in our daily lives.

2.7. Summary

In this chapter, I have laid the theoretical groundwork on which the analysis in the following chapters is built. I began by summarizing some definitions of language ideology previously offered by other scholars, noting points of agreement (i.e. that ideologies are socially grounded, experience-based conceptions of language) and disagreement (i.e., the centrality and definition of power, and the tension between consensus and conflict models) in definitions and perspectives. I also described and illustrated several methodological approaches for studying language ideologies, including experimentally-based techniques, methods that locate ideology directly in language structure, change, and shift, and methods that analyze discourse in concrete instances of interaction.

After providing my own definition of language ideology, I discussed the theoretical models of ideology as a disursive process put forth by Lippi-Green and Irvine and Gal as starting points for my own model of investigating how language ideologies emerge in metalinguistic discourse. Next, I provided some background on the interactional sociolinguistic approach to analyzing discourse, focusing on the contributions of Goffman and Gumperz. I also summarized the basic tenets of
positioning theory, which added a perspective that foregrounds the identity work that is accomplished through concrete instances of interaction. I also defined and elaborated on the concepts of “Self” and “Other”, which are positioning constructs that are central to the indexing of language ideology in metalinguistic discourse.

In the last section of this chapter, I provided a brief preview of and rationale for selecting the three discourse strategies that are analyzed in Chapters 4, 5, and 6 (reference, constructed dialogue, and metaphor, respectively), illustrating the distinct processes through which they index language ideologies in the debates emanating from Newt Gingrich’s controversial comments about bilingual education. I also demonstrated how each strategy positions Self and Other in relation to language in different ways.

Now that I have established the theoretical underpinnings and the methodological framework for my analysis, in the next chapter I describe my data and situate it historically, socially, and politically within discourses on multilingualism, education, and language legislation in the United States.
3.1. Introduction

Although the existence of the particular debates examined in the next chapters have in part been made possible by internet technologies developed in recent years, the substance of the debates certainly does not instantiate a novel discussion about language education in the United States. In fact, it is astonishing how familiar some of the arguments made by individuals in these forums sound when this discourse is viewed as a cross-section in a lengthy history of public debates about language policy in the U.S., dating back to discussions among the country’s forefathers in the chambers of the Continental Congress. Since the ideological underpinnings of language education policy date as far back as the existence of the nation itself, it is important to understand the social, political, and historical context within which the contemporary debate I analyze takes place.

This chapter begins by providing a brief historical background and description of current climate surrounding questions about language education and official language policy in the United States. I trace the history of bilingual education in the U.S., pointing out important events, cases, and federal legislation regarding the issue, beginning in the eighteenth century through current language education policy as mandated by No Child Left Behind. Throughout this discussion, I touch on how beliefs about language are discursively tied to notions of economic and personal success as well as conceptions of national, ethnic and racial identities. In the last section, I describe the procedure for
selecting the specific data that I analyze in the remainder of the study and provide a
description of the Digg discussion board and the print news items that are included in the
data corpus.

3.2. Historical developments in language education policy

Political debates about language have played an important role in public discourse
since colonial times. However, as Wiley (2000) emphasizes, while stances toward
English as on official language versus the relative intolerance of other languages have
remained relatively stable over the past few centuries, the underlying ideologies guiding
such stances have shifted, reflecting changing political, economic, and social priorities.
Let us review some of the major language policy developments throughout American
history in order to set the stage for understanding the opinions shared and the broader
discourses that are drawn on the data emanating from Gingrich’s 2007 comments about
bilingual education.

Crawford (1989) documents the history of bilingual education in the United States
from the time that the first colonists settled. As Europeans began to establish schools in
the original colonies, he notes that “vernacular language was the rule, whether in English
or another tongue” (1989: 21). Freedom to determine language of instruction in school
was held in high esteem by the English Pilgrims, after a brief period of exile in Holland
during which English children had begun to linguistically assimilate in Dutch-medium
schools.
Tolerance for linguistic pluralism (at least as it related to non-indigenous immigrant groups) remained relatively stable until the early twentieth century. However, debates regarding the official status of English had already been surfacing for quite some time. Germans, who constituted the nation’s largest ethnolinguistic minority throughout the nineteenth century (Crawford 1989, Wiley 2004), had established German language (monolingual or German-English bilingual) schools around Philadelphia as early as 1694, and they constituted the first linguistic group against which Anglo-American linguistic intolerance was aimed. Benjamin Franklin attempted to replace German with English through the establishment of religious schooling in English. But Franklin was the exception rather than the rule; bilingualism was generally accepted as a fact of life, and non-English speaking political groups were actively accommodated within the Continental Congress.

In 1839, Ohio issued a law authorizing instruction in English, German, or both in areas where parents requested it. In 1847, Louisiana followed suit with regard to French. New Mexico, shortly after its annexation in 1848, authorized bilingual Spanish-English education. By the end of the nineteenth century, more than a dozen states had passed laws authorizing education in languages other than English.

At the turn of the century, efforts to Americanize a new wave of immigrants provoked a gradual decline in support for bilingual education. At first, the German population was the biggest target of anti-immigration and anti-bilingual education sentiment, but the reasons for intolerance were mainly political and religious, rather than direct opposition to the German language. However, when Italian, Jewish, and Slavic
immigrants began arriving in great numbers in the early 1900s, Americanization efforts took a “coercive” turn, and proficiency in English began to be equated with political loyalty, constituting the first ideological link constructed between language and nationalism (Crawford 1989: 22). By 1923, 22 states had passed laws prohibiting the teaching of foreign languages in primary schools (Ricento 1997). On the other hand, this year also represented the first major act of federal legislation ensuring rights to teach in non-English languages: in the case of Meyer v. Nebraska, the U.S. Supreme Court found a 1919 Nebraska statute that forbade teaching in non-English languages to be unconstitutional. Soon after, similar laws in other states were found unconstitutional by a ruling of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals (Tamura 1993, cited in Ricento 1997).

The period of 1930-1965 was characterized by little federal intervention in language policy issues, with the exception of restrictive policies toward the use of Japanese and German in public domains during World Word II. However, Ricento (1997) describes this period an “example of policy making through inaction” (1997: 138). The next major phase of language education and immigration-related legislation came in the 1960s following the civil rights movement. The Bilingual Education Act of 1968 authorized the use of non-English languages in the education of language minority students who had been placed in inferior schools and English-only classes. The Supreme Court ruling on Lau v. Nichols (1974) declared that it was unconstitutional to disallow Chinese speaking immigrant students from being taught in their native language because it violated the Civil Rights Act (1964), which banned educational discrimination based on national origin.
In the meantime, opposition to the Bilingual Education Act also began to grow throughout the 1970s, and in 1981 Senator S. I. Hayakawa introduced a constitutional amendment that would make English the official language of the United States. Various versions of the amendment appeared during the following years, and in the meantime, Hayakawa founded the English-Only organization U.S. English, which is still in existence today and has continued to advocate for official English policies at the federal and state levels over the past three decades.

While there has been not as of yet been any anti-bilingual education legislation passed at the federal level, some states have passed laws that effectively replace bilingual education with English-only instruction in public schools, including California’s Proposition 227 (1998); Arizona’s Proposition 203 (2000), and Massachusetts’ Question 2 Referendum (2002). The federal No Child Left Behind Act (2001), which is not a language education policy per se, has been considered a de facto language policy by some because the standardized tests it uses to determine school progress are only given in English (Shohamy 2006).

This brief review of the history of institutional agendas surrounding language educational policy in the United States serves as an important backdrop against which we should consider the specific debates analyzed in this study. Newt Gingrich is certainly not the first to propose replacing bilingual education with English immersion in public schools, and his position is backed not just by contemporary Americans, but by larger

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6 See also the thematic issue of the journal *Language Policy* (vol. 7, issue 3, 2007 ed. Kate Mencken) for a variety of perspectives on NCLB and language education policy.
discourses of past eras of American history, from Ben Franklin’s anti-German sentiments in the eighteenth century to the government’s Americanization campaign geared toward non-English speaking immigrants of the early twentieth century, to the covert language ideologies espoused in current education policy.

3.3. Data “discovery” and corpus of texts

It is perhaps more appropriate to talk about the initial stages of my data collection procedure as a “discovery” process, as I didn’t begin this project by actively researching this particular language debate. I rather came across it in a naturalistic way, much in the same way the participants whose responses I analyze in the following chapters did. One morning in early April 2007, my husband emailed me a news link, as we often do when we find articles, clips, music, or videos that are of interest to each other. The article he sent me was a link to the report of Newt Gingrich’s March 30, 2007 speech to the National Federation of Republican Women, in which he made the following statement:

We should replace bilingual education with immersions- with immersion in English so people learn the common language of the country and so they learn the language of prosperity, not the language of living in a ghetto.

I read the article, watched the embedded CNN video clip of Gingrich’s speech, and filed the email away in my inbox with other language related news I collect. A few weeks later, I revisited the link and found that the report had provoked an outburst of emotionally charged responses by readers, which appeared in various internet forums – mostly blogs and discussion boards - in the weeks immediately following Gingrich’s speech. While some internet users commented on the racist meanings they interpreted in
Gingrich’s speech, others expressed wholehearted agreement with Gingrich’s stance on bilingual education. Some forums contained brief, profanity-filled incendiary remarks aimed at Gingrich or other users in the discussion, while others contained detailed arguments and expository essays about the respective benefits and shortcomings of English-Only and bilingual education in the United States. The most notable example of this second genre of discussion I found on Digg.com, a news-sharing website that allows users to post links to news stories on other websites and comment on and rate links posted by others. For readers not familiar with news networking websites I will briefly describe the nature, structure, and interface of Digg.

Digg prides itself on its democratic editorial control, in which users decide which links to promote to the front page by “digging” (showing appreciation for) them using the Digg interface. Users also have the ability to comment on posted links and “digg” or “bury” comments posted by other users. The website allows registered users to set their defaults to only show comments that have been dugg enough to surpass a particular “threshold”, thus hiding unpopular comments.

To get a better sense of how the Digg.com website works, let us examine a screenshot and breakdown the various elements that users may manipulate as they read, share, and comment on news stories and links posted on the website. The figure below contains a screenshot of the three most popular political stories of the week on Digg.com when the website was accessed April 2, 2009.
Figure 3.1. Screenshot of Digg.com top political stories, 4/2/2008

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Popularity of a story is gauged by the number of “diggs” the link receives; in Figure 3.1., we see that the top story of the week about UPS advertising on “The O’Reilly Factor” received 4,234 diggs. When users find these stories, they may click on the box below the digg tally to add a unit to the digg total. Alternatively, if they do not appreciate the linked article, they may click on the bury “X” button below the link to subtract a unit from the total number of diggs.

Users also have the ability to connect to the linked website by clicking on the article title, which opens up the link in a new window in the internet browser. By
clicking on the “comments” button below the article summary, the user is able to access the discussion generated in reaction to the link. Figure 3.2., below, contains a screenshot of the first three comments in the discussion responding to the CNN article on Gingrich’s NFRW speech, which was originally posted on Digg.com by user Nuttmeg on March 31, 2007.

**Figure 3.2. Screenshot of initial Digg comments on linked CNN article reporting Newt Gingrich’s NFRW speech**

The discussion generated by the CNN article reporting Gingrich’s speech constitutes one subsection of the data corpus examined in this study. The link received a total of 789 diggs and 256 comments (as of 4/2/2009), which average approximately 66
words in length (the entire discussion text is approximately 17,000 words), although individual responses vary in length from one-word responses (e.g., newbee70’s “Amen!” response in Figure 3.2) to essays comprised of several hundred words.

Taking a closer look at Figure 3.2, we see that Digg users have access to a variety of information regarding each comment (listed here as they appear above from left to right): the user’s icon and name; the date the comment was submitted; the content of the comment if it is above the viewing threshold; the number of replies written in response to each comment (users may click on the triangular bullet next to the number of replies to expand the view and read all replies); the total number of diggs the comment received; two icons which allow the reader to either digg or bury the comment; and finally, a “reply” option for users who wish to respond directly to the comment posted by the prior user. We can see in this figure that several comments have been buried to the point that they are below the default viewing threshold (i.e., those posted by slugicide, aceg1357, pats1237, and sleepingcow). However, users may choose to view the content of these comments by clicking on “Show” in the shaded box.

While the bury button was originally meant to be used to prevent spam, it has been criticized by the Digg community as having become in practice a tool to silence.

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7 The dates displayed in this screenshot, which was taken almost 2 years after the link was posted, are not accurate; many of these comments were actually posted in the weeks following the submission of the link on the website (i.e. in April 2007). The Digg website appears to reset the date after a certain length of time following the posting of the link.

8 If the digg total is negative, more users have buried than dugg the comment.
voices with which users disagree from an ideological standpoint\textsuperscript{9}. This interface makes Digg an especially useful site for the study of language ideologies because it can help us understand which beliefs are most widely espoused and what linguistic constructions of these beliefs have the most rhetorical force in the Digg community’s eyes. From these initial responses (posted in chronological order), we see that comments in support of Gingrich’s position are relatively highly valued among the discussion board participants, which actually runs counter to common accusations of the site’s liberal bias. Three out of four of the buried comments make disparaging comments about Newt Gingrich personally or the political position he takes in his NFRW speech.

In addition to examining the Digg discussion relating to Gingrich’s speech, I also examine print newspaper reports of Gingrich’s speech and his subsequent Youtube apology, which he performed in Spanish with English subtitles on his Youtube channel a few days following his speech. In order to locate a variety of texts relating to these two events covered in the media, I employed ProQuest National Newspapers Database, which contains full-text archives of articles from the \textit{Atlanta Journal-Constitution}, \textit{Boston Globe}, \textit{Chicago Tribune}, \textit{Los Angeles Times}, \textit{New York Times}, \textit{Seattle Post-Intelligencer}, \textit{USA Today}, and the \textit{Washington Post}, among others. To find articles, commentaries, and letters describing and contributing to the controversy surrounding Gingrich’s speech and apology, I performed searches using a variety of 2- and 3-term combinations including “Gingrich”, “ghetto”, “bilingual”, “English”, “education”, and “apology”, limiting my

\textsuperscript{9} This issue was actually raised on Digg itself in a link made popular in September 2008 to an article on the PBS website titled “Does Digg Have a Liberal Bias? Share Your Thoughts.” (http://digg.com/d1Yxv1, accessed April 3, 2009).
search to articles appearing in the month following Gingrich’s speech to the NFRW (3/30/2007 to 4/30/2007). I also used supplementary communications databases to access transcripts of Gingrich’s televised interviews in the days following his speech and web-based newspaper coverage of the events, but these types of data were not included in the corpus of data for formal analysis.

Using these search criteria, I compiled a corpus of 24 texts from various newspapers that made reference in some way to Gingrich’s comments on bilingual education or Youtube apology. Because these texts constituted a variety of types of news items, I broke them down into four categories: 1) reports, including articles documenting Gingrich’s speech to the NFRW and his public apology; 2) commentaries, including regular columns by syndicated columnists for national newspapers, as well as guest commentaries, including one by Gingrich himself in the Los Angeles Times; 3) letters from readers to the editor published in the OpEd section responding to previous articles and commentaries; and 4) aftermath, including texts reporting a debate between Gingrich and Massachusetts Senator John Kerry on the topic of climate change two weeks after the NFRW speech that makes reference to Gingrich’s “ghetto” comment as background information. The reason for dividing up the texts in this way is to bring into relief the process by which language ideologies emanate and circulate in public discourse and how discussion of bilingual education and “ghetto” language is appropriated from earlier reports into subsequent texts, and from editorial voices to readers’ voices in the newspapers.
The chart below summarizes the publication origin of the texts collected in each category.

**Figure 3.3. Newspaper texts in data corpus by type and origin**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reports</th>
<th>Commentaries</th>
<th>Letters</th>
<th>Aftermath</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chicago Tribune (2)</td>
<td>Chicago Tribune (1)</td>
<td>Los Angeles Times (4)</td>
<td>Chicago Tribune (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington Post (2)</td>
<td>Los Angeles Times (2)</td>
<td>Washington Post (1)</td>
<td>Los Angeles Times (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seattle Post (1)</td>
<td>Atlanta Journal (2)</td>
<td>Washington Post (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>USA Today (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Washington Post (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Washington Times (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the following chapters, I describe the content of these texts in more detail, and Appendix A contains a table summarizing the article title, author, text type and publication origin and date of each news item. For some of the analysis in Chapters 4-6, certain newspaper items have been excluded due to topic or lack of relevant features; these cases will be discussed as they arise.

**3.4. Summary**

In this chapter, I have provided a brief historical background of ideological debates in the United States as they relate to language education policy. I emphasized that we should view the texts under examination in this study not as an isolated media event, but as a cross-section in a larger debate about language and education that spans across centuries of time and has been influenced by a wide range of sociopolitical climates and dominant discourses relating to language, nationalism, racism, segregation, and immigration. Some of these discourses will emerge in the debates examined hereafter as contextualization strategies as well as points of comparison with current debates over of language education policy in the United States.
I then described my methods of data collection and explained the structure and interface of Digg.com, which readers may refer back to, as the Digg terminology is used to describe the data in future chapters. With these preliminaries now in place, I turn to examine the discourse strategies of person and language reference in the newspaper and Digg texts in the next chapter.
4.1. Introduction

In Chapter 2, it was established that the central goals of this study are to construct a model of how discourse strategies work in the construction of language ideologies. In Chapter 3, I introduced and situated the data within the sociohistorical context of language education policy in the United States. I now begin the analysis of exactly how these various texts and strategies work to construct, uphold, appropriate, and contest commonsensical, naturalized beliefs about language by examining reference. I will be asking questions about who (individuals or groups) and what language varieties are referred to most frequently in the texts, and I will consider how people and the languages they speak are discursively situated in geographical and social space. This analysis will allow us to uncover how the seemingly simple act of naming people and places in text and talk contributes to the construction of language ideologies and understand how ideologies are negotiated in ongoing discourse. It will also shed light on what other issues and ideologies (political, racial, economic) lie at the heart of the debate about language education policy.

In the next section, I will provide some background on the way reference has been approached in various subfields of linguistics, highlighting some studies that have linked (either explicitly or implicitly) the use of personal and linguistic reference as a discourse strategy in the negotiation of various aspects of identity and ideology. I will then present an analysis of person reference in the newspaper and online texts, focusing on how a
prominent individual (Newt Gingrich) is initially referred to in the texts, and how both the choice of referring term and its placement in context works as a positioning device in the texts. I will also discuss how person reference becomes an overt site for the negotiation of language ideologies by various participants in the online debate by closely examining referring sequences to Gingrich in the Digg data.

In the following section, I will examine what particular language varieties are referred to in these texts, creating a picture of how linguistic communities are constructed within the texts as particular types of social groups. In this section I will also highlight how agreements regarding whom is affected by language education policy are presupposed and how linguistic references are often overtly problematized in the data by performing a sequential discourse analysis of referrals to certain varieties in context. In conclusion, I will discuss how reference simultaneously creates interpersonal alignments, political and moral positions, and epistemic stances, emphasizing the role of these strategies play in the role of negotiating the social consequences of language education policy.

4.2. Perspectives on reference

Questions regarding reference, or the way we denote people, objects, and abstract entities in linguistic practice, have been explored in a variety of disciplines, including Philosophy, Linguistics, and Psychology. In Linguistics alone, the subfields of semantics, pragmatics (in the Gricean sense), and sociolinguistics (including variationist, conversation analytic, and interactional approaches) have worked with different
assumptions, approaches, and methodologies, all attempting to account for the multitude of ways in which people refer to people, places, objects, and abstract ideas in spoken and written interaction.

Conversation analysts have largely focused on two issues in reference: 1) the development of a universal systematics underlying referential practice; and 2) a description of locally emergent factors that sequentially constrain personal reference. Work representative of this first area includes an early paper by Sacks and Schegloff (2007[1979])\(^\text{10}\), in which two preferences in the organization of person reference interaction are established: namely, “minimization” and “recipient design”.

Minimization refers to the preference to give as little information as is required for the proper identification of the referral, or in their words, “On occasions when reference is to be done, it should preferably be done with a single reference form” (2007: 24). For example, if I can refer to my coworker Leslie Ann Thompson as “Leslie” in conversation without jeopardizing my interlocutor’s ability to place my reference, I will not bother mentioning other details, such as her last name, our professional relationship, or her hair color. The second preference, recipient design\(^\text{11}\), refers to the preference of the speaker to tailor his/her referral to interlocutors based on its ability to be properly recognized, based on assumed shared prior knowledge and locally anchored conversational expectations.

\(^{10}\) Both versions of this paper contain a note clarifying that the paper was actually written in 1973.

\(^{11}\) The notion of recipient design has remained a central concept in other areas in sociolinguistics, including social psychological models of Communication Accommodation Theory (e.g. Giles and Coupland 1991) and related models of sociolinguistic variation (Bell’s (1984) “audience design”).
Levinson (2007) has added a third preference in the model for optimizing person reference – “circumspection” – which refers to the tendency to observe further “local” constraints (based on cultural and situational context) in the referring process, which he illustrates with the example of referring to a teacher by their title and last name (e.g. “Mr. Williams”) while at school (even if the speaker knows and refers to Mr. Williams as “Joe” on the soccer field).\(^\text{12}\)

Stivers, Enfield, and Levinson (2007) establish three categories of reference to summarize the multiple resources we use for making non-pronominal reference to third parties in talk – names, relators, and descriptions. In discussing the relevance of these categories to the meaning-making function of talk, Stivers et al. highlight Searle’s 1997[1959] theoretical argument distinguishing the function of proper names and descriptions in person reference: “When we describe a person, we commit to selecting some features and not others as constituting ‘the description’” (Stivers et al. 2007: 4, emphasis in original).\(^\text{13}\) Descriptive elements of both person and language reference will factor importantly into our analysis of the construction of language ideology in the debates below, as descriptions allow speakers to highlight linguistic stereotypes and naturalize their individual perceptions of language varieties as shared common knowledge.

\(^\text{12}\) This aspect of linguistic choice has been addressed in variationist approaches to style in recent work by Cutillas-Espinosa and Hernández-Camboy (2007) in their discussion of “script design”, or language policies and standards based on community norms that influence stylistic choices in radio talk and other forms of media discourse.

\(^\text{13}\) Interestingly, this argument parallels the argument made by Clark and Gerrig (1990) regarding the direct reporting (“demonstration”) of speech versus the act of description; however, Clark and Gerrig note that it is demonstration rather than description that succumbs to (or conversely, exploits) the necessity of selectivity. (This issue will be taken up in further detail in Chapter 5).
Fox’s (1987) monograph on discourse anaphora in conversational and expository written English represents the second major goal of CA approaches to person reference. She posits the underlying sequentially-based rule accounting for anaphoric devices in non-narrative talk: “The first mention of a referent in a sequence is done with a full NP. After that, by using a pronoun the speaker displays an understanding that the preceding sequence has not been closed down” (18). This rule articulates an important conversational norm against which we can analyze the use of marked referring sequences in discourse. Additionally, it points to the presence of boundaries in conversation that play a role in determining the felicity of anaphors in discourse, as opposed to previous accounts for anaphor usage (Fox cites Givón 1983,) which only take distance between the anaphor and its antecedent into account.

Other researchers have since worked with and built on these constraints to better understand referring sequences in both conversational and narrative data. Schegloff (1996) takes up problem of subsequent reference forms (pronouns) in initial positions and conversely, of initial reference forms (full NPs) in subsequent positions. He concludes that in naturally occurring conversation, referential practice and the notions of locality are reflexive and mutually constitutive: “The so-called ‘continuity’ or ‘coherence’ of the talk in an enacted, interpreted and co-constructed affair, not an entirely inherited or pre-determined one” (1996: 451). Schegloff provides a vivid example from personal experience of how this works, recalling that in the aftermath of the assassination of

14 Schiffrin (2006) examines the effects of boundaries on referring sequences in two other genres spoken discourse – narratives and lists – and finds that boundaries in lists reduce the use of next-mention pronouns more so than in narratives.
President Kennedy, strangers would ask each other on the street “Is he still alive?” The use of the pronoun would be easily recognized by the addressee even though there had been no previous talk between the speaker and hearer, which he notes “served as a striking embodiment of community” (451). This account points to the capacity of reference to play a role in the construction of communities and intergroup boundaries, an important process in the positioning of Self and Other in language debates.

Cognitive and experimental approaches to the study of reference and discourse anaphora have focused on the ability of the hearer to access the reference in talk in interaction. For example, Ariel (1990) proposes an alternative to the pragmatic context-dependent classification of referring expressions which instead focuses on the “accessibility status” that the mental representation of the intended referent is assumed to have for the addressee upon first mention. For example, the use of a full name + modifier (e.g. “Newt Gingrich, former House Speaker”) would mark the referent at the lowest level of accessibility; a demonstrative followed by an NP would be relatively accessible (e.g. “that politician”); and a bare pronoun (e.g. “he”) would mark the referent as highly accessible to the addressee. Similarly, Chafe (1994) discusses the various levels of “activation state” of the hearer – “active”, “semiaactive”, “inactive” – that is presumed by the speaker when determining whether to introduce a referent in discourse as “given”, “accessible”, or “new”.

These cognitive perspectives lend themselves to a collaborative view of reference, which takes into account the speaker’s and hearer’s prior knowledge, expectations, and assumptions about the other’s information state. The collaborative model of reference
has been tested in experimental work by Clark and Wilkes-Gibbs (1992; see also Clark and Schober 1992), who devise a study to determine how a speaker and hearer establish intersubjective agreement on reference through talk by giving them a cooperative visually-oriented task to accomplish without having visual access to each other. They find that first references to objects require more conversational work and thus consist of complex descriptions, while subsequent referrals to the same object are more concise because speaker and hearer have already established linguistic means of referral.

The research summarized thus far has served as an important basis for recent inquiry in interactional sociolinguistics, which has incorporated conversation analytic and cognitive perspectives on reference while broadening the scope of questions we ask about how referrals function in text and talk. Researchers have begun to delve more deeply into issues surrounding the function of reference in the construction of social identity, the representation of power relations, and as a mediating device between micro- and macro-levels of discourse structure. These studies relate to the present investigation of how reference works in the negotiation of language ideologies in media and mediated discourses.

Schiffrin’s (2006) monograph on variation in reference examines referrals in two genres – lists and narratives, and her studies range from micro interactional issues, such as issues of self-repair in problematic referrals (Chapter 3) to larger issues of identity and the reframing of past experience by infusing referrals with post hoc knowledge of past events (Chapter 6). Chapter 8, entitled “Who did what (again)?”, examines referring expressions to people and events in two contrasting narratives, one told by a Holocaust
survivor about being captured with her family by Nazis, and the other told by a sociolinguistic interviewee about a school prank he played with a childhood friend. By delving into the way the narrators refer to characters and frame the complicating actions in the stories they tell, Schiffrin finds that the use of first person plural “we” in conjunction with references to various third parties (e.g., a rabbi, Nazi captors, a teacher, other students) plays an important role in the construction of personal and group identities and affiliations in the story world. In its “dual indexical” capacity, she demonstrates that the pronoun “we” creates an alignment, a relationship, and a bridge between the self and various others in the story world of these narratives, thus also constructing a situated view of the world and the ideological perspective of the narrator.

Connecting this textual analysis to Goffman’s sociological notion of “tie signs” (1971), or the semiotic resources individuals use to construct a relationship (a “with”) with others in public settings, Schiffrin concludes that “referrals are thus excellent ways to discover the textual emergence of a ‘with’ that can reflect the life world existence of (or desire for) that same ‘with’” (310). Because expressions of intragroup affiliation and intergroup differentiation are central to language ideological discourse at well, the examination of personal referrals in conjunction with various others (e.g. Gingrich, non-English speakers) in the present data corpus should similarly shed light on how individuals construct relationships between Self and Other and position each in relation to matters of language and community.

De Fina (2003, 2006) has also studied linguistic reference and its implications in the construction of individual and group identities by analyzing narratives of Mexican
immigrants in the United States. By tracking the use of particular membership
categorization devices (Sacks 1995), such as “Hispanic” and “Latino” in narratives of
immigration, De Fina finds that narrators’ self-identities are constructed not as
individuals but as members of particular social groups, and are often built on the basis of
opposition or contrast with others (2003: 153). She also connects specific instances of
identity construction to shared beliefs about identity, which “become the object of
resistance, alternative formulations and renegotiation” (2006: 355). This view of
reference and identity construction lends itself particularly well to a framework for the
analysis of language ideology, because it is often through language that such affiliations
are made, both explicitly through the attribution of particular languages to individuals
and groups, and implicitly through the language used to describe Self and Other as
belonging to these groups.

Now that we have established some of the structural, interactional, and
ideological foundations of person and language reference, let us turn to an investigation
of the data at hand by examining various referrals to a central figure in these debates
about “ghetto” language, bilingual education, and language policy – Newt Gingrich.

4.3. Referring to Newt Gingrich

Newt Gingrich, who made the speech and apology that inspired the language
debate at the heart of these texts, is without a doubt the individual most often referred to
in the newspaper and internet texts. Considering Gingrich’s role in the real world as the
author of these controversial statements, it is not surprising that he also serves as a central
figure in the *textual* world of the debates as well. For this reason, it will be of use to examine closely how this figure is referred to in the debates as we consider how language ideologies are constructed in the news coverage and Digg discussions that emanated from these events. Referring back to the language ideological triad (introduced in Chapter 2), we can say that Gingrich is a prominent Other that figures into the debate, and by looking at how this Other is positioned (Davies and Harré 1990, van Langenhove and Harré 1999) through the strategy of person reference by journalists and Digg participants, we can learn not only about the positions these participants ascribe to themselves, but also about the various “storylines” that are constructed as central to the question of language education policy as it relates to multilingualism in the United States.

In our analysis of referring terms used for Gingrich, we can begin by considering how they fall within the three categories of personal reference established by Stivers, Enfield and Levinson (2007) – names, relators, and descriptions. The following examples contain referrals to Gingrich\(^\text{15}\) that fall into each of these three categories:

1. **Names**
   Examples: Newt, Gingrich, Newt Gingrich

2. **Relators**
   Examples: my former boss, the man who tried to impeach Clinton

3. **Descriptions**
   Examples: Old Gringo, the former Speaker of the House

As we examine the data, however, we will find that in addition to examples that fall discretely into each of these categories, the texts also contain hybrid examples, such

\(^{15}\) Keeping in line with the academic convention of last name reference, I will hereafter refer to Newt Gingrich as ‘Gingrich’ in this chapter in order to avoid infusing my own discourse with the ideological shades of meaning that I am attempting to uncover in the texts I am analyzing.
as “Mr. Gingrich, who is considering a 2008 run for president”. This hybrid referral consists of both a name (Mr. Gingrich) and subordinate clause containing a descriptor relating to Gingrich’s current actions and professional plans (i.e., that he is currently considering the possibility of running for president of the United States in the following year).

As we attempt to determine the language ideological function of names, relators, and descriptions of Gingrich, the following questions will serve as a useful guide in our analysis:

**Names**
- Which forms are marked in their interactional context?
- Do recurrent mentions of Gingrich by name confirm earlier findings that indicate that the repetitive use of names (vs. pronouns in subsequent mentions) contribute to constructing a general stance of disagreement (Downing 1996, Fox 1987)? If so, what types of alignments are being created – political, moral, national, linguistic?
- What personal (Self) identities are constituted in these alignments and how are they constructed as related various Others and to particular languages?

**Relators**
- What does the relationship evoked in relational referrals highlight about Gingrich’s social and political position?
- How does it position the speaker/writer in relation to Gingrich?
- How does it socially position both Gingrich and the speaker/writer in relation to the proposed policy?

**Descriptions**
- Why has the speaker/writer chosen to highlight these aspects of Gingrich’s persona?
- Do the descriptors position Gingrich in a favorable or unfavorable light from the speaker/writer’s point of view?
- How do the descriptions of Gingrich reflexively construct the position of the speaker/writer?

Because of the different conventions of language use in the two disparate types of data, it will be of use to separate our analysis of referring terms according to the text type (newspaper articles vs. discussion board).
4.3.1. Referring to Gingrich in the Newspapers

Let us begin by examining the various ways in which reference is made to Gingrich in the news coverage and newspaper commentaries surrounding his remarks on bilingual education and Youtube apology. I have excluded the news articles in my corpus that are categorized in Appendix A as “aftermath” because the focus of these reports is on Gingrich’s environmental platform and his performance in a debate against Senator John Kerry rather than his remarks and stance on bilingual education. Additionally, in order to concentrate solely on third person reference, the commentary written by Gingrich in the Los Angeles Times ("The Pursuit of Happiness – In English", 4/7/2007) was excluded from this investigation.

The texts of the remaining reports and commentaries from the print newspapers and CNN online (18 total) were analyzed and all third-person referrals to Newt Gingrich in subject or object position (possessives were excluded) were coded according to referral type. Figure 4.1, below, displays the overall distribution of referrals to Gingrich, based on whether the referral contained a proper name (i.e., “Gingrich”, “Newt”, or “Newt Gingrich”), a pronoun (“he”, “him”), or another type of referral (descriptors, relators, relative clauses, address terms).
To account for the observed distribution of referral types presented in this chart, we must first consider the preferences for minimization and recipient-design in personal reference discussed above (Sacks and Schegloff 1979, Schegloff 1996, Levinson 2007), which favor bare names and pronouns as referrals because these forms are optimal in terms of their size and recognitional capabilities. We must also take into account the conventions and constraints of journalistic discourse (Levinson’s (2007) third preference for “circumspection”), which values minimization of article length to make space for advertisements, the primary source of revenue for both print and online newspapers. Additionally, journalists are influenced in referral choice by the ideology of objective reporting, which constrains them to choose referrals containing no evaluative content.\footnote{However, it should be kept in mind that this constraint applies mainly to news articles whose primary function is to report the news, and less so to opinion columns, editorials and letters.}
Other types of referrals, such as adjectival and nominal descriptors and address terms, can be considered extraneous unless they perform an alternative function that is consonant with journalistic objectives, such as to provide a higher level of accessibility for lesser known referees or to provide background information about the referee relevant to the events reported. These factors all favor the use of pronouns and names over descriptions, which accounts for the more frequent use of these categories in the texts.

To arrive at a more nuanced understanding of the discourse functions of person referrals in the news coverage, we can begin by further breaking down the category of ‘names’. Table 4.1 displays the distribution of referrals using Gingrich’s first name, last name, and both first and last name:

**Table 4.1. Distribution of simple name referrals to Gingrich in the newspaper data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of name referral</th>
<th>Number of referrals</th>
<th>Percentage of all name referrals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First (“Newt”)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last (“Gingrich”)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both (“Newt Gingrich”)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Again, this distribution can be accounted for if we take into consideration the three preferences of minimization, recipient design, and circumspection: The single last name referral “Gingrich” is economically short and amply reduces the pool of possible referents (there is only one well-known Gingrich in the American mainstream media) and is thus used the majority of the time. While “Newt” is economical and also highly recognizable, journalistic practice follows the tradition of using last name only to refer to public figures. In fact, all first-name referrals appeared in 2 articles – one written by Gingrich’s former employee who was highly supportive of his platform, and the other
one was written in a more subversive tone, utilizing Mock Spanish constructions (Hill 1995, 2006) and other jokes which served to demean Gingrich. The use of both first and last name, though used slightly more than “Newt”, places far behind the number of last name referrals likely because of their less economical nature.

Referring back to Figure 4.1, we see that while the referrals consisting of a name (first, last, or both) or bare pronoun account for a majority of the referrals to Gingrich in the newspaper corpus, other types of referrals are still quite frequent in the data, accounting for 26% of the total number of referrals to Gingrich. If we want to determine whether (and if so, where) language ideological devices are at work in the act of referring in the newspaper data, it will be useful to examine the form and function of these other referrals more closely, since their descriptive nature is likely to foreground certain aspects of the referent that function in socially situating Gingrich’s speech and the issue of bilingual education in the broader context of American discourses on language policy.

In examining the references contained in the “other” category, our task is to identify how the provision of relevant background information serves as a framing device in these texts.

Table 4.2 and Figure 4.2 display the variety and distribution of grammatical constructions that comprise the “other” category in Figure 4.1, which I will hereafter refer to as “complex” referrals because they contain more than a simple name or pronoun. The three sub-categories in the table (delineated along the X-axis of Figure 4.2) refer to complex referrals that contain no name, referrals that contain one name (either “Newt” or “Gingrich”), and referrals that contain two names (“Newt Gingrich”). The four types of
constructions that contain extra information about the referent are categorized as
descriptions (either nominal or adjectival; +DESC), address terms (+ADTERM), relative
clauses (+RELCL), and a combination of these (+COMBO).

**Table 4.2. Examples complex referrals to Gingrich in the newspaper data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Complex Referral Type</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-Name</td>
<td>+ Description</td>
<td>“the former speaker”, “this linguistically arrogant person”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Address term</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Relative clause</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Combination</td>
<td>“The former Georgia congressman, who is considering seeking the GOP presidential nomination in 2008”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-Name</td>
<td>+ Description</td>
<td>“poor Newt”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Address term</td>
<td>“Mr. Gingrich”, “Señor Gingrich”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Relative clause</td>
<td>“Gingrich, who was a polarizing figure during his years in Congress”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Combination</td>
<td>“Gingrich, a Georgian who led House Republicans into power in 1994”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Name</td>
<td>+ Description</td>
<td>“Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Address term</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Relative clause</td>
<td>“Newt Gingrich, who referred to bilingual education as learning ‘the language of living in a ghetto’ in his speech to the National Federation of Republican Women”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ Combination</td>
<td>“Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, who is mulling a presidential bid”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 4.2. Distribution of complex referrals to Gingrich in the newspaper data**
This chart does not reveal any obvious patterns concerning the distribution of types of complex referrals in the overall corpus of newspaper texts. However, an examination of where in the texts different types of complex referrals tend to occur gives us a better sense of how they function in these texts. For example, six of the eight complex referrals containing a two-name person referral (75%) can be found in the first line of the article (as can four of the eight (50%) bare two-name referrals). This is not surprising, as first-mentions tend to contain more descriptors and semantic content to secure recognition or activation in the mind of the hearer/reader than do subsequent mentions (Ariel 1990, Chafe 1994, Clark and Wilkes-Gibbs 1992, Schegloff 1996).

However, complex referrals of all types do appear throughout the articles, even after the referent has been firmly established within the text and can be presumed to be “fully activated” (using Chafe’s 1994 terminology) in the minds of readers. If they are not functioning in the establishment of a recognitional, their marked form (since pronouns and one-name referrals are preferred as subsequent mentions) must be performing additional discursive or ideological work.

Many of these complex referrals work to establish various aspects of the politician’s professional and personal identity. For example, several refer to “the former House Speaker”, which highlight Gingrich’s past institutional role, thus bestowing a certain degree of authority on the referent. While these are referrals point backward temporally, others point forward, referring to Gingrich’s then-presidential aspirations, such as the relative clause “… who’s mulling a White House run”, which indexes Gingrich’s possible future political status and thus a slightly different authoritative
potential. Other descriptors refer to Gingrich’s political record through the use of relative clauses that describe statements the politician has made or positions he has officially taken in the past. For example, consider the following referrals:

(4a) Newt Gingrich, who referred to bilingual education as learning "the language of living in a ghetto" in his speech to the National Federation of Republican Women

(4b) Gingrich, who has a long record of favoring an English-only approach to education and government services to speed economic and cultural assimilation

(4c) the same Newt Gingrich who as speaker of the House in 1998 sent out at government expense a proclamation in Spanish saluting Mexico's Cinco de Mayo holiday

Examples (4a-c) all contain relative clauses providing background information about the referent. However, notice the difference between (4a), which solely describes Gingrich’s role in the events of the story, and (4b) and (4c), establish an ideological continuity between the topical events (i.e., his NFRW speech) and Gingrich’s past political actions. Note that (4b) foregrounds aspects of the content of Gingrich’s NFRW speech indicating his stance favoring English immersion, characterizing his motivation behind his English-only proposal – “to speed cultural and economic assimilation” – using a depersonalized grammatical form\(^\text{17}\). On the other hand, (4c) focuses on Gingrich’s code choice in prior communications\(^\text{18}\). While this referral is introduced using a semantic marker of continuity (“the same”), the referral displays a contrast in Gingrich’s perceived position: his prior actions are portrayed in this referral as actively providing Spanish speakers with a service in their native language, while his current stance favors the elimination of such

\(^{17}\) Compare this construction – “to speed cultural and economic assimilation” with a relative clause, such as “which he believes is the best way to speed cultural and economic assimilation”.

\(^{18}\) Note that this commentary was written in response to his speech before his Spanish apology was reported in the press.
government services. Through this configuration of continuity and contrast markers, the author of (4c) constructs Gingrich as a hypocrite (a theme that is vociferously embraced in the Digg comments as well) and his own stance as critical of the politician’s words and actions.

In addition to the use of relative clauses which foreground selected aspects of Gingrich’s persona and position him politically, journalists make use of other referential strategies to perform similar ideological functions in the newspaper texts. Consider the following two referrals taken from two different newspaper texts:

(4d) Hablador de la Casa
(4e) Señor Gingrich

Both these referrals contain elements of Spanish: (4d) contains a word-for-word translation of Gingrich’s former title – “Speaker of the House”, and (4e) uses the Spanish equivalent of the masculine address term “Mister”. In order to understand how the Spanish functions ideologically in each of these referrals, we must examine the referral in context. (4d) appeared in a commentary in the Seattle Post, which also contained the referral in (4c) referring to Gingrich’s past communications in Spanish. The author reports that Gingrich had mistakenly signed a Cinco de Mayo communication using this title, which he notes actually translates as “Loudmouth of the House”, rather than the idiomatic “El Presidente de la Camera.” ¹⁹ Later on in the article, the author uses Gingrich’s Spanish blunder against him in a critique of the promises of his past campaign: “Where is the ‘opportunity state’ Gingrich so famously spoke for in the ‘90s

¹⁹ This instance was not counted in my above analysis since was contained within an instance of reported speech.
when he was the architect of the ‘Contract With America?’ It’s out the window, according to El Hablador de la Casa.” In this context, the author reframes Gingrich’s first-person referral as a third-person referral, manipulating the literal translation as “loudmouth” to emphasize his belief that Gingrich’s past promises have proven to be empty ones, thus positioning the politician as less than trustworthy in the current context.

Similarly, the reference in (4e) containing the Spanish “Señor Gingrich” was made in a critical report of Gingrich’s apology in the Washington Post and is embedded in a parenthetical tongue-and-cheek memorandum to the former speaker: “(However, Memorando al Señor Gingrich: In Spanish the “r” is rolled and the syllables are separated.)” This referral carries a similar subversive function to that of (4d) in that the author appropriates the aspect of Gingrich’s speech that he is critiquing – that is, his decision to apologize in Spanish – and turns it into a direct critique of the politician’s Spanish skills. This strategy of subversive referential practice accompanied by the appropriation and recontextualization of Gingrich’s speeches is an important ideological one, and will be taken up in more detail as we consider the strategy of constructed dialogue in the following chapter.

In summary, this investigation of referring terms for Newt Gingrich in the newspaper texts confirms findings from prior research on person reference which highlight the preference for minimization, recipient-design, and circumspection. By looking at distributions of referrals in the newspaper coverage of Gingrich’s speech and

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20 This article was categorized as a report in Chapter 3 because it was the only piece reporting Gingrich’s apology in the paper, although it appeared in the “Style” section of the Washington Post, which tends to contain more opinion pieces than the “A Section”, which contains the front page reports.
apology, it was shown that the pronominal reference was favored overall (for reasons of economy, following the rules for unmarked discourse anaphora), followed by the use of a bare name (likely due to both economy and journalistic conventions of objective reporting). Further inquiry into the distribution of complex referrals showed that descriptors highlighted a range of additional information surrounding Gingrich, including his past political positions and statements, and served as a way to either index continuity in his political agenda or position the author against the Gingrich’s actions. Finally, in some cases referrals took on a parodic tone to subvert Gingrich’s words and expose a perceived hypocrisy in his words and actions.

4.3.2. Referrals to Gingrich on Digg.com

Turning to the referrals to Gingrich in the Digg data, it should first be emphasized that referring patterns should not necessarily be expected to emulate those found in the newspaper coverage due to various factors. In contrast to the newspaper articles, the Digg comments are written by anonymous participants, the participants are not professional writers, and they are not edited by an outside source before publication21. Additionally, the Digg comments have a rhetorical rather than expository function, so the communicative purposes behind linguistic reference are substantially different in this forum. Rather than trying to inform readers about events, figures, and relevant contexts, participants are trying to convince others of their ideas and attitudes toward the contents.

21 The Digg default settings remove profanity from the posts, but these settings can be manually changed by the user.
in the link posted. Finally, the interactional nature of the discussion board allows users the opportunity to repair failed or missed references in a collaborative manner if reference is not properly achieved upon first try (Clark and Wilkes-Gibbs 1992), which emulates face-to-face interaction, while newspaper discourse is monologic in nature and thus provides ample information for identification of the referent in each mention.

Keeping these differences in mind, let us now examine the referring terms for Gingrich employed in the Digg discussion. Due to the different conventions of discussion board posting, I will concentrate on how users refer to Gingrich by name and will not distinguish between simple names and complex referrals in this section. Complex referrals will instead be considered in a sequential analysis below. Table 4.3 and Figure 4.3 display the distribution of referrals to Gingrich in the 52 (out of 256 total) comments that refer to this figure in the Digg discussion. Only first mentions in each comment have been counted because some comments contain several referrals to Gingrich.

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22 The examples contained in the “Other” category include nominal descriptions containing no name (e.g. “the dirty scumbag”).

23 In most posts containing multiple referrals to Gingrich, the referring sequences adhered to expectations based on the constraints of recency, potential ambiguity, topicality, and boundaries (Schiffrin 2006: 157-163).
Table 4.3. Number and percentages of first-mention referrals to Gingrich in the Digg data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Referring Term</th>
<th>No. of referrals</th>
<th>Percentage of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newt Gingrich</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gingrich</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newt</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He/him</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.3. Distribution of first-mention referrals to Gingrich in the Digg data

It is not surprising that referrals containing either Gingrich’s first name or last name comprise 62% of the total number of first mentions to him in the text, since these are both economical and are presumed to allow recognition. Among these, the use of his last name only – “Gingrich” – is more common, which is also to be expected due to its fulfillment of the third preference for circumspection; in conversational discourse,
politicians (at least males) are usually referred to by last name only. However, the relatively frequent use of Gingrich’s first name is peculiar, as it is not a common strategy in conversations on political topics, and it is presumed that the Digg participants do not know Gingrich personally (recall that “Newt” was only used in the newspaper data in a commentary by one of his former employees). This is a matter that will require further investigation.

The use of referrals containing both first name and last name – “Newt Gingrich” – comprise only 13% of the total number of referrals, as do references that fall in the “other” category, while pronominal references only comprise 12% of first mentions. The low percentage of pronominal references as first mentions is predictable considering low accessibility of the referent at the beginning of a Digg comment, since each post contain references to various other individuals (potential ambiguity). Also, users occasionally reply to posts that do not immediately precede their own, which creates a problem of distance between the use of a pronoun and its antecedent.24

Taking into account this overall distribution of referring terms, the following questions regarding referrals to Gingrich should be addressed: Since both “Newt” and “Gingrich” contain the same level of identifying information, why do users choose one over the other? Why do some users choose to use both his first and last name when either one alone is sufficient –in other words, why do these references flout the preference for

24 Digg allows users to click on a comment to reply directly to it, but because the default display settings on the website do not show responses to primary comments, many users opt to post a new comment and make reference to the user whose comment they are responding to, using conventions such as the “@” symbol followed by the participants name, or by copying and pasting the text of the comment from the prior post at the beginning of their own comment.
minimization? Additionally, what types of referrals are used in the ‘other’ category: are they names, relators, or descriptions, and what do they convey about Gingrich that necessitate the use of their conventionally dispreferred forms?

Since the content of the discussion board contains a rather heated debate about Gingrich, bilingualism, and language policy, it might be useful to begin by looking at what *evaluative stance* participants take in their responses following the various forms of first-mentions categorized in the above chart. Participants may choose one referring term over another to express affiliation or disaffiliation with Gingrich and his comments on bilingual education in these posts by choosing referring terms that construct closeness or distance to Gingrich, certainty or apprehension regarding his political stance, and agreement or disagreement with the content and/or tone of his speech.

The 52 posts containing these references have been coded according to the general evaluative stance taken by the participant, and have been categorized as “positive”, “negative” and “ambivalent”. In order for a response to be categorized as “positive” or “negative”, the content of the post had to contain unequivocal evaluation toward Gingrich personally and the stance he takes in his speech. The posts counted as ‘ambivalent’ included posts containing various types of equivocation. The following examples illustrate responses in each of these categories:

**Positive**  
Newt is looking better by the day. I hope he runs for President in 2008. He is spot on with his comments, as usual. English is the language of prosperity.

**Negative**  
I say, abolish Newt Gingrich. He is a vile hypocrite, with no morals and preaches hate, while cheating on a wife who was being treated for cancer. Actions speak louder than words, and this guy is bad through and through
Ambivalent
When I first read what newt said I thought I had my mind already made up… But after reading all the comments I am not as sure as I was before…

In the ambivalent example above, the writer expresses a change from an expectation of disagreement with “newt” to a current state of uncertainty. Other types of equivocation contain contrasting evaluations of Gingrich as a person (morally and or politically) and of the specific comment he made, or contrasting evaluations of his stance on bilingual education and the content of this particular speech. Some of these ambivalent comments will be examined in more depth below.

Figure 4.4, below, displays the distribution of evaluative stances taken in the posts containing the various forms of first-mention referrals to Gingrich:

**Figure 4.4. Distribution of evaluative stances taken in referrals to Gingrich**
From this chart, we see that the type of referral used in the most positive evaluative light is the use of first name only – “Newt”. By contrast, the referral used most in the negative sense overall is the last name only – “Gingrich”. The observed pattern regarding the use of first vs. last name referrals can be accounted for in terms of their distinctiveness as markers on a scale of closeness/distance and power/solidarity (Tannen 1994); that is, the preference to use his first name when expressing positive affiliation in this debate can be viewed as a discourse strategy that aligns the speaker with the politician by using a referring term normally reserved for close acquaintances. Conversely, the preference to use Gingrich’s last name in expressing negative evaluation can be viewed as an indicator of personal distance that linguistically mirrors a stance of opposition.

Figure 4.4 highlights a proportionate distribution of positive, negative, and ambivalent stances within the categories of two-name referrals and pronouns, so these two referral types might be considered typically neutral (i.e. non-evaluative) forms of reference. However, we must still ask why participants choose to use one or the other instead of one of the preferred single-term reference forms. A discourse analysis of these terms in context may indicate other functions they fulfill in the text: for instance, these referrals could be working in the construction of alignment or disalignment with prior posts; additionally they could be reflective of topical changes or actually work in the

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25 The use of ‘Newt’ in these texts may also be representative of the more casual, interactional style of the discussion board format.
construction of structural boundaries (Schegloff 1996) within the discourse of the discussion board.

Let us take, for instance, the following series of comments, which commences with a comment by Slugicide, who makes a personal evaluation of Gingrich by referring to his past political actions\(^\text{26}\). In the following 6 comments, references to Gingrich are underlined:

(4f) **Slugicide (-45 diggs):**
Is this the same *Gingrich* who was having affair while trying to impeach Clinton?

*The following 2 comments are marked as replies to Slugicide (1 intervening reply elided):*

(4g) **Junkyarddawg (-18 diggs):**
Yes, this is the same *Newt Gingrich* who had an extramarital affair while trying to find something, anything, to impeach Clinton for, and whom eventually opted to impeach him for not being upfront about his extramarital affair.

(4h) **Unloud (-5 diggs):**
Yes, of course it’s the same *Newt Gingrich*. Is that a common name where you live or something?

In comment (4f), Slugicide refers to Gingrich using the interactionally preferred last-name referring term “Gingrich”. Although this comment does not contain overt reference to Slugicide’s evaluation of Gingrich’s statement on bilingual education, it contains a rhetorical question implying that Gingrich has a past record of making hypocritical comments, which is embedded in a relative clause identifying the politician. This complex reference serves not only to construct a relationship between Gingrich’s past and present actions (through the comparative “the same”), but through the contrast in

\(^{26}\) The number of diggs received by each comment is also displayed in these excerpts: the -45 diggs earned by Slugicide for this comment indicate that his argument is one of the least well-received posts in the entire 256-comment discussion. Only one comment was buried further in the discussion, with a total of -68 diggs.
propositional content of the two actions – “having an affair” and “trying to impeach Clinton” (whose scandal involved an extramarital affair), Slugicide also manages to evaluate the politician on a moral level.

The following reply posted by Junkyarddawg (4g) serves to support Slugicide’s comment by expanding upon the position put forth in the prior user’s complex referral. Notice that while this comment replicates the grammatical structure of Slugicide’s relative clause – “the same X who …”, this reply to the rhetorical question replaces the referral “Gingrich” with the marked referral containing both first and last name, “Newt Gingrich”. In addition, Junkyarddawg’s referral to Gingrich is marked in that it supplies more information than necessary to identify the referent. If we take into consideration the various constraints on referring sequences – topicality, recency, ambiguity, and boundaries – a bare pronoun would suffice in identifying the referent in this location. Let’s consider each of these constraints in turn: 1) topicality – Gingrich is most topical human figure in both this strand of responses and in the Digg discussion overall; 2) recency – the last reference to Gingrich occurred 2 posts previously; 3) ambiguity – there is no other possible intervening referent to whom this referral could apply and 4) boundaries – since this comment is specifically marked as a reply to Slugicide’s comment, the referral is contained within the hierarchical boundary separating this discussion from the wider array of responses in the Digg forum.

Since it is clear that the “Newt Gingrich” referral in (4g) is superfluous from an interactional perspective, we must ask: Why does the participant choose to use his full

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27 The intervening comment is an insult aimed at Slugicide regarding his ability to engage in a debate.
name and violate the constraint the minimization? The answer to this question lies in the ideological function of this post. Junkyarddawg clearly positions himself as aligned with Slugicide through repetition of the prior user’s post with regard to both propositional content and grammatical structure, a phenomenon that has been illustrated by Tannen (1989) as an important strategy in creating involvement and emphasis in conversational contexts, which Goodwin (1990) has also identified as ‘format-tying’ in her analysis of interactions among African American children. The expansion of the referral from “Gingrich” in (31) to “Newt Gingrich” parallels the expansion of the descriptive aspect of the reference, in which Junkyarddawg provides more detailed information regarding the past scandal surrounding the politician. This type of poetic expansion has been discussed by Lempert (2008) in the context of ritual debates in a Tibetan monastery. Lempert describes how such “text-metrical structures” function as a mediator allowing propositional stance to be mapped onto interactional stance. A similar process seems to be at work in the interaction between Slugicide and Junkyarddawg; the expanded complex referral in (4g) creates an alignment between these two participants in opposition to Gingrich at a moral level; it also strengthens the force of the matrix comment in this thread (4f) through elaboration of Gingrich’s undesirable trait (hypocrisy) posited in (4f).

If we follow this thread of responses to Slugicide’s comment, we find in the next reply posted by Unloud (4h) another marked referral to Gingrich, again using his first and last name: “Yes, of course it’s the same Newt Gingrich. Is that a common name where you live or something?” While Unloud uses the same referral form as Junkyarddawg, the
referral is grammatically and propositionally situated in a way that stands in opposition to (4f) and (4g), and thus functions quite differently at an ideological level. First, Unloud provides a second answer to the rhetorical question posed by Slugicide (in the sequence of replies, (4g) already contains an answer to the rhetorical question). Unloud also adds emphasis to his response by adding the modifier “of course”, which functions epistemically by marking the response as presumably shared knowledge. Unloud then poses a rhetorical question of his own – “Is that a common name where you come from?” Through this question, the user positions himself in opposition to prior comments by subversively answering the rhetorical question in (4f), producing an illocutionary force that highlights the perceived absurdity of these prior comments. Notice here that Unloud’s reference to Gingrich contains no evaluation of either Gingrich as a person or of his proposed policy to “abolish bilingual education”. Instead, it provides metalinguistic commentary, evaluating the relevance and/or rhetorical value of the prior comments. The use of Gingrich’s full name here in a context that is grammatically similar to the prior post serves not to align Unloud with the prior users, but to instead subvert their argument by highlighting the foolishness of the rhetorical question posed in the parent post.

In summary, through a distributional analysis of referrals to Gingrich in the Digg data, we have seen an overall preference for single-name references – either by first or last name - in the Digg data. Participants tended to use Gingrich’s first name to in expressions of political or personal alignment with the politician, while the use of his last name was more often used in negative evaluations of Gingrich – either with regard to
perceptions of his moral integrity or his political and ideological stance. The atypical use of “Newt Gingrich” was shown to also perform ideological work in this discussion, albeit at a more nuanced level which required a closer consideration of the referral in its sequential and pragmatic context. This analysis demonstrated that the marked referral form performed a variety of locally dependent rhetorical functions in the Digg data, mainly to show alignment or disalignment with prior comments and by adding an ironic tone to subvert previously expressed ideologies and to criticize other participants’ posts.

4.4. Language reference

Thus far, we have only considered referrals to a topical individual in debates over bilingual education. However, dozens of references are made in the newspaper and Digg texts, not only to individuals other than Gingrich, but also to particular languages that play a central role in this debate. Despite the fact that in his original speech on bilingual education, Gingrich did not explicitly target any particular non-English language, his speech was interpreted by many to target speakers of specific languages. The central question I will deal with in this section is this: What language(s) does “the language of living in the ghetto” mean to those who reacted to Gingrich’s speech in the newspaper and Digg texts? Using tools of discourse analysis and interactional sociolinguistics, I consider how Gingrich’s reference to “ghetto” language served as a contextualization cue which played an important role in framing the debate on language education policy. Even after Gingrich made his apology in Spanish, we will see that in the responses to these statements, a multitude of other language varieties are evoked and used strategically
by participants in their construction of arguments for and against bilingual education. In this section, I will address how the newspaper texts and Digg participants socially situate these languages and the communities that speak them in both local and global contexts. I will also pay close attention to how language reference works in the positioning of both Self and Other in these debates. For example, why does one Digg user make reference to Polish, Chinese, and Vietnamese in his argument in response to comments that solely refer to Spanish? Why does another invoke Latin, which is spoken by no one as a native language? How do speakers traverse time and space in the texts through their referrals to language while maintaining a seemingly coherent argument or dialogic interaction? What does this tell us about individuals’ beliefs and attitudes toward multilingualism, stances toward language policy, and the presupposed shared knowledge underlying these discussions which is seldomly overtly called into question?

4.4.1. Language reference in the press

If we look at patterns of language reference in the newspaper coverage of Gingrich’s NFRW speech and Youtube apology, we find that when any specific language variety is explicitly referred to (i.e. by name), it is overwhelmingly Spanish, even in the coverage preceding Gingrich’s Spanish-language apology. In addition, reference to the Spanish language is also often made indirectly via reference to groups defined by Spanish-language heritage. For example, in the Washington Post report of the NFRW speech (1-WP-r), reactions are elicited from Peter Zamora, the spokesperson for the Hispanic Education Coalition. In an OpEd piece in the Washington Times (4-WT-c)
supporting Gingrich, author Tony Blankley refers to “these Hispanic American children who are discouraged from learning English” in current bilingual education programs. A third discourse strategy used is the foregrounding of Spanish among a variety of other languages through the citation of statistics, as in the following example: “more than 120,000 students with limited or no English skill, about 80 percent of whom speak Spanish as their native language” (13-AT-I).

Figure 4.5. displays distribution of language referrals in the newspaper texts:

**Figure 4.5. Distribution of language referrals in the newspaper texts**

![Bar chart showing distribution of language referrals](image)

Included in the “Spanish indirect” categories are referrals to Spanish-speaking groups, e.g. “Hispanics”, “Latinos”, etc. References to all other languages did not contain any more than 2 references to any given language (specific languages included Arabic, Russian, Chinese, Italian, Hebrew, Hindi, etc.) Included in the “General non-English” category is referrals such as “non-English languages” and “languages other than
English”. From this chart we can see that direct and indirect referrals to Spanish and Spanish speakers account for the vast majority of the data (76% of all referrals considered).

Despite the fact that the various types of news texts – reports, commentaries, and letters – make reference almost solely to Spanish, we cannot automatically assume that all referrals are functioning in the same manner. While the references quoted above serve to highlight Spanish as the most relevant non-English language in the discussion of bilingual education, other referrals to Spanish serve a more subversive function by calling into question dominant ideologies associating Spanish, economic disadvantage, and lack of agency, which were espoused both in Gingrich’s speech and apology and many of the media coverage of these events. Take for example the opening paragraph of a commentary in *USA Today* (6-US-c) written by Paul Reyes:

> When I was growing up, there was a subject around home that made everyone uncomfortable. My Aunt Lola used to call it the shame of our family. It was a dark secret that my relatives didn’t like to talk about, although it affected many Mexican-American families just like ours. The source of this embarrassment was the fact that my brothers and I didn’t speak Spanish. Worse, we didn’t care about speaking Spanish.

In this passage, Reyes weaves a personal narrative about growing up as a Mexican-American in which ideologies of language, identity, access, and agency run contrary to those discussed so far. In this narrative, Reyes delays his mention of “Spanish” till the last line of the opening paragraph, referring to his and his brothers’ inability to speak the language of his family first through vague references and pronouns – “a subject”, “it”, “the shame of our family”, “a dark secret”. He also portrays the situation as not only personal, but as a shared story describing the language situation of many families like his.
Furthermore, Reyes contradicts the unquestioned norms embraced by the news coverage that children whose parents immigrated to the U.S. are having trouble and/or resist learning English by painting the opposite picture: “My brothers and I didn’t speak Spanish. Worse, we didn’t care about speaking Spanish”.

Later in Reyes’ piece, he critiques: “Gingrich should know better than to demean the native tongue of Cevantes, Lorca and Marquez.” Here, rather than referring to Spanish by name, he uses a description relating the language to world-renowned literary figures, emphasizing the pride previously evoked on a personal level in his family narrative by extending it both geographically (Cervantes and Lorca are Spanish, Marquez is Columbian) and from a private to public realm. This poetic construction can be compared to the interactional analysis of references made to Gingrich in the previous section, although it is monologic in nature. In contrast to the interpersonal stances created between users in the Digg discussion, however, these references to Spanish serve to construct an stance against Gingrich himself.

Compare this personal narrative of Spanish to the following letter to the editor of the Los Angeles Times by linguist Ronald Macaulay (12-LA-1):

Gingrich believes that all immigrants should use primarily English. Because he is eager to learn Spanish, he could find out what this would be like by completely forgoing the use of English. He would get all his current affairs information from Spanish newspapers and Spanish television, conduct all his financial and legal affairs in Spanish, describe his symptoms to his doctor in Spanish, query his utility bills in Spanish, write articles in Spanish, give lectures in Spanish, make travel arrangements and get directions in Spanish, and so on. That way he would have a clearer notion of what his policy would mean.
In this letter, Macaulay portrays an alternative reality for Gingrich in which he would experience first-hand the social world he is creating for non-English speakers through his English-only proposal. Macaulay discursively constructs this imaginary reality by providing an enumerated list of the daily tasks that would require communication in the target language, consisting of both professionally-related activities (e.g. reading current affairs news, giving lectures) and non-professional essential daily tasks (paying bills, getting directions). What is especially striking in this letter is not the language references he uses, but the marked repetition of the word Spanish - nine times in a 102-word passage. In this letter, the repeated referrals to Spanish act as a poetic intensifying strategy which both strengthens the force of his argument and brings to life the reality faced by non-English speakers on a daily basis when they must perform these tasks in English. In other words, Macaulay paints a picture of the real-life consequences of Gingrich’s proposed policy for the Other, which in turn serves as a Self-positioning device. He positions himself as the provider of a magnifying glass through which one can view the lived reality of the Other for Gingrich, who presumably cannot see the consequences of his own actions. Through these means, Macauley positions himself as having a higher degree of authority on the subject of language policy.

To summarize the strategy of language reference in the newspaper data, the vast majority of referrals to languages other than English in this corpus made reference – whether by name or other descriptive means – to Spanish. While these references often performed the function of foregrounding the effects of language education policy on Spanish speakers, an examination of these referrals in their immediate context displayed
how writers make use of this discourse strategy to strategically embed the language in its social context. Reyes’ commentary interwove a multitude of referring strategies in a narrative and constructed a syntagmatic contrast which juxtaposed Spanish in the private discourses of his family with its position on the world stage as a dignified literary language. Macaulay’s letter, on the other hand, discursively imagined a parallel world in which the language-dominance relations are reversed and where Gingrich must play the role of the Other by struggling to carry out his life in a foreign language. We have seen that language reference serves as a powerful tool for not only constructing a multilingual country as bilingual (i.e. Spanish and English only; an instantiation of Irvine and Gal’s process of erasure), but for situating various individuals and groups in the social world while constructing one’s own stance toward Gingrich’s statements. Let us now examine the strategy of language reference in the Digg discussions and determine what functions are performed by the act of referring to Spanish and other language varieties in a dialogic context.

4.4.2. Language reference on Digg.com

While the newspaper discourses that emanated from Gingrich’s controversial statement focused overwhelmingly on Spanish as the only non-English language worth consideration in discussions regarding multilingualism in the United States, the user-powered Digg discussion presents a very different picture of the linguistic make-up of the United States, citing a variety of languages affected by this policy proposal. In addition, Digg participants make reference to myriad language varieties that cannot be classified
under a simple name (e.g. “Spanish”, “French”, “Chinese”), instead using relators or
descriptions to refer to these languages, such as “the sort of accent you hear from
rappers” or “a purposely mangled version of racist English”. In this section, I will first
examine what language varieties are referred to by name and consider their relative
distribution as well as various aspects of their contextualization within the debate. I will
then examine instances of relators and descriptions to refer to languages and consider
how these strategies function ideologically in the discourse of the Digg discussion board
by performing a sequential analysis to see how these references are either agreed upon or
contested in comments and replies by other Digg participants.

Let us begin by examining referrals to language by name. In the 256 comments
that responded to the link to the CNN article reporting Gingrich’s NFRW speech, I coded
a total of 112 referrals to specific languages. For each referral, I also coded the national
context in which the referral was found, and collapsed these categories to the USA or
elsewhere in the world. For example, two posts containing referrals to French are
reproduced below:

(4i) heavansblade23 (-9 diggs)
There’s nothing wrong with a bilingual education. Almost every western country in the
world teaches a second language in addition to the primary native language. As an
American, I wish I had been taught French or Spanish in elementary school.

(4j) arcticJKL (+1 digg)
Actually French is quite useful. I [sic] was the lingua franca for quite some time. There
has not been a country I have visited that I did not use it.
I loved the fact that the post office forms in Greece were in French!

Heavansblade’s referral to French in (4i) has been coded as pertaining to a U. S. context
because although the user makes general reference to “almost every western country” in
his post, his specific reference to the French language refers to his personal identity “as
an American” in the U.S. school system. In contrast, arcticJKL’s two referrals to French in (4j) have been coded as relating to a context outside the U.S. (“Elsewhere”) because the user refers to the language variety first as a “lingua franca”, which implies use across national contexts, and his second referral to the language is situated in the context of his/her travels in Greece.

Figure 4.6, below, displays the total number of referrals to all named languages other than English in the Digg discussion board\textsuperscript{28}:

\textbf{Figure 4.6. Distribution of referrals to language by name on Digg}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{language_distribution.png}
\caption{Distribution of referrals to language by name on Digg}
\end{figure}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textbf{Spanish:} 40
\item \textbf{Chinese:} 35
\item \textbf{French:} 30
\item \textbf{German:} 25
\item \textbf{Russian:} 20
\item \textbf{Italian:} 15
\item \textbf{Japanese:} 10
\item \textbf{Korean:} 5
\item \textbf{Latin:} 0
\item \textbf{Gaelic:} 0
\item \textbf{Polish:} 0
\item \textbf{Other:} 0
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{28} It should also be noted that some language categories include references to subvarieties of the language listed in the chart. For example, a reference to “Mexican Spanish” is included in the Spanish category, and a referral to “Mandarin Chinese” is included in the Chinese category. In some cases, these qualifiers make significant distinctions that shape the ideological function of the referral. These cases will be considered separately below.
It is not surprising that Spanish is the language most commonly referred to in the Digg discussion on bilingual education (constituting 35% of the total number of referrals to language by name), as it replicates not only the prominence of Spanish in Gingrich’s remarks (specifically in his apology) but also its overall prominence in the newspaper coverage related to this event, its prominence in broader discourses on multilingualism and immigration, and its actual representation among speakers of languages other than English in the U.S. (according the 2000 census, Spanish speakers account for approximately 60% of the total “foreign language”29 speaking U.S. population). In comparison to the news coverage analyzed in the preceding section, though, it is surprising that such a variety of other languages are represented in these debates and that they are for the most part referred to in the U.S. context. While some of these references are similar to the reference to French in comment (4i) above, where the participant refers to the language variety in a statement about foreign language education in U.S. schools, many of the references made to languages other than English in the U.S. context are grounded in the context of the local community of the Digg user.

Let us now examine a few comments containing references to varieties that fall outside educational contexts in order to see how users socially situate these language varieties in their communities. The following comment by Jewmanji contains references to several languages in a discussion about multilingual ballots in Chicago:

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29 Although the labels used in the Census refer to “foreign languages”, a significant number of speakers were actually born in the United States; in this respect, the languages might more properly be described as “domestic”.

109
(4k) jewmanji (-3 diggs)
I don’t know how they do things elsewhere but in Chicago we provide election instructions in 15 languages. According to the board of elections the federal government requires ballot assistance in English, Spanish and Chinese. At the local level, we have a very diverse population and a heavy immigrant community, so other languages, such as Polish are very important to voters…

In this comment, Jewmanji refers to multiple languages by name (underlined above) – English, Spanish, Chinese, and Polish, which are accompanied by general referrals to linguistic diversity (italics above) – “instructions in 15 languages”, “very diverse population”, “heavy immigrant community”, and “other languages”. However, even more notable than the referrals Jewmanji uses to construct a multilingual local community is the work he does in situating his community socially and geographically in his comment through a combination of person and place reference. First he opens his comment by proclaiming ignorance regarding how voting ballots are handled in other parts of the country by saying, “I don’t know how they do things elsewhere but in Chicago we…” This opening serves to Self-position Jewmanji and by consequence, construct an Other in various ways. First, he positions himself personally as belonging to a geographical city-based community through the contrastive use of the pronouns “they” to refer to ballot designers outside Chicago and “we” to refer to the Chicago community. Although it is unlikely that Jewmanji plays a direct role in the creation or distribution of voting ballots, he constructs an agentive position for himself through the phrase “we provide”. This personal reference and agentive verb thus work ideologically by positioning Jewmanji in alignment with those who are responsible for the creation and distribution of multilingual ballots. This positioning through the use of personal referring terms mirrors the use of “Newt” in the Digg data discussed in section 4.3, which tended
to be used by those who were in favor of Gingrich’s proposal to replace bilingual education with immersion programs.

In addition to constructing a distinction between his own Chicago-based community and other regions of the United States, Jewmanji also constructs a distinction between federal and local levels of language policy, specifying that while English, Spanish, and Chinese are dominant in the U.S. population at large, other languages, such as Polish, maintain a robust representation in his local community and are thus represented on ballots distributed in his community. In sum, the referrals to specific languages in Jewmanji’s comment function (in conjunction with person references and general language references) in the larger Digg discussion by taking an issue that was raised at a national level by Gingrich and grounding it in the local context of his Chicago-based community. Localization is an important characteristic of the Digg discussion and online forums in general, as it allows individuals to appropriate institutional discourses that are articulated at a national level and articulate their real-world application at the local level.

Let us compare the discourse of localization in Jewmanji’s comment with the following comment, posted by Dawnfall:

(4l) **Dawnfall (-14 digs)**

Sorry, but he's simply wrong. They tried to teach in our schools German to Arabic or Turkish kids and wondered why the results were more than poor. In the end they gave them lessons in their mother language and their skills in German rose remarkably. To learn your mother language forms your brain in a certain way and that helps you to learn other languages. The pupils who don't get that kind of education end up with speaking no language properly and fail at school. Bilingual education is the key when you want foreign kids, who don't speak English at home, to learn English.
Dawnfall unequivocally states her disagreement with Gingrich’s statement in the opening line of her comment (“Sorry, but he’s simply wrong”), and reinforces her belief about bilingual education at the end of her comment (“Bilingual education is the key when you want foreign kids… to learn English”) after making a claim regarding the benefit of learning one’s “mother tongue”, which is framed in terms of cognitive development. However, upon reading this post in its entirety, it is evident that the personal experience that Dawnfall shares in this post regarding language education refers to a German context, though the user makes no explicit reference to her geographical location in her comment. Rather than making overt reference to her locale, as Jewmanji did in his comment regarding Chicago, Dawnfall positions herself as German instead through her referrals to the German language as the dominant language in “our schools”, and through her reference to Arabic and Turkish students, who constitute a significant percentage of the non-German speaking population in the and are often at the center of debates on immigration policy in the country.

Dawnfall’s linguistic positioning strategies differ from those of Jewmanji not only in terms of the explicitness of her Self positioning, but also in terms of the way she positions the Other. Recall that Jewmanji made general references to those who benefited from multilingual ballots in Chicago – through references to a ‘heavy immigrant community’ and ‘voters’, making no distinction between an Us and Them in this regard. In contrast, Dawnfall positions herself as a member of the dominant German-speaking population in her country by explicitly referring to non-German speaking students as the Other – “they gave them lessons in their mother language and their skills

112
in German rose remarkably”. She also distances herself from those making and implementing such language policies through the use of the third-person pronoun – “they tried to teach in our schools German” – which contrasts Jewmanji’s agentive “we provide ballots”.

We can draw several conclusions from comparing these two comments in closer detail. First, while Jewmanji and Dawnfall both show general support for multilingualism and/or bilingual education, they do so by drawing on different aspects of their local social contexts: Jewmanji positions his argument for multilingualism in the context of voter enfranchisement in his community of Chicago, while Dawnfall draws on her knowledge of parallel attempts in language education reform in Germany. Additionally, the participants position themselves in the discussion differently by using more or less agentive linguistic strategies and by creating more or less personal distance with the issue as they discuss the implementation of language policies in their respective communities.

We saw in Figure 4.6 and in the comments discussed above that participants personally situate this national issue by drawing on aspects of their local linguistic landscapes. However, by looking at how individual participants position themselves through interaction with others in relation to various languages in these debates, we can better gauge participants’ beliefs about the meaning and consequences of Gingrich’s proposed policy, and to what degree these beliefs are shared (or assumed to be shared) among the community. Consider the following sequence of comments posted on Digg
specific language referrals are underlined, descriptions are in bold, and constructed dialogues is in italics):

(4m)  Pats1237 (-9 diggs)  
Newt is right...except for this part  
"English...the language of prosperity, not the language of living in a ghetto..."  
(remainder of post elided).

The following 5 comments are marked as replies to Pats1237:

(4n)  korvan504521 (+12 diggs)  
how is that not right? talking with the sort of accent you hear from rappers is not likely to get you a job as anything *other* than a rapper. and there aren't that many openings in that particular job market.

(4o)  Pintomp3 (-10 diggs)  
korvan: how about having a southern accent? someone is going to base your qualifications on your accent, a hip-hop accent shouldn't be any worse than a southern accent.

(4p)  Chicknbot (+34 diggs)  
Accent is a different thing than language.  
Who would you hire?  
Chump #1 "Zupp pops, I decided to slide my ass into yo' corner to see if you could get gig, ya know, to assist ya' with the shiznit"  
[ or ]  
Chump #2 "Hello Mr. Williams, I thought it would be a good idea to stop by to see if you have any job openings in your store, for customer service"

(4q)  Coutesyflush (+33 diggs)  
Please, let's NOT get into discussing a purposely mangled version of racially separatist English. Misspellings, slappin' hoes and calling everyone "nigger" is ghetto. It comes from the ghetto. It is formulated to promote ghetto values. Anyone who says otherwise is in denial.  
It is NOT an accent. Natural regional accents are not the issue. We are talking about knowing a language and speaking it properly.

(4r)  Kuzotz (+1 digg)  
@courtesyflush  
You're an idiot, and I can tell you never lived in a ghetto.  
Ghettos do have a lot of ignorant people, but they sure as hell don't brag about it. All that shit you hear in mainstream rap music today is directed towards one type of consumer. Middle class White Suburbanites.. You guys eat that stuff up, and its the only reason why these shitty albums hit plat. When I got into University, and saw how a white person would approach me I was appalled that they actually thought I was some unintelligent guy who says yo yo yo. Hell most black people don't do that shit. I say this because the slang within black pop culture varies from city to city.  
If you walk up to someone, and say "wassup" to them in Chicago. You will get into a fight because that's a provocative statement that will cause conflict.  
If you say what's up to someone in Houston. They say "they still say that shit?"
Its like saying *foshizzle my nizzle* in Atlanta. All of that is just pop culture for the youth. You will rarely hear a 35-40 year old use these terms unless they're a platt. rapper.

BTW listen to some underground rap..

immortal technique, Tonedeff
very political.
Icecube is also but thats just old skool rap.

This series of comments constitutes an ideologically charged debate in which beliefs of language are put forth by various participants across replies to Pats (4m), who expresses overall agreement with Gingrich’s position but takes issue with his choice of words in equating English with “the language of prosperity” as opposed to “the language of living in a ghetto”. In (4n), Korvan responds to Pats’ expression of disagreement regarding Gingrich’s referral to “the language of living in a ghetto” by referring to “the sort of accent you hear from rappers”. In this comment, we see a recontextualization of Gingrich’s intended referral to languages other than English (and presumably Spanish, more specifically) as a referral to a particular “accent” belonging to “rappers”, which centers around the complex polysemy of the word “ghetto”. As Gingrich reported in his Youtube apology and in news interviews following his speech, he intended “ghetto” in the sense of a place in which socioeconomically disenfranchised groups are isolated, which he believes is the case for many monolingual Spanish-speaking groups in the United States. Korvan, however, contextualizes this cue as a referral to African American varieties of English through her referral to “rappers” by drawing on dominant associations between race, class, and language in the United States. Notice that although Korvan’s reference subverts the ethnoracial ideology underpinning Gingrich’s statement, his referral reinforces the *socioeconomic* ideology inherent in the statement at the same
time by making reference to the limited employment opportunities of those who speak this variety.

In the next comment posted by Pintomp (4o), the user problematizes Korvan’s prior reference to a particular “accent” by directly questioning him (as indicated by the “korvan:” which prefaces the question) about another type of accent – “a southern accent”. Pintomp posits that in terms of considering one’s language variety as a job qualification, “a hip-hop accent shouldn’t be any worse than a southern accent.”

Although Pintomp’s position toward both Gingrich’s comments and bilingual education are left ambiguous by his comment, he does clearly call into question Korvan’s reference to language by comparing the prior user’s referral (the “accent of a rapper” (reformulated as a “hip-hop accent”), which is heavily ideologized as indexical of a particular race (African American), place (urban/inner-city), class (lower/working), and moral corruption (associated with gangs, drugs, and violence), with a geographically based variety (a southern accent). Despite the attested relative social stigmatization of southern accents in the American public consciousness (e.g. Lippi-Green, 2001; Preston, 1989), a southern accent is not considered a “corruption” that threatens the existence of the English language as a whole (Daniels 2007, Lippi-Green 2001, Ronkin and Karn 1999), as opposed to Ebonics or African American English.30

The following user, Chicknbot, begins his response in this thread (4p) by bringing to the surface the recontextualization of Gingrich’s remarks about language as dealing with a rapper/hip-hop “accent” in his statement: “Accent is a different thing than

30 Southern accents have even been shown to carry symbolic capital some contexts (Johnstone 1999).
language.” Similarly to Korvan’s comment in (4n), Chicknbot does not align himself with either Gingrich personally or the politician’s stance on bilingual education in his comment. Chicknbot does, however, proceed to construct an argument about what he believes either “ghetto language” to be in the scenario he creates in the remainder of his comment. Because this comment contains a demonstration of this language variety (whether it is an “accent” or “language” in Chicknbot’s view cannot be determined) which involves an ideologically rich use of constructed dialogue, this comment will discussed further in Chapter 5. However, it is clear that by the time Chicknbot has posted his reply in this thread, the topic of discussion has migrated from an issue of language education policy to a question of what “ghetto” language is. Indeed, this question features prominently not only in the discussion board data, but also in some of the newspaper coverage and Youtube videos responding to Gingrich’s speech and apology.

The comment posted by CourtesyFlush (4q) performs multiple functions in terms of positioning and contextualization within the sequence of replies posted in reaction to Pats’ comment in (4m). Let us examine how this comment, replicated below, contributes both interactionally in this thread and ideationally in the larger discussion board debate:

(4q)  CourtesyFlush (+33 diggs)
Please, let's NOT get into discussing a purposely mangled version of racially separatist English. Misspellings, slappin' hoes and calling everyone "nigger" is ghetto. It comes from the ghetto. It is formulated to promote ghetto values. Anyone who says otherwise is in denial. It is NOT an accent. Natural regional accents are not the issue. We are talking about knowing a language and speaking it properly.

CourtesyFlush opens her comment by voicing opposition to the propositional content of Chicknbot’s prior comment (4p) by literally begging (“Please, let’s NOT…”) the
community of Digg users to not turn the discussion toward toward the topic of “ghetto” language or a ghetto accent. However, she refers to this language variety not by name but through an elaborate description – “a purposely mangled version of racially separatist English”. This semantically loaded referral emphasizes a stance that is quite distinct from stances taken by others in the debate in terms of the agency that it ascribes to the Other - speakers of “ghetto” language varieties. While other participants who explicitly comment on the relationship between language and the ghetto emphasize the idea that by not speaking the dominant language, economically disadvantaged groups have difficulty gaining social mobility requisite to integrate with society, CoutesyFlush constructs ghetto language as a variety spoken by choice to maintain cultural separation from mainstream society.

CoutesyFlush clarifies what ghetto language in the sentence following her descriptive referral by illustrating what practices embody this language: “Misspellings, slappin’ hoes, and calling everyone ‘nigger’ is ghetto.” It should be noted that these three practices embody “language” (or perhaps more appropriately, “discourse”) in the widest sense: Misspellings relate to the standard written language; “slappin’ hoes” indexes either the practice of physically abusing women, talking about such misogynistic practices using slang expressions such as this one, or both the language and the practice; and finally, “calling everyone ‘nigger’” refers to the controversial in-group use of a derogatory address term that has been the focus of a great deal of controversy both within
the Black community and in the media at large in discourses on racism in recent years. In sum, CourtesyFlush’s descriptive referral and three illustrations of “ghetto” language align her ideologies of “ghetto” language quite distinctively from other Digg participants, providing an alternative ideology that “ghetto” behavior is a conscious decision made by choice (cf. Daniels’ 2007 book Ghettonation for a vivid characterization of this ideology).

In sum, although CourtesyFlush emphasizes that a discussion about what is and is not “ghetto” should not be central to the current debate in her opening comment, she proceeds to use a range of linguistic strategies to define “ghetto”, including a descriptive referral and illustrations, thus implying that at some level, it is important for users to agree upon a definition of this language variety. She concludes her comment by emphasizing instead what this discussion is about: “We are talking about knowing a language and speaking it properly.”

Notice that similarly to the two previous posts, CourtesyFlush does not explicitly express her stance toward Newt Gingrich’s comment, bilingual education, or which languages are at stake in this discussion. However, her comment does serve as a prior text on which the following user, Kuzotz (4r; excerpt of post reproduced below), builds yet another picture of “ghetto” language:

(4r) Kuzotz (+1 digg)
@courtesyflush
You're an idiot, and I can tell you never lived in a ghetto.

31 Prominent spokespeople such as Bill Cosby, Oprah Winfrey, and Rev. Jesse Jackson have made public statements denouncing this practice within the Black community (Cosby and Poussaint 2007, Lippi-Green 2001, Reitman 2006).
Ghettos do have a lot of ignorant people, but they sure as hell don't brag about it. All that shit you hear in mainstream rap music today is directed towards one type of consumer. Middle class White Suburbanites. You guys eat that stuff up, and it's the only reason why these shitty albums hit plat. When I got into University, and saw how a white person would approach me I was appalled that they actually thought I was some unintelligent guy who says yo yo yo. Hell most black people don't do that shit. I say this because the slang within black pop culture varies from city to city.

In this final post in the strand, Kuzotz begins by positioning himself as directly opposed to CourtesyFlush: “@courtesyflush: You’re an idiot, and I can tell you never lived in a ghetto.” By responding directly to the prior user and indicating his beliefs about her personal experience, Kuzotz constructs his own authoritative stance on the issue of “ghetto” language. In this expression of interactional stance, Kuzotz also posits a higher level of epistemicity regarding what is and is not “ghetto” than his addressee. His assertion - “I can tell you never lived in a ghetto” - functions as a self-positioning tool, indicating that the speaker has first-hand experience with ghetto life. In this way, the construction of epistemic stance also serves to situate the speaker in social and geographical space. Additionally Kuzotz positions himself racially in this post as Black by distancing himself from simultaneously CourtesyFlush as an individual (through the second person “you”) and from the larger community he categorizes her as belonging to - “Middle class White Suburbanites”.

Once Kuzotz establishes his interactional stance in relation to the prior user and situates both himself and the interactional Other (CourtesyFlush) in social and geographical space, the speaker then goes on to narrate a past personal experience in which he was subject to stereotypes based on dominant language ideologies of the ghetto:
“When I got into University, and saw how a white person would approach me I was appalled that they actually thought I was some unintelligent guy who says yo yo yo.”

The discursive tools of positioning and contrasting beliefs about language in this post function similarly to those used by Reyes and Macaulay in their newspaper commentaries in that the user provides a juxtaposition of place to put forth his ideas about language. Recall that Reyes’s narrative contrasted ideologies of Spanish within the home and the reputation of the language on the world stage, and Macaulay created an alternative configuration of language, power, and place by situating Gingrich in a Spanish-speaking world. In the Digg post, Kuzotz discursively situates himself in a place that sharply contrasts the ghetto – a University – and compounds this place-based distinction with race-based alienation in his recollection as a Black student who was subject to the linguistic stereotypes of white students. Through this narrative evaluation strategy, Kuzotz points to the complex ideological nature of the concept “ghetto” as an intersection of ideologies about race, place, socioeconomic status, language, and educational. In doing so, he also problematizes the ideologies at the heart of Gingrich’s statement equating bilingual education with “the language of living in a ghetto.”

The following table attempts to summarize the way in which language references (names, descriptions, general concepts, and demonstrations) in this strand function both interactionally and ideologically in the Digg discussion.

**Table 4.4. The interactional and ideological roles of language references in (4m-r)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>User</th>
<th>Language references</th>
<th>Type(s) of referral</th>
<th>Interactional function</th>
<th>Ideological function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pats (4m)</td>
<td>-English</td>
<td>-Name</td>
<td>Quotes Gingrich</td>
<td>Contrasts general</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We have observed in the analysis of language reference that there is a marked contrast in the language varieties that are evoked in the journalistic discourse of the newspaper articles covering Newt Gingrich’s speech to the NFRW and the discourse in the Digg discussion. While the institutional discourse of the press portrays the issue as relating nearly exclusively to Spanish, the Digg discussion displays a much more elaborate picture of multilingualism in the United States. It was shown that Digg users...
appropriate institutional discourses at the national level – news coverage of Gingrich’s NFRW speech – by situating the consequences of his proposed language policy in their immediate and local surroundings, whether the local is defined geographically - as Chicago or Germany - or symbolically - as the ghetto, the suburbs, or a university campus. In these locales, language varieties as distinctive as Arabic, Polish, southern accents, and hip-hop accents were evoked, and reference to these varieties functioned in the construction of epistemic and interactional stance as well as in the positioning of Self and Other in social space. Together, these resources allowed users to put forth their own beliefs about language policy and the language of the ghetto, incorporating discourses of others and displaying support and disagreement with others in the debate on bilingual education.

4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, we have examined the use of reference as a discourse strategy in the construction of language ideology. First, we examined variation in referrals made to one individual – Newt Gingrich – and used distributional and sequential methods of analysis to shed light on how different types of referrals functioned in each type of text. While structural and contextual conventions of use regarding referral type (e.g. full noun, pronoun, descriptors) were shown to be relevant in the selection of referring terms in the data, it was also shown that the use of certain structures, especially complex referrals containing descriptive relative clauses in journalistic discourse, worked to portray Gingrich’s proposal as having a natural place in the trajectory of his political life. In the Digg data, it was shown that referring terms correlated with evaluative stances taken by
users in their posts, and that writers often flouted norms for referring sequences for rhetorical purposes – to oppose prior stances and subvert dominant ideologies of language.

We then examined the strategy of language reference, considering not only what languages were referred to in the newspaper and Digg texts, but also how writers situated these varieties in a lived social world and both global and local space. It was shown that although references to Spanish dominated the institutional discourses of the newspaper, authors of OpEd pieces and letters to the editor took advantage of Spanish referrals by appropriating them while subverting dominant ideologies of the language – that it is spoken in the ghetto, that it is or should be a source of shame, that it is preferred by immigrants over English, that it is equivalent to taking the “easy way out”. In the Digg data, we found a much more varied distribution of referrals to languages other than English or Spanish. These referrals functioned as devices of localization, as resources for the positioning of Self and Other, and as strategies for grounding interactional and epistemic stances. Through the sequential analysis of one particular thread of Digg comments (4m-r), we also saw that language reference was intimately tied to other discourse strategies in the construction of language ideologies as it revealed a complex intersection of ideologies behind Gingrich’s reference to the “language of living in a ghetto”. One of these strategies was the use of constructed dialogue in the narration of personal experience or hypothetical encounters. This will be the focus of analysis in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 5. CONSTRUCTED DIALOGUE AND INTERTEXTUAL STRATEGIES

5.1. Introduction

The last chapter introduced the strategy of reference and considered how different types of referrals to Newt Gingrich and various language varieties indexed language ideologies in the newspaper and Digg texts responding to Gingrich’s speech and apology. I turn now to another strategy – constructed dialogue – and consider the forms it takes and the type of indexical work it does in the newspaper texts and the online Digg discussion surrounding these events that thrust questions about language education policy into the media spotlight in April 2007.

I begin by reviewing how reported speech has been addressed in past sociolinguistic research, noting how this body of research has either explicitly or implicitly pointed to the ideological capacity of this discourse strategy. I also expand upon the discussion of intertextuality introduced in Chapter 2 by describing the capacity of intertextuality as a discourse analytic method and highlighting how it can serve in the critical study of language ideology construction.

I then present an intertextual analysis of the print news texts and the online Digg discussion. I use a combination of distributional measures and qualitative analysis to address the following questions: Whose voices are appropriated in these texts? How? For what purpose? And finally, what do constructed dialogue and related intertextual strategies tell us about individual speakers’ beliefs and assumed collective beliefs about language structure and use?
In conclusion, I compare findings from the two text types and discuss the patterns that emerge given the different capabilities, constraints, and conventions of use within each medium. I discuss how the strategies examined in each of these contexts position Self and Other vis-à-vis language in metalinguistic discourse.

5.2. The sociolinguistics of reported speech

Reported speech is a discourse unit that has received a great deal of attention in studies of media discourse, as well as other genres of written and spoken discourse. Traditional studies on reported speech, such as those collected in Coulmas (1986a), have deconstructed many of the grammatical properties of this discourse unit. This volume of work elaborates on the person and place deictic shifts, tense shifts, complementizers, intonation and gestural shifts that distinguish direct from indirect reported speech in a variety of languages. This prototypical grammar of reported speech can be used as a base against which we analyze the multitude of creative ways in which speakers appropriate others’ words in speech and writing, for example in mixed genres of reported speech that have been referred to “quasi-direct” and “free indirect” discourse (Voloshinov 1973). While the studies in Coulmas (1986a) have largely focused on the productive aspect of reported speech, Coulmas (1986b) has highlighted the effect of direct versus indirect reported speech from the perspective of hearer/reader, noting that direct reports are less
ambiguous than indirect reported speech, which requires pragmatic interpretative work on the part of the hearer/reader to identify the extension of certain deictic expressions\textsuperscript{32}.

However, later studies of reported speech emphasize the fact that even \textit{direct} quotation requires active interpretation on the part of both the speaker and hearer. Clark and Gerrig (1990) show that direct quotation involves \textit{active} and \textit{selective} “demonstration” on the part of the speaker, in contrast to the descriptive nature of indirect quotation. Likewise, the hearer/reader of direct quotation must actively interpret \textit{which} aspects of the reporter’s rendition are purposely voiced as emanating from the quoted figure, as opposed to which aspects are idiosyncratic characteristic of the reporter him/herself. Clark and Gerrig also point to the dialectical nature of quotation by emphasizing that the explicit framing of a text as emanating from another figure both draws the reported figure into the reporting situation while it simultaneously distances the reporter from the speech through the framing devices employed to distinguish the voice of the reporter (Self) and reported (Other).

Tannen’s (1989) study of reported speech in everyday conversation employs the term “constructed dialogue” rather than using other common names for the phenomenon (e.g., “reported speech”, “quotation”, “direct discourse”, etc.) because it emphasizes the fact that what is going on – in her words, “framing an account of another’s words as dialogue” (Tannen 1989:110) – is not the mere \textit{reporting} of someone else’s speech but the \textit{creation} of dialogue by the speaker. Tannen argues that constructed dialogue is not

\textsuperscript{32}For example, in the sentence “Cliff mentioned that his mother was in the hospital”, the noun phrase “his mother” might refer to the mother of Cliff or the mother of Cliff’s friend, Ali. Compare this to a direct report: “Cliff said, ‘my/his/Ali’s mother is in the hospital.’”
an objective report of past speech but a discourse strategy for creating involvement that
draws the indexed speaker into the conversation, thus functioning as a creative means for
evaluating people, events, and situations.

Another study that has emphasized the evaluative function of constructed
dialogue is Labov’s (1972) early work on narrative structure, in which he notes that
constructed dialogue is an important resource for embedding evaluation into the
complicating action of a narrative. Similarly, Goffman (1981) considers constructed
dialogue among the primary linguistic resources for accomplishing a footing shift in talk,
which has important implications for speaker/hearer alignment and situated identity
construction in conversational interaction.

The studies described above have all investigated constructed dialogue in either
conversational or interview contexts, both of which constitute face-to-face
communication. Hamilton (1998) is one of the few researchers that has examined the
form and function of this discourse strategy specifically in a computer-mediated context.
She demonstrates through an interactional sociolinguistic analysis of a discussion board
created to support those affected by bone marrow transplants that constructed dialogue is
still indeed used to creatively evaluate non-present others. In the data she analyzes,
constructed dialogue is often used in the framing of relationships between participants
and the health care professionals with whom they must regularly interact as they seek and
receive treatment. Hamilton finds that constructed dialogue plays an important role in the
construction of discourses of empowerment for patients and for highlighting status and
knowledge differentials between figures in recounted interaction (e.g., doctors, nurses,
family members, and the patients themselves). In addition to confirming findings from face-to-face contexts in a CMC environment, this study is also important because it goes beyond the interpersonal involvement work that is accomplished by directly voicing another’s speech, and emphasizes the fact that constructed dialogue is a prominent discourse strategy used in the construction of epistemic stance, positions of authority, and thus also the contestation of power relations.

This emphasis on the *power* dimension that is intricately interwoven with the evaluative function of constructed dialogue has also been documented by researchers who have examined the strategy in overtly persuasive discourses. For instance, in a discourse analysis of focus groups where news events are discussed to gauge public opinion, Myers (2004: 137) remarks that “participants assume the existence of opposing views and use reported speech to dramatise, shift, or reinforce a view, or to bring out the tensions between views.” Myers finds that in order for participants to accomplish this, they often employ *hypothetical* voices against which they position themselves in order to advance their own opinion. Likewise, Tannen (1989: 111-119) has remarked that speakers do not only report the actual words of real speakers, but use a substantial amount of creativity in the reporting of dialogue (hence the term “constructed”), at times directly voicing what speakers do *not* say, constructing a collective quotation (as in a Greek chorus), or voicing those who cannot speak for themselves (e.g., babies, pets; see also Tannen 2007).

The multiple interactional functions of this discourse strategy are certainly in play in the persuasive arguments put forth by many of the participants in the discussions about
language education policy examined below. Before examining the form and function of constructed dialogue in the texts, I will briefly explain the approach I take, which is rooted in the notion of *intertextuality*.

### 5.3 Intertextuality as a method of analysis

Many of the perspectives on reported speech presented above draw upon the work of literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin (1981, 1986) and Voloshinov (1973) and the notion of *dialogicality*, often employing Kristeva’s (1980) related term, *intertextuality*. Intertextuality refers to the idea that all utterances are imbued with echoes of prior texts and that they anticipate future texts, as in a dialogue. Intertextuality also emphasizes the idea that *all* utterances are polyphonic; that is, they contain several “voices”, reminiscent of particular characters, social groups, or styles. Polyphony is perhaps most obvious in the case of direct reported speech, where the speech of the reporter and the reported are each distinctly identifiable. However, Fairclough (1989, 1992, 1995), who has employed intertextuality as an approach to media discourse analysis, emphasizes that *all* discourse representation is intertextual; if not manifestly so, texts can be “constitutively” intertextual, or *interdiscursive*, containing indexes to particular social domains of use (cf. Foucault’s (1982) “orders of discourse”).

Fairclough illustrates the notion of interdiscursivity through his example of the “synthetic personalization” of media discourse, which refers to the interpersonal construal of discourse that is produced by a multitude of individuals at various stages of the production process and is geared toward a diffuse public audience (1989: 62).
Linguistic strategies of synthetic personalization include the use of informal registers, singular address terms, and textual presupposition of the desires or attitudes of the implied hearer/reader. Thus, intertextuality relates not only to constructed dialogue in the strict sense of direct reported speech, but also to the representation of voices through other linguistic strategies.

In taking an intertextual approach to discourse analysis, we must consider several questions to establish how texts make use of a variety of voices to convey meaning, evaluate people and ideas, construct authoritative stances, and subvert interactional norms. The following questions will serve as a guide in our intertextual analysis of the newspaper and Digg texts:

- Whose voice or words are being appropriated by the author(s) of a given text?
- If the voice of a co-present interlocutor is appropriated, what function does it serve? Does the reporter make use of the voice to agree or disagree, or to compare or contrast points of view with interlocutors? Does the constructed dialogue index an addressee, a conversational topic, or an underlying big ‘D’ Discourse (in the sense of Gee 1999)?
- If the voice or speech reported belongs to a non-present identifiable individual, what purpose does it serve in the given context? What type of relationship is constructed between the reported individual and the reporter? What particular identity categories of the individual are made salient through the way his/her voice is appropriated?
- Does the author refer to the individual or group explicitly or implicitly when reporting their speech? If explicitly, how does the lexical choice of referring terms in the quotative frame relate to the contents of the speech reported (see also the discussion in Chapter 4 on this topic), and what does this relationship tell us about the author’s stance vis-à-vis the reported figure?
- If a voice of an unidentifiable individual is used, what geographical, social, or cultural characteristics are cued through the demonstrated speech? What linguistic cues (e.g., lexical, phonological, morphosyntactic) identify this group membership? What aspects or stereotypes about that group’s identity are made salient through these cues?

33 For example, think of the typical television infomercial that says, “I know what you’re thinking: ‘I can’t afford this!’ But yes you can, with only 3 installments of $29.99...”
In this sense, the intertextual method of analysis is not dramatically different from a general interactional sociolinguistic approach to discourse analysis; instead, the intertextual method zeros in on understanding on how social identities are represented through the reporting of speech and representation of others’ voices.

One shortcoming of taking an intertextual approach to media discourse analysis is that it stops at the level of the social domain of discourse and does not consider the socio-cognitive aspects of discourse reception and ideology formation (van Dijk 1991, 1998; Sclafani 2008), which is of vital importance if we want to consider how individuals are appropriating institutional media texts when they congregate in computer-mediated forums to engage in language debates. I argue that we should combine an analysis of explicit intertextuality in media discourse with an analysis of how this discourse is framed for audience consumption through interdiscursive means. In doing so, our understanding of the import of reported speech as constructed dialogue is enriched because it connects the representation of multiple voices in discursive practice to the chain of production, reception, and ideology formation that is central to Bakhtin’s original notion of dialogicality. In the following sections, I perform an intertextual analysis and consider how this strategy is employed in each of the text types – the newspaper articles (5.4) and the Digg.com discussion (5.5).

5.4. Constructed dialogue and intertextuality in the newspaper texts

Journalistic discourse is a genre of written language well known for the extensive use of speech representation in its texts, whether in the form of direct quotation or other
modes of discourse representation. In fact, in a recent study on metaphors for speech representation in the British press (Heywood and Semino 2007), the representation of speech is shown to account for 47% of the press data analyzed (taken from the British National Corpus), compared to only 32% of the data examined in the “fiction” genre and 23% in the “autobiography” genre. The frequent exploitation of this device in newspaper discourse can be attributed to its function as a distancing mechanism, an important practice in the presentation of “neutral” or “objective” reporting (Cotter 1999, Fairclough 1995). However, it must be taken into account that the alternation between different types of speech representation rarely displays all voices equally. In the words of Fairclough (1995: 81),

Reports are rarely even-handed with all the various voices represented. Some are given prominence, and some marginalized. Some are used to frame others. Some are legitimized by being taken up in the newsreader’s or reporter’s voice, others are not. Equity and balance cannot be assessed by merely noting which voices are represented, and, for instance, how much space is given to each; the web of voices is an often subtle ordering and hierarchization of voices.

To provide a general picture of the types, relative frequency, and attributed sources of speech representation in the corpus of newspaper texts, I coded all instances of speech representation in the articles that fell within the categories of “reports”, “commentaries” (excluding the one written by Gingrich in the Los Angeles Times), and “letters”34. The following table displays the major categories of speech representation found in the data, along with examples from the texts.

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34 The articles in the “aftermath” category were excluded from the distributional analysis because they only marginally dealt with the topic of Gingrich’s speech and language education policy.
Table 5.1. Categories of speech representation coded in the newspaper data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Defining elements</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct Quotation</td>
<td>Contains framing devices (quotation marks, punctuation, deictic shifts) to distinctly mark speech as belonging to another</td>
<td>Peter Zamora said: “The tone of his comments were very hateful.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect Quotation</td>
<td>Reported speech not marked by framing devices or deictic shifts</td>
<td>He has also said that all U.S. children should learn English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Quotation</td>
<td>Combination of direct and indirect quotation within the reporting of a speech act</td>
<td>He said that bilingualism poses “long-term dangers to the fabric of our nation”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominal Representation of Speech Act</td>
<td>Nouns that refer to an act of speaking</td>
<td>…a nasty, racist remark directed at the Latino community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Representation of Speech Act</td>
<td>Verbs that refer to an act of speaking</td>
<td>He mocked requirements that ballots be printed in multiple languages.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to coding for these categories, the length of quotation, attributed author (e.g. Newt Gingrich, Peter Zamora, unidentified Youtube user), and the type of news item in which the representation of speech was found (report, commentary, or letter), were noted. There are a few cases of irrealis speech representation (e.g. “he should say X”, “he would query X”), but these account for only 14% of the total amount of represented speech. Despite their infrequent appearance, they will be included in both the quantitative and qualitative analyses, since such constructions have been shown to be an important method of evaluation in various genres of speech and writing (e.g. Labov 1972, Schiffrin 2002, Tannen 1989).

35 In some cases, it was unclear as to whether the noun referred to a speech act; for example, the verb “support” in certain contexts might refer to either verbal or monetary encouragement. Such instances were excluded from the quantitative analysis.

36 In fact, only 16% of irrealis clauses were found in the “report” category; the remainder were found in commentaries and letters.
The following table and chart present the distribution of types of speech representation in the subset of the newspaper data delineated above:

**Table 5.2. Distribution of speech representation in the newspaper data by grammatical type and quoted source**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammatical Type, Quoted Source</th>
<th>Number of occurrences</th>
<th>Percentage of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indirect Q (total)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gingrich</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Q (total)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gingrich</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Q (total)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gingrich</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noun SA (total)</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gingrich</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>19.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verb SA (total)</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>30.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gingrich</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL (total)</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gingrich</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>69.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>30.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This distribution reveals that out of 176 total instances of speech representation in the data, a majority of these instances fell into the categories of nominal and verbal representations of speech acts. Considering the topic of the news coverage – a controversial speech and apology – this is not surprising. In all three types of articles, nominal speech act references to Gingrich’s “comments”, “remarks”, and “apology” were frequent, as were verbs describing his speech and reactions to it; “apologized”, “called for”, and “repudiated” are examples of common verbal representations of speech acts in the data. It is also not surprising that Gingrich features most frequently as the source whose speech was reported, since his words and acts were central to the events and opinions reported in these texts.
Among the three types of quotation, direct reports were most common (24.4% of all speech representation), followed by mixed quotation (11.9%), and lastly, indirect quotation (5.7%). This distribution can be explained by the preference for direct reports in journalistic discourse, since they appear less biased as they provide the reader with an unmediated view of the events being reported. This also accounts for the greater frequency of mixed quotation versus indirect quotation, despite its awkward appearance and flow in written discourse. Gingrich was also the most frequently quoted source by far in each grammatical category, followed by other sources, especially representatives of organizations who opposed his remarks (e.g. Peter Zamora, co-chair of the Hispanic Education Coalition, and Maegan Ortiz, editor of the popular U.S. Latino blog “Vivir Latino”).

Keeping in mind Fairclough’s emphasis that we must not only pay attention to who is quoted and to what length, but also issues of framing devices that construct positions of legitimacy and authority in media texts, it will be useful to perform a sequential qualitative analysis of constructed dialogue in some of these texts. I will limit this analysis to the two reports in the Washington Post (the first reporting the NFRW speech, the second reporting Gingrich’s apology), since they are expected to contain relatively objective reports of the events, as opposed to letters to the editor and OpEd pieces in the corpus.

37 Consider this example of mixed quotation in the CNN report of Gingrich’s apology, which contains an abrupt deictic shift: “…he did concede that ‘my word choice was poor’”.
38 Although recall that the report of Gingrich’s apology appeared in the Style section of the paper, which constrains it less in terms of its adherence to norms of objective reporting.
Upon first glance, it is clear that the two *Washington Post* articles differ significantly in the way they interweave constructed dialogue into the reporting of the topical events: The first article (Hunt, “Gingrich: Bilingual classes teach ‘ghetto’ language”, 4/1/07, [1-WP-r]) uses constructed dialogue in a fairly predictable way, covering the five “W’s” central to journalistic reporting (Who? What? When? Where? Why?), while the second report (Vargas, “Gingrich tries to translate his remarks on Youtube”, 4/6/07, [6-WP-r]) draws on the controversy that erupted over Gingrich’s speech in the intervening days to weave together a pastiche of voices that sheds a more critical light on the politician’s remarks about bilingual education.

Beginning with Hunt’s article, it is worth mentioning that while Gingrich’s NFRW speech actually covered a variety of topics of interest to Republican women, the headline zeroes in on the *one* particularly controversial statement – the newsworthy part of the speech – using a typical journalistic mode of discourse representation in the title: “Gingrich: Bilingual classes teach ‘ghetto’ language”. The replacement of the speaking verb by a colon is a common space-saving strategy used in newspaper article titles (Cotter 2001, Scollon 2004). However, one could argue that it also operates here as a neutralizing agent, since many (if not all) verbs of saying add elements of the speaker’s and/or reporter’s epistemic or affective stance toward the reported speech. For example, the verb “report” would construct the reported speech as established fact, while “claim”, which is often used in cases where no evidence or proof is provided in support of the proposition, would introduce an element of doubt with regard to the veracity of the reported speech. Similarly, the verbs “cheer” (used to describe the NRRW’s response)
and “admit” (used in a report reporting Gingrich’s explanation of his statement) connote speaker emotions of enthusiasm and possible guilt, respectively. The colon used here, through its lack of semantic content, avoids making the choice between a variety of emotionally or epistemically imbued verbs, thus creating an ideological stance of detached journalistic objectivity.

Although the statement attributed to Gingrich – “bilingual education classes teach ‘ghetto’ language” – is not a direct quotation, rather a summary of his speech, it is presented as a single statement that actually simplifies and changes the content of the original speech, most notably by transforming the lexical category of “ghetto” from a noun to an adjective, while emphasizing that this word in particular was in fact uttered by Gingrich through the use of quotation marks. While this particular intertextual representation gives the appearance of distance and objectivity, the syntactic transformation of Gingrich’s words also implicates a semantic transformation: the word “ghetto”, which denoted a place in Gingrich’s speech, is transformed into an evaluative description of language.

Turning to the content of the article, the first paragraph clarifies Gingrich’s comments in his speech to the NFRW (although the venue isn’t mentioned until the third paragraph), for he is reported to have referred to bilingual education as teaching the “language of living in a ghetto”. Gingrich’s speech is also directly quoted extensively throughout the text, marking the thematic topic (van Dijk 1988) of the article. In addition to utilizing the language of Gingrich’s speech as a source of constructed dialogue, the report also contains quotations from remarks Gingrich made in 1995 on the same subject,
as well as a stretch of direct speech attributed to Peter Zamora, co-chair of the Hispanic Education Coalition, who criticized the language of Gingrich’s remark and opposed his position on bilingual education. In order to get a general picture of the distribution of constructed dialogue throughout the article, the chart below summarizes the number and length of quoted segments accorded to each figure in the article:

**Table 5.3. Distribution of direct quotation in the Hunt article**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Gingrich (NFRW)</th>
<th>Gingrich (1995)</th>
<th>Zamora</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of direct quotations</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of words in quotation</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average length of quotation (words)</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>19.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of total quotation attributed to figure</td>
<td>56.4%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>34.1%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If we begin by considering these figures alone without examining the content of the quotations, the distribution does not seem out of the ordinary. The thematic topic of the article was Gingrich’s speech, and the figure of Gingrich speaking to the NFRW is attributed the most quotes, the longest quotes, and the greatest proportion of reported speech among all figures whose speech is reported throughout the article. Of course, this statement is somewhat circular because the amount of attention accorded to Gingrich in part determines the topic of the article. However, it will be useful to refer back to this distribution of quotations presented in this first report when we begin to look at how

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39 I have categorized Gingrich in his NFRW speech and in his 1995 speech as separate “figures” although they were arguably delivered by the same “author” and “animator”, in the terminology of Goffman (1981). I distinguish the two figures because the statements were taken from very different contexts - different speeches from different time periods given for different reasons.

40 Includes direct portions of quotations categorized as “mixed quotation” in the previous section.
segments of this text are reappropriated in later reports and responses to Gingrich’s statements.

While the distributional summary tells us a bit about the structure and content of the article, we must examine some of these quotations more carefully in order to understand their function – rhetorically, structurally, and ideologically - in the article.

Consider the first paragraph of the article, reproduced below:

Former House speaker Newt Gingrich yesterday described bilingual education as teaching “the language of living in a ghetto,” and he mocked requirements that ballots be printed in multiple languages.

While it is tempting to delve into an analysis of the content of Gingrich’s speech in this analysis, I want to concentrate here on the way in which it is reported, and the strategic choices made by the Post - whether made the author, editors, or due to reporting conventions - in presenting the speech within the body of the article.

The first sentence of the article is what one would refer to as a “soft lead” in news discourse. That is, rather than summing up the entire article in the first sentence (as a “hard lead” does), the introductory sentence – in conjunction with the headline – provides the most eye-catching or sensational aspect of the article (Bell 1998), using a direct quote of the most controversial phrase in Gingrich’s speech - “the language of living in a ghetto”, accompanied by a clause containing a verbal representation of a speech act (i.e., “he mocked requirements that ballots be printed in multiple languages”). It is significant that the verb of saying selected (“mocking”), not only depicts the content of Gingrich’s speech but also indicates his display of emotional stance toward multilingualism at a more general level. In essence, the use of the verb “mock” expresses the view that
making amendments to accommodate language minority citizens in the United States (which was mandated by the 1975 amendment to the Voting Rights Act amendment) is not a serious matter and one that is worthy of ridicule.

The following two paragraphs, reproduced below, expand on the quotation introduced in the lead and provide new information regarding the content and context of Gingrich’s speech:

“The government should quit mandating that various documents be printed in any one of 700 languages depending on who randomly shows up” to vote, Gingrich said. The former Georgia congressman, who is considering seeking the GOP presidential nomination in 2008, made the comments in a speech to the National Federation of Republican Women.

In this paragraph, the author provides the direct quotation relating to the mocking clause in the lead: “The government should quit mandating that various documents be printed in any one of 700 languages depending on who randomly shows up’ to vote, Gingrich said”. The selected direct quotation of Gingrich’s somewhat hyperbolic (“700 languages”) and ironic (since voters must be previously registered, they are not “random”) statement adds a demonstrative aspect (Clark and Gerrig 1990) to the prior description of Gingrich’s speech act (through the verb “mock”). This quotation is then followed by the presentation of new information: a description of Gingrich’s past institutional role (“former Georgia congressman”); a possible prospective role (“who is considering seeking the GOP presidential nomination in 2008”); and a description of the venue and audience (‘a speech to the National Federation of Republican Women’).

Though it is not surprising that these contextual details surrounding the speech are presented, as they answer the “five W’s” central to journalistic reporting, it is crucial to
acknowledge that they also function ideologically as devices that position the reported speaker in a particular institutional role, with the associated degree of authority that this role bestows on him. In this way, the article positions the reported speech not only as the position of an individual, but as the possible future official position of the U.S. government (cf. analysis of referring terms for Gingrich in Chapter 4).

The third paragraph in this article serves as an anaphor to the lead as well, expanding the most reportable statement from the speech (the “ghetto” statement, already referenced in both the headline and lead):

“The American people believe English should be the official language of the government... We should replace bilingual education with immersion in English so people learn the common language of the country and they learn the language of prosperity, not the language of living in a ghetto,” Gingrich said, drawing cheers from the crowd of more than 100.

This segment provides further details about the audience, including its approximate size (over 100) and evaluative response (“cheers”) to Gingrich’s statement.\(^{41}\) Considering the constraints of media discourse, in which articles must remain concise (in order to make space for advertising, a newspaper’s primary source of revenue), it is interesting that the second two paragraphs repeat in large part what is reported in the lead, and only provide minimal new information (the venue, the audience, the response), which is backgrounded syntactically relative to the direct quotations of the speech.

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\(^{41}\) It is interesting that the author notes in the third paragraph that Gingrich’s remarks drew “cheers from the crowd of more than 100” if we consider that the number of attendees represents a relatively low turnout for the speech of a prominent politician and prospective presidential candidate in the nation’s capital.
The fourth paragraph of the article again highlights a quotation from the speech, consisting of a (faulty) logical statement that supports Gingrich’s prior dismissal of multilingual ballot legislation:

“Citizenship requires passing a test on American history in English. If that’s true, then we do not have to create ballots in any language except English,” he said.

This statement consists of a syllogism that is only logical given the unstated premise that all American-born citizens are English speakers, an assumption that the 2000 U.S. Census data does not support. However, the text of the article does not provide any evidence in support of or in contradiction of Gingrich’s statement, leaving the politician to speak in his own words without any layering of point of view. The article does provide a critical angle, however, in the second half of the article through the voice of Peter Zamora:

Peter Zamora, co-chair of the Washington-based Hispanic Education Coalition, which supports bilingual education, said: “The tone of his comments were very hateful. Spanish is spoken by many individuals who do not live in the ghetto.”

Zamora said research has shown “that bilingual education is the best method of teaching English to non-English speakers.” Spanish speakers, he said, know they need to learn English. “There’s no resistance to learning English, really, among immigrants, among native born citizens. Everyone wants to learn English because it’s what you need to thrive in this country.”

Notice the structure of the presentation of information in this section article, in which criticism to Gingrich’s words is expressed through a spokesperson – Zamora – who is associated with an organization that supports the education of Spanish speakers in the United States. Zamora’s comments first respond to the “tone” of Gingrich’s comments – presumably the mocking tone referred to in the first paragraph. This

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42 According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 21.5 million native-born U.S. citizens speak a language other than English at home.
emotional response is then backed by an evaluative statement ("bilingual education is the best method"), which is voiced as the product of research rather than the personal opinion of Zamora himself. Notice the contrast between this sentence and the next sentence, which contains an indirect quotation with some markers of direct recorded speech:

“Spanish speakers, he said, know they need to learn English.” In this sentence, while the split quotation device of interjecting “he said” bracketed by commas gives the impression that the speech is directly reported, the lack of quotation marks the statement as potentially indirect. It is important to note that the alteration between direct and indirect quotation in this paragraph is accompanied by a change in Zamora’s role in his capacity as a spokesperson. In the direct reporting of research-based knowledge about teaching methodology, Zamora’s role as an education specialist is highlighted, whereas in the following indirect\(^{43}\) quotation regarding the stance of Spanish speakers toward English, his identity as a representative of the Hispanic community is foregrounded. In the final sentence, the switch back to direct quotation marks Zamora as a representative of a greater ideological voice. This final identity is enhanced through the selected content of his statement – especially the lack of specific referents (e.g. in the use of existential expressions such as “there’s no resistance to English”) or the use of general referents (e.g. “among immigrants, among native-born citizens”, “everyone”). More importantly, he is portrayed as being in agreement with Gingrich regarding certain aspects of the policy by reaffirming the ideology of English as a unifying device central to American identity.

\(^{43}\) Though the punctuation renders it quasi-direct (Coulmas 1986, Lee 1997, Voloshinov 1973).
The final segment of the article presents a direct report of Gingrich’s words again, though not from the NFRW speech, but a speech the politician made in 1995:

In the past, Gingrich has supported making English the nation’s official language. He has also said that all U.S. children should learn English and that other languages should be secondary in schools.

In 1995, he said that bilingualism poses “long-term dangers to the fabric of our nation: and that “allowing bilingualism to continue to grow is very dangerous.”

Bilingual education programs teach students reading, arithmetic and other basic skills in their native language so they do not fall behind while mastering English.

In elections, federal law requires districts with large populations of non-English speakers to print ballots in multiple languages.

The constructed dialogue accorded to Gingrich here is presented differently than prior direct references to the recent speech in that it follows, rather than introduces, the indirect reporting of past statements made by the politician (e.g. “he has supported...”, “he has also said...”). Structural and sequential differences aside, the constructed dialogue here nevertheless here plays an equally important role in terms of its ideological function. Most notably, bilingualism is described using Gingrich’s metaphoric language, deeming it “dangerous to the fabric of our nation”. The direct quotation of this particular statement, which was chosen among an array of past statements made by Gingrich is important here because this metaphor, which combines metaphors of LANGUAGE AS THREAT and NATION AS TEXTILE, brings into relief interdiscursive links to contemporary –

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44 Interestingly, no context regarding this speech is provided in any of the news reports or commentaries which reference this quotation. See Chapter 3 for the context of this speech, which was located through a Proquest National Newspapers database search.

45 Full transcripts of many of Gingrich’s speeches, as well as video clips of his public appearances are easily accessible and publicly available on his website, http://newt.org. (The transcript of his NFRW speech and his Youtube apology were both taken down from the site soon after they appeared, probably due to the less than flattering appropriations of his words and video in the press.) His stance toward English and education policy is clearly articulated in several places on the website.
specifically, post-9/11 - discourses of national security. This recontextualization (Bauman and Briggs 1990, Bauman 2004) of remarks made well before the 9/11 attacks plays an important role of setting the stage for connecting ideologies of language with beliefs about national identity, loyalty, and national security, a theme that resurfaces in the Digg discussion.

In summary, the article by Hunt reporting Gingrich’s controversial statement in his speech to the NFRW makes use of direct, indirect, and quasi-direct quotation that does much more than provide readers with information regarding the content of Gingrich’s speech. Constructed dialogue is used throughout to foreground the most sensational aspects of the speech in each paragraph while simultaneously introducing the “5 W’s” surrounding the event. Alternation in discourse representation with regard to Zamora’s voice marks changes in footing, constructing his role alternately as an education specialist, as a representative of the Hispanic community, and as representative of a larger ideological voice. Finally, the use of constructed dialogue in reference to an earlier speech made by Gingrich connects the recent speech not only to a history of public declarations of his ideological stance, but also an ideology of language to post-9/11 discourses of terrorism and national security.

Let us now compare the structure and use of constructed dialogue in the Hunt article with the second article on the Gingrich affair in the Post, which headlined as “Newt Gingrich Tries to Translate His Remarks on YouTube” on April 6, 2007 (two days after Gingrich’s apology was posted on YouTube). In this article, Jose Antonio Vargas

46 A detailed discussion of these metaphors is provided in Chapter 6.
reports on the content of Gingrich’s Spanish Youtube apology, recaps the original NFRW speech, and recounts the reactions of Youtube viewers and Latino groups to the two events.

The quantity, types, sources, and contexts of constructed dialogue in this article mark a striking departure from the use of this discourse strategy in the Hunt article. In comparison to the Hunt article, which provided extensive direct quotation of the speech, the Vargas article contains very little direct quotation of the actual apology. Instead, the article quotes from an unspecified interview in which Gingrich commented on his speech and apology in English. What results is an intricate interweaving of voices and sources that provides a snapshot of the discourses circulating in the wake of Gingrich’s remarks, rather than a strict report of events and comments by institutional spokespeople in the style of the Hunt article.

We can begin by examining the range of voices appropriated in the Vargas article and the relative amount of quotation attributed to each. The following chart displays the variety of figures represented via direct quotation in this report, again separating figures of Gingrich in various speaking events:

**Figure 5.4. Distribution of direct quotation in the Vargas article**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Gingrich (NFRW)</th>
<th>Gingrich (apology)</th>
<th>Gingrich (interview)</th>
<th>Gingrich (1995)</th>
<th>Latino response</th>
<th>Youtube comment</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of direct quotations</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total no. of words</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average no. of words/quotation</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of total reported speech</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>35.6%</td>
<td>26.9%</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This distribution of quotation sources clearly indicates that this article does not simply present the “5 W’s” surrounding the topic put forth in the headline and lead (provided below) – that is, the publication of Gingrich’s Spanish-language YouTube apology. Perhaps most noticeable is that there is only one instance of direct quotation of Gingrich’s apology, and in fact it contains solely the title of Gingrich’s video (“Mensaje de Newt Gingrich”). There are, however, several other instances of direct quotation attributed to Gingrich, including quotes recycled from his NFRW speech, his 1995 speech (the same quote used in the Hunt article), and several quotations from the unnamed interview in which Gingrich explained his comments, intentions, and apology. In addition, several direct quotations are attributed to members of Latino groups and YouTube viewers, and the mean quotation length in these categories exceeds all of those categories containing quotations by Gingrich. In sum, this distribution reveals the focus on reactions to Gingrich’s apology rather than the content of it. In fact, this can also be seen in the headline of the article, which contains the volitive “tries to translate”, implying a lack of accomplishment, thus setting up an expectation of negative reactions to his attempted apology.

Let us now perform a qualitative analysis of constructed dialogue and related intertextual strategies in the text of the article to understand how these various voices are
framed, positioned relative to each other, authenticated and/or delegitimized through various intertextual means. Consider the two opening paragraphs of the article below:

On Wednesday, former speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, who’s mulling a White House run, apologized in a YouTube video for his recent remarks equating bilingual education with “the language of living in a ghetto.”

The apology was delivered in English and Spanish, with the three-minute Spanish video, “Mensaje de Newt Gingrich,” subtitled in English. Can’t get any more bilingual than that.

This article contains a very different tone in comparison to the Hunt report, which appears to stem in part from the manipulation of conventions of discourse representation in journalistic discourse. Specifically, where one would expect to see direct quotation of Gingrich’s apology, following the quotation of the title of the video in the second paragraph, we find explicit evaluation on the part of the journalist: “Can’t get any more bilingual than that.” This unexpected move by Vargas not only bends the journalistic discourse register in its colloquial syntactic form – a sort of synthetic personalization, using Fairclough’s terminology, but also betrays the normal stance of journalistic distance and objectivity in its sarcastic tone.

What follows in the next paragraph strays even further from norms of journalistic discourse. As we see below, a parenthetical statement is directly addressed to Gingrich, in a form that code-mixes Spanish, English, and a written demonstration of Spanish phonology placed on the English words describing it:

(However: Memorando al Señor Gingrich: In Spanish, the “r” is rolled and the syl-la-bles are se-pa-ra-ted.)

It should be emphasized that these conventions are not as strict in articles that appear in the STYLE section, which contains more opinion pieces, but this is the only report of Gingrich’s apology to appear in any section of the Washington Post, so it serves not only as a venue for the author to reveal his own views but to inform readers of this particular newsworthy event.
In an interview yesterday, the Georgia Republican called his choice of words “clumsy.”

The parenthetical comment directed at Gingrich in this section – “In Spanish, the ‘r’ is rolled and the syl-la-bles are se-pa-ra-ted” - contains an intertextual strategy similar to constructed dialogue despite the fact that it does not conform to the types of speech representation that have been analyzed thus far in the newspaper articles. This strategy is analogous to Clark and Gerrig’s (1990: 766) discussion “concurrent” demonstration and description, in which a speaker describes and demonstrates “in parallel, and the demonstration is concurrent with the description.” Clark and Gerrig give the example of someone limping while they describe the uneven gait of a third party. In the example above, Vargas demonstrates how Spanish should be pronounced as he describes how this is done, using textual indicators (hyphens) to mark the “se-pa-ra-ted” nature of Spanish syllabification. Ironically, though, Vargas does this in English. In this parenthetical comment, the author constructs a dialogue between himself and Gingrich which simultaneously serves as a metalinguistic commentary aimed at readers, critiquing Gingrich’s Anglo-accented Spanish. Invoking Goffman’s (1981) notion of participation framework, we might say that Vargas manipulates the distinction between his “addressees” and “overhearers” in this parenthetical comment. That is, his comment regarding Spanish pronunciation is directed at Gingrich (his addressee) while Post readers stand by as overhearers, but the keying of this advice as a critique of Gingrich’s apology is in reality addressed to readers. In addition, it is notable that his keying and manipulation of audience members is accompanied by a transformation in the type of
speech act being accomplished: a Spanish lesson for Gingrich is keyed as an assessment of language ability for readers.

Furthermore, one may consider Vargas’s metalinguistic comment a second pair-part of an adjacency pair (Schegloff and Sacks 1973). The first pair-part, consisting of Gingrich’s apology, requires either an acceptance or a rejection as a response for the speech act to be felicitous (Austin 1962, Levinson 1983, Owen 1983, Thomas 1995). In this interpretation, the parenthetical comment can be considered an indirect rejection of the apology, or a “dispreferred” second pair-part because it endorses the apology’s claim to have caused offense (Robinson 2004). In this case, however, Vargas’s comment deauthenticates the apology by mocking the code in which it was made, a strategy that is also used frequently in the Youtube video commentaries to Gingrich’s apology.

After recapping Gingrich’s self-defense in an unidentified interview and reiterating highlights from the NFRW speech via direct quotation, Vargas focuses on reactions to Gingrich’s statements by named or unnamed representatives of Latino groups, including the Hispanic Education Coalition, the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, and Vivir Latino (“U.S. Latino life in blog form”). In addition to this institutional representation of the opposition, however, Vargas spends equal time citing comments that appeared on YouTube in response to the apology.

Consider the following excerpt:

As of yesterday afternoon, Gingrich’s YouTube apology, the Spanish version, had been watched more than 34,000 times on the video-sharing site. Comments kept coming in, some viewers sympathetic to Gingrich, many not, others simply LOLing -- laughing out loud.
“While the rest of the world rushes to make their children bi- and trilingual, this linguistically arrogant [person] bring [sic] his narrow mindedness to light,” as one commenter put it.

“Keep it up, Newt. You’re absolutely right,” wrote another. “People who speak English have better opportunity [sic] in this country. That’s not a racist or anti-Spanish statement, it’s just the reality that speaking the dominant language of a country is a first step at being successful.”

Another wrote: “This is freaking hilarious. Newt makes Bush sound like an expert in Spanish.”

The critiques that Vargas reports in this section vary along several dimensions: 1) the type of speech representation (verbal representations of speech acts versus direct quotation); 2) the stance taken in these reactions (“some viewers sympathetic to Gingrich, many not, others simply LOLing – laughing out loud”); and 3) aspects of the apology that they take issue with (possible racist undertones, his decision to apologize in Spanish, his non-native Spanish accent, his view regarding bilingual education). It is also significant that Vargas chooses to directly quote two YouTube comments that contain nonstandard English grammar. This particular representation of voices may be interpreted in more than one way. First, it may serve to highlight the diversity of opinions among non-native English speakers in these discussions, emphasizing the idea that native-born English speaking Americans are not the only linguistic-cultural group to support English-only legislation. However, a more likely interpretation, considering the greater context and style of the article, is that these instances of constructed dialogue serve as a type of varidirectional double-voiced discourse (Bakhtin 1986), in which the representation of speech works to subvert the ideological implications of the discourse represented. In this

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48 This is likely a result of the newspaper editing for profanity.
49 My notation.
case, a supporter of English-only education is voiced using nonstandard grammar, thus betraying their own “ignorance” of the language (cf. Sclafani 2008 for similar examples of double-voiced discourse in newspaper discourses on language policy.)

Overall, the Vargas article departs in several ways from a typical newspaper report in its intertextual, interdiscursive, and polyvocal representation of reactions to the events reported. Through its selection of popular reactions rather than institutionally affiliated voices to provide commentary on Gingrich’s speech and apology, the article presents a vivid picture of the language debates that were sparked among the general population in the wake of the events reported. Let us now turn to examine one particular source through which an array of individuals voiced their reactions to these media events: the Digg.com discussion board.

5.5. Constructed dialogue on Digg

The Digg discussion board that was created in response to an article reporting the NFRW speech on CNN.com contains a representation of opinions on Gingrich’s speech as varied as those reported by Vargas in the Washington Post article discussed above. However, it is important to keep in mind that newspapers edit to a great extent the array (and in some cases, the content) of the reactions that were actually voiced in reaction to Gingrich’s speech and apology in online forums. So while Vargas provided a balanced representation of proponents and opponents in his reporting of the Youtube comments,

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50 Since the Digg discussion was created before Gingrich’s apology appeared on YouTube and there was no direct link created to the apology in this Digg discussion forum, the content of most of the comments are in relation to the ‘language of living in a ghetto’ quote or discuss bilingual education versus Gingrich’s proposed English immersion policy in general.
the actual distribution of points of view may not have been equal. My focus in this section, rather than quantifying how many Digg users agreed or disagreed with Gingrich’s statements, will concentrate instead on how users construct their arguments through the use of constructed dialogue and related intertextual means.

I will begin by discussing what prior texts are appropriated as direct reported speech in the Digg discussion. Instances of direct quotation were identified according to a variety of linguistic devices. The major criterion for coding direct reported speech was the use of quotation marks and/or other similar punctuation devices.\textsuperscript{51} In addition, there were a few examples in which no punctuation devices were used to signal a direct report used but contained lexical quotative devices and deictic shifts; these were also coded as direct reported speech. For example, consider the text in boldface in the following excerpt from a comment made by Kuzotz\textsuperscript{52}:

If you say \textbf{whats up} to someone in Houston. They say “they still say that shit?”

In this excerpt, “whats up” has been categorized as direct quotation due to the use of quotative “say” (without the complementizer “that”). In addition, the larger discussion from which this extract is pulled is a discussion of how the meaning of this particular colloquial expression – “what’s up?” – changes depending on the geographical region in which it is used, also lending itself to an interpretation as a direct report.

\textsuperscript{51} However, instances of scare quotes (where only one word is quoted and functions as a distancing device) on words such as “English”, “American”, “ghetto” and other popular buzzwords in this discussion were excluded from this analysis, despite the fact that they do represent another important type of ideologically laden double-voiced discourse (Fairclough 1995).

\textsuperscript{52} Original spelling, capitalization, and punctuation is maintained in all the Digg.com comments reproduced in this text.
In order to get a better general idea of what types of texts Digg users have appropriated in their comments, I coded all instances of direct quotation for the source of quotation. This chart shows the overall distribution of the 52 direct quotations coded from this discussion:

**Table 5.4. Distribution of direct quotation sources on Digg.com.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quotation Source</th>
<th>Number of quotes</th>
<th>Percentage of total number of quotes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prior comments</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linked article</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Imagined’ source</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown/Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>52</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We can see from this chart that the greatest percentage of direct quotation in these comments originates in the text of prior posts on the discussion board. Quoting prior text in electronic discourse is very common and has been documented in past research on internet language use (Davis and Mason 2004, Herring 2001). In particular, Davis and Mason have noted that internet discussion board discourse is highly appropriative, calling the strategy “the easiest text-based technique for letting other participants know that you have read their words” (2004: 52). It seems that direct quotation is a conversational involvement strategy particularly conducive to web-based communication because of the copy-and-paste affordances of computer keyboards and word-processing programs. In our analysis of the Digg data, we will try to determine whether quoting prior texts performs other functions – interactional, rhetorical, and ideological – in these language debates.
Since the Digg discussion was created as a link to a news article, one might expect there to be a lot of citation from the CNN article as well, but in fact we have only 17% of the direct quotations emanating from this source. Instead, there appears to be a surprisingly high percentage of quotation of what I’ve coded as “imagined” voices. In these cases, users construct the voice of a hypothetical character, often in a narrative context, representing a particular Other they encounter in a situation as a way of expressing their own attitudes and beliefs about language and bilingual education. In order to understand why these imagined voices are so prevalent (representing 37% of all the direct quotation sources in the Digg discussion) when there is such a plethora of “real” voices that participants have at their disposal to draw on, we should consider more closely how each type of source quotation functions in the construction of users’ arguments.

First, I will consider a few examples of how the text from a prior post is appropriated in a user’s comment. The excerpt below contains a comment made by Cliffzdude, which was quite well received among Digg readers, earning 58 ‘diggs’ and the status of fourth most popular comment of the 256-comment discussion53.

**Cliffzdude (+58 diggs):**
“f [sic] you want people to speak English, then help them. Make friends with someone who speaks broken English.”

I'm very fucking tired of every time somebody has an issue, somebody tries to come up with the “then YOU help” solution. Damn it, the issue here is whether the United Stated Government should be going out of its way to help non English speakers.

With this logic, I need to befriend a non English speaker and help him learn better English. Volunteer for Habitat for Humanity (Ok, already do that). Begin a grass roots

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53 Digg totals last assessed on 10/21/08.
initiative against the RIAA. Etc., etc., etc. Guess I can tell my family and their hungry mouths to FUCK OFF because I'm too busy being an activist...

Or...

Maybe the USA should help immigrants learn English the most successful way ever invented; TOTAL IMMERSION. If we hand enough aids out to non English speakers they won't learn the language, can't blame them. But if they truly want to get along, if they are forced to learn a few hundred words, guess what? THEY FUCKING WILL.

The quoted text in the first paragraph of this comment has been reproduced almost word-for-word from a prior comment made by Detritus (discussed later) – the only change is the missing “I” in the first word, “If”. This change is likely due to a copy-and-paste error, where the cursor did not capture the entirety of the original text, thus providing support for the idea that constructed dialogue is a rhetorical strategy particularly suited to CMC environments due to its technological facility. In Cliffzdude’s comment, the quoted text is also separated visually from the user’s reaction through the paragraph separation between the quotation and Cliffzdude’s evaluative reaction which follows.

The appropriated text in this case serves as a marker to ground the user’s disagreement with particular aspects of Detritus’s prior post. Cliffzdude’s highly emotionally charged disagreement responds to Detritus’s argument that the teaching and learning of English is an issue that English-speaking citizens can become personally involved in by interacting with non-English speakers in their everyday lives. It is important to note that when Cliffzdude articulates his stance – “I’m very fucking tired of every time somebody has an issue…” - he reappropriates the prior text by characterizing the prior discourse as a “‘then YOU help’ solution”. This type of quotation device is unique in that it changes the grammatical form of the prior text in the process of reappropriation, much like the syntactic transformation we saw in the appropriation of
Gingrich’s comments in the title of the Washington Post article. Compare the structure of these two transformations below:

**Table 5.5. Syntactic transformations in reappropriation of prior texts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial form of utterance</th>
<th>Reappropriated form</th>
<th>Transformation Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“…so people learn the language of prosperity, not the language of living in a ghetto.” (Gingrich in NFRW speech)</td>
<td>“Gingrich: Bilingual classes teach ‘ghetto’ language” (Hunt in 1-WP-r title)</td>
<td>Ghetto: Physical place (noun) &gt; Evaluative adjective Agent: immigrants (“people”) &gt; Teachers/policy (“bilingual classes”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“If you want people to speak English, then help them. Make friends with someone who speaks broken English.” (Detritus)</td>
<td>“I’m very fucking tired of every time somebody has an issue, somebody tries to come up with the ‘then you help’ solution.” (Cliffzdude)</td>
<td>Syntax: Conditional phrase &gt; Compound adjective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the reappropriation of Gingrich’s speech examined earlier, we witnessed a transformation in the lexical class of the word “ghetto” from a noun to an adjective. In this case, Cliffzdude takes a prior stretch of discourse uttered by Detritus and reappropriates it by summarizing, simplifying, and using it in an adjectival position (i.e. it describes the “solution”). The ideological function of this strategy in each of these cases is especially effective in highlighting, hiding, and erasing certain aspects of the prior text, a theme that arises in considering the other discourse strategies in Chapters 4 and 6 as well.

In the following paragraph, Cliffzdude again reappropriates an aspect of the prior text, but not through constructed dialogue. Instead, he takes the humanitarian and citizen-activist Discourses underlying Detritus’s comment and illustrates how he already is doing his part to help fellow citizens in need and be an active citizen: “Volunteer for Habitat for Humanity (Ok, already do that). Begin a grass roots initiative against the RIAA…”

Through this list of activities, he positions himself as an already socially engaged citizen.
and positions Detritus as idealistic by noting that if he spent any more time engaging in volunteer work, his family would go hungry.

This positioning is then used as a preface to a declaration of Cliffzduke’s own stance on the issue (which is ironically introduced by the mitigator “maybe”, even though in general his comment is quite direct). Cliffzduke emphasizes here that the issue in Gingrich’s speech is not what Americans can do in their everyday lives but how the federal government should be involved. The user ultimately highlights his personal interests in this issue by highlighting the question of how taxpayers’ dollars should be spent, stating that it should not be the duty of the government to provide services in languages other than English because this “aid” will serve as a deterrent to learning English. On the other hand, if this “aid” is taken away, immigrants will be “forced to learn a few hundred words”. Note that Cliffzduke’s personal stake in this matter is also reinforced through the inclusive reference “we hand enough aids out”, in which he positions himself as personally agentive in the provision of governmental support (cf. the discussion of reference and agency in the analysis of Jewmanji’s post in Chapter 4). This self-positioning by Cliffzduke is diametrically opposed to Detritus’s prior positioning of participants in this debate as citizens who can provide support to immigrants by making friends.

In sum, this example of directly quoting a prior text acts as both a structural and ideological framing device, which introduces and allows the user to contrast their point of view regarding Gingrich’s stance on language education policy with that of another Digg participant. It was also shown that the discourse of a prior comment was transformed
and interwoven into Cliffzdude’s response, acting in both the positioning of Self and Other and in the highlighting and hiding of certain aspects the reappropriated texts.

I now examine another example of direct quotation of a prior text that contrasts the use of constructed dialogue in Cliffzdude’s post by both structure and function.

Consider the following post by Digg user Vet:

Vet (-10 diggs):
Keeping people divided is “a goal of the liberals”? If you can’t make a point without relating to idiotic smears you should just shut up instead.

In contrast to Cliffdude, Vet integrates the text of a prior user comment into a rhetorical question as an opening to her own post. Her comment differs at a structural level to the prior post because the prior comment is fully incorporated syntactically into Vet’s comment. This particular placement of constructed dialogue within Vet’s post has important implications for its communicative and ideological function in the post. First, it identifies her primary addressee, the “you” referred to in the second sentence: this second-person referral can be traced back to user Guillermox, who wrote in an earlier post, “Bilingual education/government only serves to keep people divided (a goal of the liberals).” It should be noted that this strategy is especially useful in terms of its function of delimiting the set of addressees in this particular type of CMC, where the primary mode of communication is one-to-many (Baron 2008; Herring 2001) but where users may also wish to select individual participants in the forum as primary addressees⁵⁴. In this sense, constructed dialogue actually functions as a referential device because it
indexes the addressee. This function further expands our understanding of the complex relationships between the discourse strategies examined in this study.

Vet’s use of reported speech also functions as an interactional positioning device in this post. Although Vet’s post does not directly express her stance toward the linked CNN article, nor her position vis-à-vis Gingrich’s speech, nor her beliefs about bilingual education policy, her insult directed at Guillermox constructs an oppositional stance toward the prior user and consequently, a devaluation of his authority on the topic of discussion.

We have seen that the appropriation of prior users’ comments in the Digg discussion served several practical, interactional, and ideological functions which also related to their placement in the discourse structure of the Digg discussion. Constructed dialogue was used to preface disagreements, which included further problematization and/or personal insult directed toward the author of the appropriated text. Additionally, the incorporation of prior texts served to preface the positive or negative appraisal of the prior speaker’s rhetorical style. This type of metadiscursive commentary sometimes occurred (in Vet’s post and in others in the Digg discussion) with no direct flags of agreement or disagreement with regard to the issues addressed in the linked article.

Let us now turn to consider an example of appropriation of text from the linked CNN article, a type of intertextual referencing that was infrequent in this corpus,

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55 It should be noted that prior texts were also appropriated to preface agreement flags of various sorts, although these arguments tended to be much less developed than those that expressed disagreement.
comprising only 17% of the total number of explicit direct quotations in the corpus. The following excerpt contains a comment by Mekongcola:

Mekongcola (+7 diggs):
“Peter Zamora, co-chair of the Washington-based Education Coalition, which supports bilingual education, said, “The tone of his comments were very hateful.” Must these people ALWAYS turn to the race card? It makes me want to dismiss their comments out of hand as soon as I hear shit like this… He’s simply stating a fact that most Americans speak English and it’s silly to try to accommodate a million other languages. Not to mention how hard it is trying to live and work in the US without being able to speak English.

Like all of the instances of direct quotation of the CNN article in this discussion board contain quotes-within-quotes voicing either Zamora’s or Gingrich’s words, Mekongcola’s comment contains a quote-within-a-quote that voices Peter Zamora’s reaction represented in the linked article. In this example, the constructed dialogue prefaces a hypothetical question that sets up Cola’s expression of disagreement with Zamora’s position, although the referral is broadened to extend to “these people” rather than target Zamora personally. Similar to the instances of prior post citation, this direct quote of a character in the CNN article functions to set up a stance of disagreement. In this and other instances of article citation in which users revoice Zamora or Gingrich, constructed dialogue tends to function similarly to prior post appropriation, that is, as a marker that signals upcoming agreement or disagreement with the source cited in the article.

Let us now compare these instances of constructed dialogue to represent identifiable or “real” voices with the direct quotations in the Digg comments that voice “imagined” characters. Recall that the quotation of “imagined” voices comprises 37% of the total number of instances of direct reported speech in the Digg data, almost equal to
the number of instances of constructed dialogue appropriating prior user comments.

Unlike the range of structural integration (i.e. visual and/or grammatical separation from accompanying text) that was noted in the discussion of the prior examples, quotation of imagined voices was found to only occur in fully integrated contexts (i.e., situated within ongoing discourse that identifies the speaker and situation prior to the quotation). This is not surprising if we consider the fact that the Digg user must discursively construct a social situation in which an imagined voice can speak coherently before actually quoting the imagined individual.

Let us examine some examples of this type of constructed dialogue to get a better sense of the interactional and ideological functions of this strategy in the discussion board. The first example is extracted from the post by Detritus (which was discussed before in the analysis of constructed dialogue in Cliffzduke’s post):

**Detritus (+10 diggs):**
If you can't make friends with brown people, there are plenty of white people who could use your help too. Here in Chicagoland we have a lot of Latvian and Polish folks who are staying comfortably within their own communities without integrating because Americans aren't trying to welcome and integrate them. When I'm in a Chinese restaurant I'll try to chat up the people behind the counter just to give them an opportunity to practice English beyond the mechanized "What you order? Ok, pickup or delivery?". They're usually very grateful for the opportunity, and I've seen a dramatic improvement in the accent of one such new found friend.

In this excerpt, Detritus voices an employee at the takeout counter of a Chinese restaurant to illustrate the way in which he “makes friends” with speakers of other languages in order to help them learn English. This example exemplifies the crucial difference between referring to this strategy as “constructed dialogue” and “reported speech”. The speech that is reported in this segment – “What you order? Ok, pickup or delivery?” - is an example of what Tannen has called “dialogue as instantiation”, or dialogue
constructed to illustrate an utterance that occurs repeatedly. That is, Detritus is not voicing a particular employee at a particular Chinese restaurant in this post. The presence of indefinite and vague references, like “a Chinese restaurant”, “the people behind the counter”, and “them”, prior to this constructed speech give the impression that this type of interaction happens quite frequently with a variety of people in Detritus’s life. In addition, he uses the adjective “mechanized” to describe the speech, which seems to refer to the routinized nature of the utterance.56

This example of constructed dialogue that is attributed to an imaginary character functions as an important positioning device in Detritus’s post. The user creates a narrative world in which the issue of language – the central topic of this debate – is situated in a lived social world, inhabited by Detritus himself and a multitude of unnamed imagined “others”. The strategy of constructed dialogue as “instantiation” in this case works to vivify and typify a particular Other while simultaneously homogenizing and erasing variation within the larger community indexed by the general referrals (“a Chinese restaurant”, “the people behind the counter”, etc.). Through this intertextual and narrative strategy, Detritus portrays Chinese immigrants as lacking not only proficiency in English through the nonstandard syntactic form of the quotation, but also lacking agency, which is reinforced by the position Detritus ascribes to himself in the interactional context. If we broaden our analytical lens and consider the ideological construction accomplished by this constructed dialogue, we might say that Detritus’s quotation of the Chinese takeout employee functions in the construction of a “grassroots

56Alternatively, “mechanized” could describe the phonology and/or intonation of Chinese-accented English.
ideology” of language education, in which the user acts as a good citizen by teaching immigrants English himself, and urges others to do the same.

Compare the post by Detritus to the following instance of constructed dialogue in a post by Chicknbot, which reads:

**Chicknbot (+34 diggs):**
Accent is a different thing than language. Who would you hire?

Chump #1 “Zupp pops, I decided to slide my ass into yo’ coner to see if you could get gig, ya know, to assist ya’ with the shiznit.”

[or]

Chump #2 “Hello Mr. Williams, I thought it would be a good idea to stop by to see if you have any job openings in your store, for customer service”.

This comment, in contrast to Detritus’s post, does not begin by constructing a narrative world in which to situate the voices represented through constructed dialogue. Instead, Chicknbot commences his post with a direct statement expressing his beliefs about the difference between an accent and a language, followed by a hypothetical question targeted at Digg readers: “Who would you hire?” This question positions the reader as a potential employer faced with the decision who to hire among two applicants, Chump #1 and Chump #2. Chicknbot presents the two chumps not through description or reference, but through the juxtaposition of two dramatically different “voices”.

To fully understand the function of these examples of constructed dialogue, we must first begin by examining the content of the dialogue: What type of voices are presented? What aspects of the chumps’ identities are made salient through their quoted speech? The case of Chump #1 is particularly complex due to its hybrid nature. First,

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57 The sequential analysis of linguistic reference in this thread in Chapter 4 provides the interactional context surrounding this statement.
the word “shiznit”, containing the “iz” infix made popular by Snoop Dog, evokes a persona that is affiliated with mainstreet rap music. Other features, such as various lexical items – e.g., pops, gig, corner – index a stereotypical working-class African American identity. In addition, characteristics such as r-lessness and use of the discourse marker “yaknow” index a general casual style of speech common to many varieties of English. Together, these features construct a variety similar to the “Mock Ebonics” that Ronkin and Karn (1999) found in parodies of AAVE on the internet. Through constructed dialogue of Chump #1, Chicknbot constructs his own ideology of what “ghetto language” is.

Next, we must consider how these features are used in the immediate interactional context. Here, they are juxtaposed with the constructed dialogue of Chump #2, who speaks a more formal register of mainstream American English, thus giving Chump #1 the situated identity as a less desirable and less qualified candidate of the two chumps. However, this interpretation can only be drawn by considering the broader discursive context of the discussion board debate, in which Chickenbot presents these two voices as part of an extended rhetorical question that presupposes shared beliefs about what “good” language is and what “ghetto” language is. In doing so, the user also reinforces the ideology that good language is not an just important factor in one’s professional life but is actually the sole prerequisite for obtaining a job and consequently, financial means for emerging from the “ghetto”.

Overall, the imagined voices in the Digg data performs a different type of indexical work than did the appropriation of comments by other users and voices from
the news link. Rather than serving as a preface to expressions of agreement, disagreement, or as an anchor for the creation of ideological alignments, the use of imagined voices in the posts of Detritus and Chicknbot draw readers into the speakers’ theories about language and education. Ideologies are constructed by having readers experience the contexts and consequences of the proposed language policy directly through encounters with imaginary speakers of different language varieties. In the first example, the reader witnesses a “typical” encounter in a Chinese restaurant with an employee who speaks limited English. This scene provides a context for Detritus to express his “grassroots ideology” English language education. Chicknbot, on the other hand, puts readers into the situation of power, as the employer that must choose between a speaker of Standard English and a speaker of “ghetto” language. This scene naturalizes Chicknbot’s view that mastery of Standard English is the only required skill for professional success while reinforcing the belief that bilingual education produces “ghetto” language speakers.

5.6. Conclusion

In this chapter, I investigated the discourse strategy of constructed dialogue and analyzed both the forms and functions it took on in the three text-types in my corpus of public discourse surrounding the media controversy over Gingrich’s speech and apology. My analysis of the newspaper coverage showed through both distributional and sequential analyses that despite an apparent adherence to the ideology of objective reporting, a close analysis of the way that Gingrich’s and other voices were appropriated...
in the newspaper coverage functioned in the construction of particular positions and identities of the people involved in the debate; it was also shown that the two Post articles diverged greatly in terms of the types of voices they incorporated and the style in which these voices were presented. The analysis of the Digg comments, on the other hand, compared the source and structural aspects of prior text appropriation and found that the construction of both “real” and “imaginary” voices served to position the speaker in relation to other participants and express particular beliefs about and ideologies of language education policy. In the discussion board context, constructions of imaginary voices also functioned as an involvement strategy, drawing the reader into the author’s view of how the language issues discussed are actually experienced in daily life.

In each of these contexts, it was noted that constructed dialogue did not function on its own but in consort with other discourse strategies, such as the strategic use of referring terms or stylized displays of outgroup language use, and also functioned in the process of stance-taking and in the positioning of Self and Other. We will take up these issues further in the next chapter, in which we consider how particular metaphors surrounding language use and education function ideologically in the three types of data.
CHAPTER 6. METAPHORS FOR LANGUAGE, EDUCATION, AND POLICY

6.1. Introduction

This chapter sets out to explore the ideological role of metaphor in the corpora of texts surrounding the media events regarding Newt Gingrich’s speech contrasting English with the language of the “ghetto” and his subsequent Spanish-language apology. I begin by introducing the reader to various definitions and theoretical frameworks surrounding the study of metaphor that have been offered in various academic disciplines. I highlight similarities and differences in these approaches to metaphor, which are related to the respective purposes and underlying assumptions about the nature and relationship between language, thought, and action. I also consider some methodological questions concerning the analysis of metaphor in language use. I then introduce the approach I take to identify and analyze metaphors in the corpora, which combines Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff and Johnson 1980) with critical and interactional sociolinguistic approaches to the study of discourse.

The first half of my analysis illustrates and examines four recurrent metaphoric themes in the Digg and newspaper data which serve as important strategies in the construal of the English language as a valuable resource and as a common currency in the national and global marketplace. Metaphors also convey peoples’ beliefs about aspects of language learning by equating the process with concrete and physical experiences. Thirdly, metaphor use in both the institutional and user-generated discourses serve in the positioning of English language learners as a social group that has an important effect on
the economic and political stability of the United States. The second part of my analysis examines the variety of ways in which textual metaphors and broader metaphoric themes are negotiated in the interactive forum provided by the Digg discussion board.

I conclude my discussion by summarizing how metaphoric language use in these texts works to index language ideologies, namely through the indexical process of imagination. I also consider the effect of the presence of multiple competing and contrasting metaphors in the data, and I suggest that metaphor is a useful tool for tracking language ideological conflict in discourses about language education and language policy.

6.2. Defining Metaphor

Definitions of metaphor have been offered in virtually every major study on the topic, and these definitions have varied along several dimensions that relate to the concomitant theoretical paradigms, assumptions, and goals of those who define the phenomenon. The study of metaphor maintains robust representation in fields as diverse as literary theory, cognitive science, rhetoric, linguistics, and media studies, so the review in this section will necessarily be selective, representing a few current major frameworks from which my approach draws.

All definitions of metaphor share a common ground in defining this trope as a phenomenon in which one object (or idea or action) is described in terms of another. There is also agreement across definitions on the basic function of metaphor, which indicates that this transference serves to highlight the similarity between the two entities
being compared. While traditional literary theory tends to focus on the surface linguistic form of metaphor, distinguishing it from similar figures of speech (e.g., simile or analogy) due to the relative implicitness of its form (Cuddon 1977, Sapir 1977), cognitive theorists tend to define metaphor in terms of the underlying cognitive process that involves constructing a relationship between concepts from distinct semantic domains (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, Turner and Fauconnier 2002).

A seemingly straightforward definition of metaphor has been offered by Knowles and Moon (2006: 3) in their introductory text to the study of metaphor: “the use of language to refer to something other than what it was originally applied to, or what it ‘literally’ means, in order to suggest some resemblance or make a connection between two things”. However, the definition is deceptively simple and contains many ambiguities, which inevitably lead to methodological problems in the analysis of metaphor. First, how do we determine the “original application” of a language form? Considering the discussion of intertextuality in Chapters 2 and 5, we might say that all language use is metaphorical to a certain extent since no utterance is completely new. Practically speaking, the attempt to uncover the meaning associated with the “original” use of a word or phrase would not only be futile, but the fruit born out of such an inquiry would lack utility in terms of its analytical force.

Another question stemming from Knowles and Moon’s definition is that of how “literal” meaning can be distinguished from other types of semantic relations. Metaphors are often conventionalized over time to the point where the figurative aspect of meaning is rendered opaque to contemporary language users. For example, one study on
metaphors for speech acts in the press (Heywood and Semino 2007) gives the example of the idiom “give advice” as an example of a metaphor for language as a concrete object that can be packaged and sent. However, such expressions – especially ones relating to language as concrete objects (cf. the “conduit metaphor” in Reddy 1979, Lakoff and Johnson 1980) – are so conventionalized in English that it would be difficult in some cases to phrase expressions more “literally”.

We can compare highly conventional metaphors for speech acts like “giving advice” to an example of a metaphorized speech act from one of the newspaper commentaries in my corpus, in which Gingrich is described as having “dropped the G-bomb” in reference to his utterance of the word “ghetto”. The metaphoricity and creativity of this usage is much more apparent than the example given by Heywood and Semino, and its use is clearly ideologically grounded (i.e. deliberate). Not only is it an instantiation of the metaphorical concept of LANGUAGE IS AN ACT OF WAR, but it also likens the utterance of the word “ghetto” to the specific event in which the U.S. dropped the atomic bomb (“A-bomb”) at the end of World War II. Additionally, this metaphor plays intertextually on popular referring terms for other profane words (e.g. “F-bomb”, “N-bomb”58). This particular example shows that the meaning derived from a metaphoric form is often polysemous, based on the various levels of comparison made between its form and both past and contemporary usages of the word.

58 “F-bomb” is often used as a euphemism for the word “fuck” and “N-bomb” is used as a euphemism for “nigger”.
Another issue that arises in Knowles and Moon’s definition of metaphor is related to how the “otherness” of the target object or idea is determined. Their definition treats otherness as categorical, but relations between the semantic domains of the referral source (the semantic domain from which the metaphor is taken) and target (the domain of the concept to which it refers) may be better thought of along a continuum of sameness-difference. In fact, metaphor is often distinguished from the related tropes of *synecdoche* (characterizing part-to-whole relations, e.g. “I could use a couple *hands*”) and *metonymy* (which describes semantically related concepts, according to Lakoff and Johnson 1980, e.g. “the *White House* issued a statement”), both of which might be categorized as dealing with medial relations of otherness. These tropes can also have important ideological functions in discourse, highlighting salient characteristics of a person or object or aggrandizing (or diminishing) the power of an institution or individual. Since the focus of this analysis is on function rather than form, it would be a mistake to preemptively exclude these figures of speech from our analysis.

Finally, the definition of metaphor presented above says nothing about the *scope* of ideas that can be compared by way of metaphor. While figurative reference to singular objects, ideas, or actions are fairly simple and straightforward examples of metaphor, what about the figurative rendering of full propositions? I contend that analogies, in which propositions are metaphorized, and even allegories, in which a narrative is metaphorized, may carry similar functions in discourse and should thus also be included in a metaphor-based analysis of language in use.
As many scholars who study metaphor in language use have noted (e.g., Cameron 2003, Lowe 2008, Musolff 2004, Santa Ana 2001), these problems in defining metaphor inevitably lead to problems in identifying, coding, and categorizing metaphor in discourse data. Despite the various difficulties that arise in developing a working definition of metaphor for the analysis of language in use, I believe it is an important discourse strategy to consider in the study of language ideology, especially due to its capacity to simultaneously highlight similarities and hide differences in the comparison of two concepts. Because my analysis of metaphoric language in the texts will focus on function (although form and variation in form will be considered), I will rely on a broad and inclusive definition that is based on the primordial definition of metaphor in Western thought, offered in Aristotle’s *Poetics* (Chapter 21): “the application of an alien name by transference either from genus to species, or from species to genus, or from species to species, or by analogy, that is, proportion.” Aristotle’s definition includes not only the strict literary definition of metaphor (“genus for genus”), but also the related figures of speech discussed above, including synecdoche, analogy, and metonymy. This flexibility will be useful in my analysis as I plan to focus on broad metaphorical themes that emerge in the data and analyze how metaphors are negotiated in interaction, serving as important framing devices in discussions about language, learners, education, and policy.

6.3. Interactional, structural, and ideological functions of metaphor

Metaphoric language has been shown to perform a variety of functions in spoken and written discourse in past research. Tannen (1989), who has analyzed the use of
various types of imagery, including metaphor, in conversation and storytelling, notes that “a major form of mutual participation in sensemaking is creating images: both by the speaker who describes or suggests an image in words, and the hearer or reader who creates an image based on that description or suggestion” (135). In this sense, metaphor functions as an involvement strategy in discourse by jointly orienting speaker and listener to a particular evaluation of a person, object, or action in interaction.

Similarly, Cameron (2007) shows how metaphors work to establish mutual evaluative orientation as well as topical continuity between speakers in interaction by examining the discourse of a reconciliation interview. She follows the way in which metaphors used by a victim of violence are appropriated by the perpetrator in a reconciliation conversation, which allows each participant to describe their own involvement and feelings toward an event that affected each of them personally, albeit in very different ways. Cameron concludes that metaphors allow for the “re-humanization of individuals away from the limited stereotypes as ‘enemy’ and offer affordances for empathic understanding of the Other” (219). This study points to the capacity of metaphor to provide a lens for the Self to view, understand, and relate to the Other in a novel way. This function will be worth considering in our analysis of metaphor in talk about Others (i.e. those who don’t speak English), as they are defined by dimensions of linguistic, national, economic, and ethno-racial difference.

Lowe (2008) has also examined aspects of interpersonal alignment that are enabled through metaphor by analyzing a very different type of data – written academic book reviews. Using van Langenhove and Harré’s (1999) theory of positioning as a
theoretical framework, Lowe examines how metaphors function in conjunction with other discourse strategies in the authoritative self-positioning of reviewers with respect to the book’s authors and to the audience reading the review. In this sense, metaphors participate in the discursive construction of power. In contrast to this view, Cameron (2003, 2008) has found that metaphors used in educational discourse can serve in the mitigation of power relations through their function as face-saving devices. She demonstrates that metaphors are used as positive politeness strategies (Brown and Levinson 1987) by teachers to encourage students, especially in response to incorrect answers in class discussions. Because the discursive establishment of power through reference form and constructed dialogue in contexts of disagreement has been shown to be a common occurrence in the newspaper and Digg corpora, it will be of use to examine how metaphor interacts with these strategies in participants’ construction of epistemic and interactional alignments in these debates.

In addition to the attested interpersonal functions of metaphor in discourse, this strategy has also been shown to play a role in the structural organization of text and talk, such as the construction of discourse coherence and the establishment of topic continuity. Johnstone (1990) examines the function of metaphor in written narrative by analyzing the evolution of local newspaper discourse covering a flood in the city of Fort Wayne. She finds that the metaphoric theme of the flood as a BATTLE emerges as the textual structure of the coverage shifts from a topic-focused reporting of events to a community narrative about the strength of the residents of Fort Wayne in the face of adversity. In a similar fashion, Keller-Cohen and Gordon (2003) have shown that metaphoric language in oral
narrative provides structural organization to individual stories by introducing and animating characters and presenting storyworld information. They also demonstrate how metaphors provide a link mediating the relevance of individual narratives to larger themes and identities in life stories through the intertextual relationships they create across several narratives told in life story interviews. This work is important as it demonstrates the ability of metaphors to connect the micro- and macro- levels of discourse structure via the process of imagery.

Drew and Holt (1998) take a conversation analytical approach to the study of metaphor, demonstrating the function of figurative language in topic transition places in talk. They find that figurative language is plays a role in such transitions by providing a summary of the topic of previous talk before participants commence a new topic. They also show that metaphors function in the establishment of agreement or alignment between speakers before transitioning to a new topic, which they discover by examining places in talk where this strategy is unsuccessful in the establishment of topic transition. In these cases, topic transitions are extended by a negotiation of and additional use of figurative language. This study is relevant to the analysis of language ideologies because it points to possibility that disagreements and contrasting beliefs about language education policy may appear in the form of extended metaphor use and metaphor negotiation, especially in the interactional Digg forum.

While the studies discussed so far have focused on the interactional and structural functions of metaphor in discourse, Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980) groundbreaking work on metaphor from a cognitive perspective effectively captures the ideological function
that metaphors play: “The very systematicity that allows us to comprehend one aspect of a concept in terms of another… will necessarily hide other aspects of the concept” (10).

In other words, when metaphors bring to the forefront a similarity between two entities or processes, they cover up other important distinctions between the two, and they hide nuances and details of the object being depicted. This idea recalls Irvine and Gal’s work on language ideology (2000), especially what they refer to as the semiotic process of “erasure”, whereby an ideology “simplifies the sociolinguistic field” by imagining a group as homogenous and disregarding or explaining away variation within the community (Irvine 2001: 33-34; see Chapter 2 for a full discussion of Gal and Irvine’s framework).

Lakoff (1996, 2002) has elaborated on the connection between metaphor and ideology in his research on how metaphors serve as framing devices in American politics. Lakoff describes the dominant metaphors underlying conservative and progressive rhetoric about the role of government in American society, in particular the NATION AS FAMILY metaphor that is frequently evoked in media discourses about government agendas and policies. He argues that conservatives have successfully framed many of these issues by evoking a “strict father” model of the NATION AS FAMILY concept, and discusses possibilities for reframing these discourses from a progressive “nurturant parent” model. Lakoff illustrates dominant metaphors in politics, ranging from simple terms like “tax relief”, which frames taxes as an affliction, to public statements such as

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59 Lakoff notes that his use of the term “progressive” instead of “liberal” is a deliberate reframing of the moral values and ideological agenda espoused by those commonly referred to as “liberal” to frame their sense of morality in a more positive, forward-looking light.
President George W. Bush’s 2004 reference to “needing a permission slip to go to war”, which likens the idea of seeking UN approval to invade Iraq to a child seeking parental permission to go on a school trip. Lakoff explains how such text-level metaphors reinforce certain conceptual metaphors that influence the way people think by constructing commonsense ideas about the role of government in social life and on the world stage.

Subsequent research on the ideological role of metaphor has applied Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) to the critical analysis of media discourse, including issues surrounding immigration and language policy (Chilton 2004, Hart 2008, Johnson 2005, Musolff 2004, Santa Ana 2001, Woolard 1989). Specifically relevant to the present study is Woolard’s (1989) work, which examines news coverage and campaign material surrounding San Francisco’s Proposition O, a 1983 ballot measure that advocated for amending the Voting Rights Act so that election materials in any language other than English would no longer be required in the county. She traces the recurrent themes such as “waste”, “logic”, “national unity”, and “bossism” that emerge in pro-Proposition O discourse and highlights the unstated premises that enable the inferential chain connecting these themes with ideas about English language proficiency and language legislation. Woolard notes that the “metonymic structuring of the ballot issue was sometimes taken to the extreme of associating foreign languages with illegal aliens and fraudulent balloting, thus giving the languages even greater symbolic freight” and concludes that her analysis reveals a “recurring metaphor of imprisonment in the presentation of bossism and its relation to language” (273). This study demonstrates the
power of metaphor in the construal of beliefs about language and the effects of language policy at a local level. Furthermore, it outlines some dominant metaphors that resurface in the discourses in my corpora dealing with language policy on a national level.

Otto Santa Ana has performed an in-depth application of CMT and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to media discourse on immigration in his (2001) monograph, Brown Tide Rising. The title of his book captures dominant media images of immigrants, who are portrayed as dark, dangerous waters threatening to wash out American society. Santa Ana performs a corpus analysis of the Los Angeles Times coverage of several anti-immigration measures in California, coding and classifying over 4,000 metaphors, arriving at a limited number of dominant conceptual metaphors, including those depicting immigrants as animals, disease, intruders, and dangerous waters that disrupt the nation, which is often represented via metaphors as a body, a house, or fabric. Similar metaphors are used to describe languages other than English and their effect on the nation in the debates in the corpora analyzed in this study, for instance, that they “dilute” American culture, that they “invade” American territory, and they destroy the “health” of the economy.

One shortcoming of many critical studies on metaphor in media discourse (e.g., Heywood and Semino 2007, Johnson 2005, Santa Ana 2002, Woolard 1989) is that in attempting to quantify and/or summarize dominant metaphorical themes, they tend to decontextualize actual textual metaphors as they appear in language use. While quantitative approaches are useful in uncovering general themes in large corpora, they are also problematic because these methods rely on the delimitation of metaphor boundaries
and the necessarily subjective construal of metaphor categories on the part of the researcher. As scholars of metaphor in language use (e.g. Cameron 2003, Low 2008, Musolff 2004) have emphasized, metaphors are imbued with meaning based on both the immediate and larger discursive context in which they occur, and different aspects of context may lead one to categorize the metaphor in a particular way. To give an example of how the process of metaphor analysis works, let us consider a hypothetical example of a textual metaphor: “immigrants arrive in this country like hurricanes.” Consideration of the immediately subsequent linguistic context might lead one to categorize this metaphor in a variety ways. If the following text indicates that “they drown cities and destroy the country’s infrastructure”, one would likely categorize the textual metaphor as an instantiation of the IMMIGRANTS ARE DESTRUCTIVE WATERS concept. However, if the immediately subsequent text reads, “they always come in early September just before the harvest season”, the metaphor might be categorized as IMMIGRATION IS CYCLICAL. If both contexts can be found, the metaphor might be included in both categories. In prior studies that focus on uncovering dominant metaphors, researchers are rarely explicit about the categorization process, which leaves their conclusions about the relative “dominance” of particular concepts subject to scrutiny.

6.4. A critical-interactional approach to metaphor

In order to track how metaphors play a role in the thematic structuring of the debates while at the same time attending to their interactional function in the construction of language ideology, I combine the critical approaches taken by Santa Ana and other
critical studies of metaphor (i.e. by considering recurring metaphoric themes) while also taking into account the interactional and pragmatic aspects of metaphor in language use (i.e. analysis of their interactional and discourse-structural functions). I also make use of the analytic tools of interactional sociolinguistics, considering the function that metaphors perform as contextualization cues allowing for conversational inference (Gumperz 1982), their use as framing devices (Goffman 1974), and their role the positioning of Self and Other (van Langenhove and Harré 1999) in these debates about language. This approach is similar to other approaches to metaphor that take context into account, including the “pragmatic” approach (Searle 1979) the “discourse” approach (Cameron 2003, see also Musolff 2004) and the “applied linguistic” approach (Zanotto, Cameron, and Cavalcanti 2008).

In addition to the problem of categorizing metaphor in discourse data, there is also the related problem of identifying metaphors in spoken and written discourse. In response to this problem, a group of metaphor researchers known as the Pragglejaz Group has developed a procedure (Pragglejaz Group 2007, Steen 2007) for identifying metaphor in language use, which I follow in locating metaphors in my own data:

1. Read the entire text–discourse to establish a general understanding of the meaning.

2. Determine the lexical units in the text–discourse.

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60 Searle’s pragmatic approach, which is based on a three-step contextual interpretation process, is often criticized by metaphor theorists whose frameworks rely on cognitive perspectives (e.g. Santa Ana 2002, Steen 2007). Critics of Searle’s approach often cite Gibbs’ (1994) experimental studies, which show that it does not take significantly longer for hearer/readers’ to process metaphoric language compared to literal language, as evidence against Searle’s pragmatic account (since in theory, a three-step decoding process should take longer to process than a one-step process). However, as my approach focuses on the social-interactional function rather than the cognitive processing of metaphor, Searle’s pragmatic account, which is based on Grice’s (1975) cooperative maxims, remains relevant to my analysis.
3. (a) For each lexical unit in the text, establish its meaning in context, that is, how it applies to an entity, relation, or attribute in the situation evoked by the text (contextual meaning). Take into account what comes before and after the lexical unit.

  (b) For each lexical unit, determine if it has a more basic contemporary meaning in other contexts than the one in the given context. For our purposes, basic meanings tend to be:
  
  • More concrete [what they evoke is easier to imagine, see, hear, feel, smell, and taste];
  • Related to bodily action;
  • More precise (as opposed to vague);
  • Historically older;
  • Basic meanings are not necessarily the most frequent meanings of the lexical unit.

  (c) If the lexical unit has a more basic current–contemporary meaning in other contexts than the given context, decide whether the contextual meaning contrasts with the basic meaning but can be understood in comparison with it.

4. If yes, mark the lexical unit as metaphorical.

(Pragglejaz Group 2007: 3)

While this procedure still leaves plenty of room for interpretation on the part of the researcher (e.g., the most “basic” meaning of any word in contemporary usage is subject to the individual experience of the hearer/reader), it is useful in that it judges the metaphoricity of a term based on a contrast between its observed contextual usage and expectations based on patterns of use in other contexts. In addition, it allows for a broad interpretation of a “lexical unit”, which may range from a simple noun denoting a singular object or person to an entire phrase conveying a more complex proposition.

I restrict my analysis of metaphor in the corpora of texts to an examination of those that make reference to language (in general or specific language varieties), language education (including its goals and products), and language/education policy (bilingual or English-only). I begin by summarizing four metaphoric themes that emerged in the identification process, which were instantiated by a multitude of textual metaphors containing similar semantic cross-domain mappings and that appeared to
function as persuasive strategies in context. The metaphors considered tended to position people, languages, and policies in particular ways to convince readers of the writer’s own beliefs about language education and policy. I refrain from quantification in this section because I recognize that the determination of metaphoric usage and the classification of metaphors into semantic categories or themes are both ultimately subjective practices, unlike the classification of referring terms and constructed dialogue, which, as we saw in previous chapters, was based on structural and grammatical categories. I also discuss the frequent use of extended metaphors and analogies for the experiences of immigrants in the Digg texts, as these discourse strategies represent a unique cross between metaphoric and narrative techniques for putting forth beliefs and constructing ideologies about language education policy in the United States. Finally, I look at several examples of metaphor negotiation in the Digg texts and outline several ways in which metaphors put forth by participants are reinforced, recontextualized, or overtly problematized by others, concluding that metaphor is an interactional achievement and that this discourse strategy lends itself to a conflict model of language ideology in metalinguistic discourse.

6.5. Common metaphoric themes

Perhaps one of the reasons that metaphoric language use in the data is so common is the fact that Newt Gingrich’s controversial statement actually consisted of a metaphor itself: When he contrasted English, “the language of prosperity”, with “the language of living in a ghetto”, Gingrich foregrounded a complex nexus of metaphorical themes that served as fodder for the reactions appearing the newspaper texts and Digg discussions.
regarding his position on language policy. First, by labeling English the “language of prosperity”, Gingrich presented the dominant language of the United States in terms of an economic metaphor, that is, as a language representing not just symbolic but also actual financial capital. He contrasts this language with “the language of living in a ghetto”, using a metaphorical place to frame speakers of non-English languages as people of limited financial means.

However, Gingrich’s reference to the “ghetto” contains a connotation that extends beyond the economic frame of reference. If we consider the word “ghetto” in its historical sense, in which it referred to isolated places in European cities where Jews were forced to live, the word carries connotations of systemic segregation and discrimination based on ethnic, racial, and religious identity. In current usage, the word “ghetto” maintains these connotations but has transformed in terms of the specific ethnic and racial groups to which it tends to refer. Rather than indexing groups of Jewish descent, the word is most often employed in reference to predominantly African-American or Latino inner-city neighborhoods (e.g. New York City’s Harlem and Spanish Harlem are often referred to as “ghettos”). In all of these cases, the word emphasizes social disenfranchisement and isolation, themes that reappear via various types of textual metaphor in the press and Digg data.

Other metaphors that emerge in the data are not directly related to Gingrich’s speech, but have been discussed in past critical research on metaphor in the media. For instance, some metaphors discussed by Santa Ana (2002) – IMMIGRATION AS DANGEROUS WATERS, IMMIGRANTS AS INVADERS - in his analysis of the *Los Angeles Times* coverage
of immigration reform in the early 1990s in California occasionally appear in this data. Additionally, themes discussed by Woolard (1989) in the coverage of Proposition O in San Francisco (which proposed to do away with multilingual ballots) surface in this corpus, including the idea that spending tax dollars on anything that is not conducted in English is a WASTE, and the idea that the English language is symbolic of NATIONAL UNITY. Additionally, metaphors analyzed by Johnson (2005) in the Arizona’s Proposition 203 (“English for the Children”) campaign surfaced in my data, including references to language minority students as VICTIMS and English as a KEY TO THE AMERICAN DREAM.

Below I discuss four common metaphoric themes observed in the newspaper and Digg corpus, illustrating each with five text-level metaphors from the data (two from the newspaper coverage; three from the Digg discussion). While other metaphoric themes did recur in the data, these themes were most representative of the way in which institutional discourses on language and education policy (both in Gingrich’s speech and in language policy debates in general) are appropriated by and manipulated in the construction of individuals’ beliefs about the nature of language acquisition and the place of English language learners in American society. The four themes I discuss are: 1) LANGUAGE AS AN ECONOMIC ASSET OR DEFICIT; 2) LANGUAGE LEARNING AS MOVING FORWARD; 3) EDUCATION AS SINKING OR SWIMMING; and 4) NON-ENGLISH LANGUAGES AS A NATIONAL SECURITY THREAT.

The illustrations of each metaphoric theme are categorized in tables throughout the chapter, in which I also indicate the subject of the metaphor, provide a contextual gloss of the metaphor, and summarize the speaker’s stance as indicated by the language
in and immediately surrounding the metaphor. This organization of the data serves to highlight that within each metaphoric theme, a variety of concepts are subject to metaphoric rendering at the textual level, and similar metaphors are used to put forth divergent stances toward language education policy. I also discuss how both textual metaphors and their underlying themes serve to provide an ideational and ideological structure to the language debates represented in these texts.

The first recurrent metaphoric theme I discuss relates most closely to Gingrich’s NFRW speech contrasting the language of “prosperity” and the language of the “ghetto”, which foregrounded the cross-domain semantic mapping between the concept of speaking a language and the concept of economic assets and deficits. Let us examine several examples of particular textual metaphors that have been categorized under this general theme:

**Table 6.1. Textual metaphors for LANGUAGE AS AN ECONOMIC ASSET OR DEFICIT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Textual Metaphor</th>
<th>Subject of metaphor</th>
<th>Contextual meaning</th>
<th>Speaker’s stance toward policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12-LA-1</td>
<td>[Bilingual education students] grow up biculturally shortchanged</td>
<td>Bilingual education students</td>
<td>Students don’t grow up with equivalent competencies in both their native language and English</td>
<td>Anti-bilingual education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-SP-c</td>
<td>“Why should any nation limit its horizons to a single language when the global economy rewards those who can accommodate diversity?” (Reporter quoting James Crawford)</td>
<td>The global economy</td>
<td>Nations who foster bilingualism through language and education policies are more successful at a global level.</td>
<td>Crawford: Pro-bilingual education Reporter: in agreement with Crawford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diggiz4Kids</td>
<td>The English language is the</td>
<td>The English</td>
<td>English is used as a</td>
<td>Pro-English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

61 The two examples from newspapers are listed first in each chart, and the code in the source column corresponds to the codes given to the articles in Appendix A. Following the newspaper examples are three examples from Digg users in each chart, who are referred to in the “Source” column by user name.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>currency of communications</th>
<th>language</th>
<th>lingua franca in the global professional world</th>
<th>only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drmangrum</td>
<td>Our education system <em>is strained to the max</em>, and mostly due to the mentality that just because [immigrants] are in America they should get everything an American does</td>
<td>The American educational system</td>
<td>Too many federal resources are spent on educational programs that aid immigrants</td>
<td>Anti-bilingual education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korvan</td>
<td>[Talking like a rapper] is not likely to get you a job as anything <em>other</em> than a rapper – and there aren’t many openings in that particular job market</td>
<td>“Ghetto” language</td>
<td>Speaking “ghetto” language is not useful for success in the professional world</td>
<td>Pro-(standard) English only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The metaphors in this chart, much like Gingrich’s statement about “the language of prosperity” and “the language of living in a ghetto” – focus on the economic benefits of (standard) English, at the individual, national, and/or global levels. Notice that only one of these examples (5-SP-c) presents multilingualism as beneficial, and this excerpt from a *Seattle Post* commentary is quoting James Crawford, a language education specialist and vocal advocate and spokesperson for English language learners and bilingual education. In fact, this ECONOMIC ASSET metaphor was the only one found in the entire data set that expressed a pro-bilingual stance.

This particular metaphor also stands out from many of the other ECONOMIC metaphors because it places the issue at the nexus of a national-global level of importance: “the global economy rewards those who can accommodate diversity” frames multilingualism (i.e. “diversity”) as an asset to nations that promote it (i.e. “*those who can accommodate* diversity”) in a globalizing world. Another textual metaphor which places language on a global level can be found in the statement made by Diggis4kids,
who states that “The English language is the currency of communications”. Notice, however, that this Digg user employs the same metaphorical theme of language as an ECONOMIC ASSET to promote a view that is diametrically opposed to the view put forth by Crawford in the Seattle Post article. Diggis4kids emphasizes through this metaphor that English is valuable as the dominant lingua franca at a global level, and that the symbolic capital associated with speaking the dominant language translates to financial capital.

The remainder of the examples illustrating the ECONOMIC ASSET OR DEFICIT theme frame issues surrounding language education policy within the borders of the United States, expressing beliefs about the importance of speaking English either as it relates to personal economic success or the economic well-being of the nation. For instance, one writer describes bilingual education students as “economically and culturally shortchanged” (12-LA-I), while another describes the American educational system as “strained to the max” (Drmangrum), or financially wrung out, by bilingual education programs. Another Digg user declares that speaking “the language of living in a ghetto”, which she refers to as speaking “like a rapper”, is not likely to ensure professional success, and consequently, one can presume, financial means for emerging from the ghetto. This last metaphor seems to take two indexical potentials of the word “ghetto” described earlier – as relating to either economically-based or race-based isolation – and blends them into one through this textual metaphor. Through this example, we see that metaphors not only serve as useful strategies for expressing one’s beliefs about language policy, but through their polysemous nature, they allow speakers and writers to connect other types of ideologies in the expression of language ideologies.
Let us now examine some examples of textual metaphors in the second theme, which summarizes textual metaphors for *LANGUAGE LEARNING AS MOVING FORWARD*:

### Table 6.2. Textual metaphors for  *LANGUAGE LEARNING AS MOVING FORWARD*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Textual Metaphor</th>
<th>Subject of metaphor</th>
<th>Contextual meaning</th>
<th>Speaker’s stance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6-CT-r</td>
<td>[Students in bilingual education] <em>don’t fall behind</em> while mastering <em>English.</em></td>
<td>Students in bilingual programs</td>
<td>Students continue to learn other school subjects while learning <em>English</em></td>
<td>neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-AT-I</td>
<td>Bilingual education <em>is the way out of the ghetto</em></td>
<td>Bilingual education</td>
<td>Bilingual education allows students to overcome isolated situation that results from not speaking <em>English</em></td>
<td>Pro-bilingual education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ray-tibbitts</td>
<td>…allowing [students] <em>to lean on the crutch of bilingual education</em>…cripples the students’ capabilities to reach the real potential…</td>
<td>Bilingual education</td>
<td>Bilingual education, as a means of support, does not allow students to succeed in school</td>
<td>Anti-bilingual education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wonder-kind</td>
<td>A variety of languages is a <em>stumbling block</em> for the majority of people</td>
<td>Multilingualism</td>
<td>Multilingualism impedes progress for the monolingual majority</td>
<td>Pro-English-only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chubby-duck</td>
<td>[Bilingual education] can make sure [students] stay focused on school as a whole, and when their language skills <em>catch up</em> that they haven’t <em>fallen behind</em> elsewhere.</td>
<td>Students in bilingual programs</td>
<td>Bilingual education allows students to learn other subjects in their native language while they are learning <em>English</em></td>
<td>Pro-bilingual education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As we see in Table 6.2, the textual metaphors that instantiate this metaphoric theme range from extremely conventional to moderately creative. In fact, the use of idioms such as “falling behind” and “getting ahead” in reference to work or educational progress are so commonplace in English that is difficult to word their contextual meaning in non-metaphoric terms. These metaphors also represent part of a larger *LIFE IS A JOURNEY* metaphor that has been identified in prior research on metaphor in both the cognitive and interactional traditions (Cameron 2007, Keller-Cohen and Gordon 2003, Lakoff and Johnson 1980). Notice, however, that both these idioms not only frame educational
progress as moving forward, but they frame school as a race. This framing device constructs educational achievement as progress that is measured in comparison to either other students: in order to “get ahead”, you must beat other students in the race for achievement, and if not, you will “fall behind” other students competing to reach the finish line first. While this metaphor is extremely common in both institutional and lay discourses on education (e.g. many programs “track” students), it is by no means the only way to conceptualize the philosophy of primary and secondary education. 62

Other metaphors that fall within the theme the language learning as forward movement include references to language learning (either in English-only or bilingual programs) as a tool that aids forward movement, or in the case of Wonderkind, as an obstacle (“stumbling block”) that impedes forward movement. Raytibbitts provides an interesting blend of metaphors in his statement regarding bilingual education: “allowing [students] to lean on the crutch of bilingual education…cripples the students’ capabilities to reach the real potential”. In this statement he combines the textual metaphors of bilingual education as a tool that both aids (i.e. crutch) and impedes (i.e. cripples) students from walking. One might say at first glance that Raytibbitts’ comment is contradictory in this sense, but we must keep in mind that the ideological potential of metaphor lies in its ability to force reader/hearers to construct a coherent relationship connecting the metaphoric image to the concept that it is used to describe. Thus, when we read Raytibbitts’ metaphor, which creates an image of a crutch as a crippling device,

62 For instance, an alternative conceptualization of schooling characterize school as a place that fosters the intellectual development of individual students; alternative metaphors might characterize students as balls of clay that are sculpted into works of art rather than runners racing for the finish line.
we may interpret the metaphor as follows: If someone uses a crutch as extra support for walking, they stop relying on their own musculature. As a result, their legs atrophy to a point where they cannot walk without the crutch. In order to derive a coherent interpretation of this metaphor as it relates to language education, we must first posit that non-English speaking students are perfectly capable of succeeding in school with no instruction in their native language. Working from this premise, bilingual education can be seen as an unnecessary aid that disincentives students’ reliance on their English language abilities. In sum, through the use of the *crutch* metaphor, Raytibbits’ constructs not only a distinct ideology regarding the *purpose* of bilingual education, but also one relating to the *competencies* that non-English speaking students bring to these programs.

The textual metaphors in the MOVING FORWARD theme might be classified as what Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 14-21) refer to as “orientational metaphors” because they categorize abstract concepts and experiences as grounded in the physical world so that we can visualize them as concretely anchored in time and space. Another metaphorical theme that emerged in the textual metaphors relating to language and language learning in the newspaper and Digg texts that might be categorized as an “orientational” metaphor is the idea of success and failure in school as *SINKING AND SWIMMING*. Consider some examples of textual metaphors that can be categorized by this theme in the table below:
### Table 6.3. Textual metaphors for SINKING AND SWIMMING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Textual Metaphor</th>
<th>Subject of metaphor</th>
<th>Contextual meaning</th>
<th>Speaker’s stance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6-WP-I</td>
<td>Research shows that modern bilingual education accelerates the learning of English, by using the child’s home language as a springboard</td>
<td>Student’s native language</td>
<td>Bilingual education uses the student’s native language to foster English development and educational progress</td>
<td>Pro-bilingual education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-SP-c</td>
<td>[Gingrich’s] shtick on bilingual education may not be his biggest policy issue, but it is the most telling about the <em>shipwreck</em> [Gingrich] proposes</td>
<td>Gingrich’s English-only policy</td>
<td>Gingrich’s stance on bilingual education is representative of his overall campaign platform, which is doomed to fail</td>
<td>Anti-English only, Anti-Gingrich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chubby-duck</td>
<td>Why not <em>clamp an anchor around their leg and force them to swim</em>? Teaching bilingually when [students] start off can make sure they stay focused on school as a whole…</td>
<td>English-only policy</td>
<td>Placing non-English speaking students in English-only classes impedes their progress</td>
<td>Pro-bilingual education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aardvaroo</td>
<td>Remember those <em>flotation devices</em>?… Guess what happens in reality if you <em>stick a pin in those devices and they deflate</em>? You drown.</td>
<td>Bilingual education (shortcomings)</td>
<td>When students are taken out of bilingual classes, they do not have the English skills required to succeed in mainstream classes and American society.</td>
<td>Anti-bilingual education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notioste</td>
<td>…<em>submerging</em> students in English classes is a pretty good way to achieve [the goal of English fluency for immigrant students].</td>
<td>English-only education</td>
<td>Placing students in an English-only educational environment is more effective than bilingual education</td>
<td>Pro-English only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These texts draw on the conventionalized metaphor for the immersion model of education as the “sink or swim” method of learning English. However, the many of these metaphors are rather creative, drawing on various swimming aids (e.g. flotation devices, springboards) and obstacles (e.g. shipwrecks, anchors) to create vivid images of the functions and effects of bilingual and English-only language education policies. These orientational metaphors are similar to the metaphors discussed in the LANGUAGE.
LEARNING AS MOVING FORWARD theme in their construction of progress as concrete movement in space, although instead of grounding educational progress in a forward-backward orientation, they function via an up-down orientation through their references to staying afloat (up) and sinking (down).

Although at the broader level of the SWIMMING AND SINKING metaphoric theme, the orientation of “up” in relation to the water is positive, as it indicates swimming and success, and “down” is negative, indicating sinking and failure, we see at the textual level of actual metaphors in use, this discourse strategy produces a variety of contextual meanings. For instance, the letter written to the Washington Post (6-WP-I) uses the metaphor of a “springboard”, which serves to frame students’ performances in school as a diving competition. By diving off a board rather than the concrete surface surrounding a pool, a diver gains height and space in which to perform his or her acrobatic tricks before landing in the water. Likewise (according to the author of this letter), a student in a bilingual program may use the medium of his/her native language to perform academic acrobatics in other school subjects.

Chubbyduck, who expresses a similar stance on bilingual education in the Digg discussion, uses the metaphor of clamping an anchor around a student’s leg to describe the English-only policy proposed by Gingrich. Chubbyduck’s statement is framed as an ironic rhetorical question, using a syntactic construction containing the negative interrogative “Why not clamp an anchor around their leg and force them to swim?”, which usually carries the pragmatic function of expressing the speaker’s stance of agreement with the proposition. However, it can be assumed that Chubbyduck does not
actually want students to sink or fail in school, and the negative question can instead be read as a sarcastic response to prior Digg users who have expressed positions in favor of English immersion, especially those who have used SINK OR SWIM metaphors in their own arguments. In this sense, the anchor metaphor can be seen as an ideological strategy that subversively revoices a pro-English-only position in order to expose the potential negative effects of this policy.

In fact, the metaphor of swimming aids and impediments is taken up later in the Digg texts in an argument between Chubbyduck and Aardvaroo and becomes a site for the overt negotiation of language ideologies. An extract from Aardvaroo’s comment containing a SWIMMING metaphor is illustrated in the table above: “Remember those flotation devices?… Guess what happens in reality if you stick a pin in those devices and they deflate? You drown.” Aardvaroo refers to the flotation devices that children use when learning to swim (often called “swimmies” or “water wings”), noting that if these aids are taken away, the novice swimmer will drown. This metaphor functions similarly to the crutch metaphor in Raytibbitts’ Digg comment that discussed earlier, as it evokes the image of a particular learning tool but frames it as an impediment to learning to accomplish the task at hand independently. For Aardvaroo, bilingual education is tantamount to relying on an external device to stay afloat rather than using it as a stepping stool to swimming independently. This particular metaphor is negotiated at length in the Digg discussion, and the full argument between Chubbyduck and Aardvaroo will be addressed in the last section of this chapter.
Another particularly salient metaphoric theme that appeared in the newspaper and Digg data was that of NON-ENGLISH LANGUAGES AS A THREAT, especially in relation to national security. If we consider that in several of the newspaper reports, Gingrich is quoted as having referred to bilingual education as “posing long-term dangers to the fabric of our nation” in a 1995 speech as background information relating to his NFRW speech, the frequent emergence of this theme is not surprising. Let us examine some instances of textual metaphors that evoked this theme in the newspaper and Digg data:
Table 6.4. Textual metaphors for NON-ENGLISH LANGUAGES AS A NATIONAL SECURITY THREAT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Textual Metaphor</th>
<th>Subject of metaphor</th>
<th>Contextual meaning</th>
<th>Speaker’s stance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6-US-c</td>
<td>It is xenophobic to view Spanish as a threat to American society.</td>
<td>Those with anti-Spanish sentiment</td>
<td>Those who view Spanish as problematic in American society are xenophobic</td>
<td>Anti-English only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-SP-c</td>
<td>[Gingrich] wants to turn schoolchildren and newcomers who want to become part of our fabric into villains and victims.</td>
<td>Students and immigrants</td>
<td>Gingrich is further dividing the nation politically by proposing extreme policies</td>
<td>Anti-English-only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robda-zomba</td>
<td>We’ve all had the moment where we’re in a mall and overhear a mom and her kids carrying on in Spanish and that sudden, irrational red light that goes on with a ridiculous sense of being invaded</td>
<td>English speakers (who witness the speaking of Spanish in their local environment)</td>
<td>English speakers feel like their local environments are occupied by outsiders when they hear Spanish spoken around them.</td>
<td>Doesn’t express stance toward policy, but believes idea of ‘threat’ is not as serious as Gingrich poses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thedp-show</td>
<td>Bilingualism is not a threat to the nation by any means.</td>
<td>Bilingualism</td>
<td>Bilingualism does not imperil national unity</td>
<td>Pro-bilingual education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name-uofm</td>
<td>Malicious bilingual schools… are just those wacky madrassas</td>
<td>Bilingual schools</td>
<td>Bilingual schools breed students with unpatriotic ideologies</td>
<td>Ironic revoicing of Gingrich’s statement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If we observe the range of subjects metaphorized in this chart, we see that the relationship between language and the concept of a security threat is constructed in a multitude of ways in the data. Furthermore, many of the examples displayed here contain intertextual references to Gingrich’s particular statement regarding bilingualism posing “long-term dangers to the fabric of our nation”. For instance, the author of the Seattle Post commentary (5-SP-c) comments on the perlocutionary effect of Gingrich’s statement, noting that it casts a negative image on immigrants and speakers of other languages in the U.S. by framing them as “villains and victims”. In this comment, the author also makes reference to “newcomers and school children who want to become part of our fabric”,

198
using the same NATION AS TEXTILE metaphor employed by Gingrich in his 1995 comments on bilingualism. This interweaving of metaphors creates a “fabric” of texts itself by taking metaphoric themes originally posited by institutional voices and recasting them in a new configuration with other metaphors to create contesting ideologies of language.

Namuofm also does this in his Digg response by taking the theme of NON-ENGLISH LANGUAGES AS A THREAT and revoicing it by sarcastically referring to bilingual schools as “madrassas.” This textual metaphor is especially interesting because it recontextualizes the metaphoric theme that emerged in Gingrich’s 1995 speech and recontextualizes it in a specifically post-9-11 discourse of national security. The word “madrassa”, which literally means “school” in Arabic, has acquired a negative connotation in post-9-11 media discourses through its frequent use to refer to Islamist extremist schools, which are commonly metaphorized in the media as breeding grounds for terrorists. If we compare this contextualization of the idea of a THREAT to the sociopolitical context in which Gingrich’s statement was originally made, during a time when discourses on bilingualism focused chiefly on the economic impact of immigration (Santa Ana 2002), we see that this particular metaphoric strategy has the power to transport discourses about language across time periods. Thus, the ideological capacity of metaphor as a discourse strategy not only connects micro- and macro-levels of social interaction and structure, but also connects language use across temporally defined broader cultural discourses.
Namuofm continues to evoke a post-9-11 discourse later in his comment by making reference to the Department of Homeland Security, again in an ironic manner: “Remember if you hear/see a child speaking a foreign language, walk away and call your local Dept of Homeland Security agent.” Namuofm’s comment and use of these strategies serves a variety of functions in this context: the textual metaphors not only ridicule Gingrich and his position on language and education policy, but they also construct a broader commentary on dominant discourses in the contemporary media which have appropriated metaphoric themes connecting speakers of other languages with terrorism.

It is important to note that metaphors containing specifically post-9-11 discourses appear in other thematic categories in the data as well. For example, one user responds to Diggiz4Kids’s reference to English as the “currency of communications” (an ECONOMIC ASSET metaphor discussed earlier) by commenting that countries that do not trade in U.S. dollars are declared by the U.S. government “part of the axis of evil.” Another user talks about the importance of teaching “critical languages” (i.e. those declared by the government to be important in maintaining national security, such as Arabic, Pashto, and Urdu) in a comment supporting bilingual education. It is thus evident that interdiscursive strategies work in consort with metaphoric strategies in order to frame individual and collective perspectives on the real world relevance, importance, and effects of language education policy.

63 If this discussion took place in a pre 9-11 setting, one would likely reference the INS (Immigration and Naturalization Services) instead of the Department of Homeland Security, which was not established until after the 2001 terrorist attacks on the U.S.
In summary, these four metaphoric themes serve to structure the debate ideologically by conceptualizing language education and non-English languages in particular ways, forming a concrete level of experience through which writers and readers of the newspaper articles and Digg discussions can imagine the complex situation of immigration, multilingualism, and formal language education in the United States. It was observed that the SINKING AND SWIMMING and MOVING FORWARD textual metaphors tend to be used in the construction of ideologies about the effects of language education policies on individual students, who may be either helped (by having a “springboard” or “flotation devices”) or hindered (by a “shipwreck”, an “anchor” clamped to their feet, or the reliance on a “crutch”) by the policies being discussed. On the other hand, the textual metaphors that refer to languages as ECONOMIC ASSETS OR DEFICITS and NATIONAL SECURITY THREATS tended to be used in the expression of ideologies about how these policies affect the social and political systems of the United States government, occasionally positioning the status of nation on a global level as well.

6.6. Extended metaphor and analogic narratives

In addition to the textual metaphors discussed above, which were usually expressed in a single noun phrase, verb phrase, or proposition, many instances of extended metaphors and analogic narratives can be found in the Digg data. Many of these analogies compare the idea of immigrating to the United States and learning English to emigrating to another country and learning the language spoken there. However, as was shown in the examples discussed above, users often use the same
metaphoric theme to express opposing views on language education. Let us examine a few examples of analogic strategies being employed at a higher level of discourse structure. In the following excerpt, Digg user Asian1 compares the idea of moving to the United States to moving to other places with undesirable climates:

Why immigrate to a country whose language, culture and general environment you don't like? It's like moving to Antarctica while complaining you don't like cold weather or moving to Death Valley while complaining you don't like the heat.

Through this analogy, Asian1 compares the language spoken in a particular country to its meteorological climate. This analogy is particularly powerful in that it constructs a social climate – that is, one that is constructed through human interaction, institutional structures, and patterns of social and political dominance – to a natural climate that is determined by factors outside of human control64. The analogy constructed by Asian1 performs what Gal and Irvine (2000) have referred to as the process of “iconization” in their model of language ideology by constructing the linguistic representation of the social order as a manifestation of natural order. In addition, Asian1 also performs the ideological process of “erasure” in his analogic argument by assuming that immigrants who come to the United States do so because they desire to live somewhere pleasant, whereas in reality, many emigrate in order to escape religious, social, or political persecution in their native countries.

Other examples of analogic arguments in the newspaper and Digg data contain hypothetical statements about moving to a different country and learning the language there. In some cases, the arguments made in these statements become sites for overt

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64 Although it should be noted that scientific research has begun emphasize the human impact on climate change in recent years.
negotiation of metaphor use. Take the following interaction between Donatj and Skew009:

**Donatj:**
Exactly, I wouldn’t go to Sweden and expect my children to be taught in English.

**Skew009:**
To Donatj,
If you went to Sweden then you actually WOULD expect your children to learn English since it is required for all students there.

In this exchange, Donatj expresses his agreement with a prior user’s stance on English-only education in the United States by positing a hypothetical situation in which he moves to Sweden with his family. Through this analogy, he puts himself in the shoes of an immigrant and expresses that he would not expect his children to be taught in their native language. This strategy allows Donatj to put forth his own beliefs about what immigrants in the U.S. should expect from the American school system – that is, that their children will be taught in English only. However, Skew009 responds to Donatj’s comment by contesting that his expectations regarding schooling in Sweden would not be met, since all students are required to study English there.

Skew009’s response to Donatj carries several functions in this exchange. Interactionally, she opposes the stance taken by Donatj by pointing out his faulty reasoning. At an ideological level, her response can be seen as an ambivalent act that both reinforces the value of bilingual education by reminding Donatj that other countries promote the learning of multiple languages, while at the same time this act upholds the dominance of the English language by reinforcing its world-wide status. This exchange
demonstrates the complexity of how metaphors can produce multiple and contrasting meanings when considered in their immediate and broader discourse contexts.

Skew009 is not the only Digg user to express ambivalent language ideologies in the Digg discussion. Both ideologies present in her response – one relating to world-wide dominance of English and the other relating to the importance of bilingualism - are upheld in comments by other Digg users who compare the situation of the United States with other countries. However, through these comparisons, many of the issues central to the debate on language education policy in the United States are ignored. For example, Digg user Heavensblade23 notes that “almost every western country in the world teaches a second language in addition to the primary native language” in his post, expressing a position that favors bilingualism, but which focuses on the teaching of second (foreign) languages rather than teaching other subjects in the students’ native language along with the dominant language of the country. Another user, Comatose51, draws a comparison between the U.S. and the European Union, noting that:

Workers [in the EU] are not as mobile as American [sic] because they don’t have an [sic] universal language. The closest thing they have to it is, ironically, English. A Texan, such as myself, can easily move to California with no problem. The average French will have a hard time moving to Sweden and working there. We are lucky to have one language that unites all of the vast area that is the US and we should encourage that.

In this post, Comatose51 opposes the stances expressed by other Digg users (such as Heavensblade23) who comment on the ubiquity and utility of bilingualism in other countries by positioning the European Union as disadvantaged because of its lack of a single unifying language. Comatose51 compares this situation to that of the United States, where “we are lucky to have one language that unites all of the vast area”. Notice
that again in this comment, Comatose51 overlooks the central idea of bilingual education – that regardless of the form it takes, one of its main goals is to aid students in gaining proficiency in English. In these examples as well as in other instances of extended metaphors, analogic arguments, and hypothetical comparisons, users employ these strategies to highlight particular ideologies of language and beliefs about language education that emerge in the debate – e.g. the importance of English at a global level, the advantage of individual bilingualism – while ignoring major tenets of both bilingual and English-only education policies. Metaphoric language thus serves as a vehicle to transition the topic of discussion, similar to Drew and Holt’s (1998) findings, from the original topic put forth in the linked CNN article to a general forum for the expression of beliefs about language.

6.7. Metaphoric negotiation on Digg

We saw in the previous sections that in addition to their function in the expression of beliefs about particular languages, language education, and policy, metaphors may also act as a site in the contestation of language ideologies, especially in the dialogic context of the Digg discussion. We saw an example of how this is accomplished in the exchange between Donatj and Spew009, where Spew009 challenged the reasoning underlying Donatj’s analogy by pointing out a fact regarding language education policy in Sweden. However, metaphor negotiation takes on a variety of other forms in the debates, with a diverse set of consequences, so it will be useful to consider other examples of metaphor negotiation observed in the corpora.
Both Cameron’s (2003) research on metaphor in educational contexts and Musolff’s (2004) analysis of metaphor in political media discourse have outlined types of metaphor negotiation that occur in discourse data. In fact, Cameron emphasizes that her approach to metaphor is a “dynamic” model that “will describe not just individual instances of metaphor, but how the metaphors across discourse are connected, and how the impact of metaphor is built up through interactional dynamics” (8). This orientation echoes the goals of the interactional sociolinguistic framework because it emphasizes not just the dominance of certain metaphorical themes but also how metaphoric language is used as a tool for creating meaning, stances, and identities in unfolding interaction. Because Cameron’s discussion of metaphor negotiation strategies is slightly less elaborated than Musolff’s in his analysis of European press discourse, I will only summarize Musolff’s work in detail here and parenthetically note where Cameron’s terminology overlaps with Musolff’s descriptions.

Musolff offers five different forms that metaphor negotiation can take on in interaction, which I have summarized in the table below:

**Table 6.5. Types of metaphor negotiation in interaction**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of negotiation</th>
<th>Speaker’s stance in relation to prior use metaphor</th>
<th>Speaker’s negotiation tactic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elaboration</td>
<td>Agrees fully with metaphor presuppositions and conclusions</td>
<td>Provides further presuppositions, renders metaphor more conclusive (Cameron’s “vehicle development”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modification</td>
<td>Agrees partially with presuppositions and conclusions of metaphor</td>
<td>Provides alternative presuppositions and modified conclusion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Musolff only provides descriptions, not names, for these types of negotiation. The names provided in the left-hand column of this chart are my own characterizations of his descriptions.
Renewal

Disagrees with conclusion reached by metaphor and accompanying presuppositions

Offers new metaphor with new set of presuppositions to achieve desired conclusion

Reappropriation

Finds previous scenario and presuppositions attractive but disagrees with conclusion

Blends previous metaphor and presuppositions with a further set of presuppositions that cancel previous conclusion and provide counter-conclusion (Cameron’s vehicle re-deployment)

Rejection

Disagrees with metaphor presuppositions and conclusion

Avoids or rejects the metaphor outright.

The five types of metaphor negotiation in Table 6.5 encompass a variety of stance-taking strategies, ranging from taking a stance of full agreement to full disagreement with a prior speaker’s semantic construal and pragmatic use of a particular metaphor. The negotiation tactics outlined above also include intermediate stances of partial agreement with regard to either the presuppositions or conclusions assumed in the prior speaker’s metaphor use.

These strategies also hint at several types of positioning moves that can be accomplished through metaphor negotiation. For example, a speaker may use the same metaphor offered by a prior user as a similar positioning device to further develop a particular “storyline” (in Davies and Harré’s 1990 terminology) surrounding the metaphoric construal of a subject (in the case of metaphor “elaboration”). Alternatively, one may reject a position created by a prior metaphor and offer a new metaphor to construct an alternate position (in the case of “renewal”). One may also use the same metaphor to resist a prior position or storyline established through its prior use and construct a new position or altered storyline (through the tactics of “modification” or “reappropriation”). Finally, in the case of metaphor “rejection”, one may reject a position...
put forth by a prior user by changing the metaphor and consequently the storyline within which the contested positions are located.

Let us now consider some examples of interactional metaphor negotiation in the Digg texts in order to see how they function in the negotiation of language ideologies. The excerpt below contains three comments from the Digg discussion board. The first comment, posted by Artificial001, contains a metaphor that falls within the theme of LANGUAGE LEARNING AS MOVING FORWARD, and the following two comments, posted by Bizchris and Spacejack, are replies to Artificial001’s comment. Each reply appropriates the textual metaphor put forth by the prior user, though the type of negotiation in each instance takes a different form. I have indicated the use of metaphors and their themes in the left-hand margin below, as well as the type of negotiation tactic used (where relevant):

**Artificial001 (+10 diggs):**
MOVE ⇒ you have to teach immigrants English. you have to walk before you can run.

<2 intervening replies elided>

**Bizchris (+7 diggs):**
MOVE-MOD ⇒ Immigrants have to learn English. They have to walk before they can run. It’s not our responsibility to teach them.

**Spacejack (-5 diggs):**
MOVE-REPET ⇒ “You have to walk before you can run”
MOVE-CHALL ⇒ So your point is you can’t learn any history without knowing English? Do you people not realize that is what this is? People are being taught history, math, etc. in Spanish while SIMULTANEOUSLY BEING TAUGHT ENGLISH. What you seem to want is for someone to sit down and listen to someone jabber in a language they don’t understand for six hours a day and be tested on it, and then spend ONE hour a day actually learning the language. It’s an absurd position and one look at it will demonstrate MOVE-REAPP ⇒ that it’s going to cripple the kids.
Artificial001 puts forth an analogy in her comment equating the concept of immigrants learning English with *walking*. This example of metaphorical language constructs the English language as a basic necessity on which all personal accomplishments depend, and conversely, as the sole prerequisite for all other forms of personal success (i.e., since “walking” is a prerequisite for “running” and performing a variety of other activities). In this sense, immigrants are portrayed as not fully functioning, immature, or crippled habitants until they learn to speak English.

Despite the structural parallelism between the two propositions posited in this analogy, it should be noted that the “you” of the first and second sentences of Artificial001’s comment are not co-referential; agency is assigned to the teachers of English in the first sentence (“you have to teach”), while the second-person reference in the second sentence assigns agency to English learners (“you have to walk before you can run”). This capacity to fluidly change the referent of a pronoun and maintain coherence while avoiding deictic ambiguity also speaks to the power of metaphor in the construction of language ideologies. Because metaphors are able to index semantic connections beyond the strict comparison accomplished by the textual metaphor (via the domain-mapping, which provides access to other related concepts within the same metaphoric theme) and highlight dominant ideologies and shared assumptions, we might say that metaphorical language use is less restricted by the normal discourse constraints of pronominal reference (Fox 1987, Schiffrin, 2006; see Chapter 4 for full discussion of pronominal reference).
Furthermore, Artificial001’s analogical statement can also be said to “erase” competing beliefs about language by evoking the image of FORWARD MOVEMENT: first, it disguises the alternative ideology of multilingualism as a resource (e.g., Crawford 1992, Cummins 2000, Ruiz 1984) by ignoring the benefit of speaking another language\textsuperscript{66}; secondly, it obscures the reality that many monolingual English speakers in the United States are socially marginalized, economically disenfranchised and thus are by no means “running”. On a similar note, Artificial001’s statement obscures the fact that knowledge of the English language alone is not a great benefit if not complemented by literacy, technology, and a multitude of other skills necessary for success in many professional contexts. In short, this example of metaphor illustrates what Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and others have referred to as the “highlighting” and “hiding” functions of metaphor.

Bizchris’s reply to Artificial001’s uses the same metaphor likening the learning of English to walking, but she alters the grammatical form of the statement. Instead of employing the general “you” to refer first to teachers and then to immigrants, Bizchris specifies the subject of the proposition via a specific noun phrase: “Immigrants have to learn English. They have to walk before they can run.” In this alternative formulation of the same metaphor, notice that the subjects of the two sentences are co-referential. Bizchris also emphasizes that “It’s not our responsibility to teach them,” emphasizing the idea that immigrants must learn English without the help of American citizens or tax dollars. We can characterize Bizchris’ negotiation tactic in this post as one of

\textsuperscript{66} According to the logic of Artificial001, speaking a language other than English would presumably be likened to “crawling” or being stuck in one place.
modification. That is, she agrees for the most part with Artificial001’s metaphoric characterization of learning English as learning to walk before one can run, but she disagrees with the construction of agency put forth in the original metaphor, and therefore modifies the metaphor so it places agency entirely on immigrants, indicating her position that language policies should not involve the spending of tax dollars and other resources to help immigrants acquire English.

In the following comment, Spacejack takes a different approach in his reaction to the metaphor put forth by Artificial001. Notice that he also repeats the analogy put forth by the prior user, but does so via constructed dialogue, distinctly marking the metaphor as originating from another source via punctuation devices of direct quotation. Spacejack then challenges this metaphor by overtly questioning the presupposition it contains: “So your point is you can’t learn any history without knowing English?” Spacejack expresses his disagreement with the implications of the prior use of this metaphor by explaining that the goals of bilingual education (with which the prior users appears to be opposed) are actually consistent with the presupposition contained in the walking analogy. Spacejack also recycles the LANGUAGE LEARNING AS MOVING FORWARD theme, albeit through the use of an alternative textual metaphor, stating that English-only legislation is “an absurd position and one look at it will demonstrate that it’s going to cripple the kids.” Thus, Spacejack’s negotiation type can be considered a reappropriation, since he borrows the metaphorical theme but alters the conclusion. His modified metaphor expresses the opposing stance that rather than allowing immigrants and children to “run”, English-only policies will only “cripple” them.
If we look at the progression of metaphors in these three posts, we also find that the metaphor negotiation involves a transformation of the metaphorized subject: while Artificial001’s analogy dealt with the concept of language learning generally, Bizchris focused on those who carry the responsibility for making English learning happen. Spacejack further specifies the subject by articulating specific contrasting models of language education policy and implying that prior speakers are advocates of English-only, and he puts forth an opposing ideology of this policy as a “crippling” mechanism.

On a related note, this sequence of Digg posts also illustrates that categorizing a metaphor negotiation tactic is dependent on the level of specificity at which we define the metaphor. In Spacejack’s response, he borrows the same metaphorical theme of LANGUAGE LEARNING AS MOVING FORWARD, but rejects the specific textual metaphors of walking and running embraced by the prior two users and offers a new one, which portrays language policy as an obstacle to forward movement.

Let us now examine a final set of comments that involves the negotiation of a metaphor of a different type. In the following excerpt, Aardvaroo compares bilingual education to the use of a flotation device for swimming in order to express his opposition to this policy (a metaphor discussed in the previous section), and Chubbyduck responds to Aardvaroo’s comment by bringing to the surface and problematizing Aardvaroo’s use of metaphoric language. Chubbyduck then posts a second comment in a new Digg thread in which he offers competing metaphors to characterize Gingrich’s policy:

Aardvaroo (+2 digs):

SWIM ⇒ Remember those flotation devices you use as a kid to keep you above water? Well guess what happens in reality if you stick a pin in those flotation devices and they deflate? You
drown. That's why it's imperative to learn how to swim.

ELAB-SWIM ⇒ Teaching kids within a bilingual framework is like using a flotation device, without ever forcing the kid to jump in the water in a vulnerable state. Eventually, they rely on the accommodations of bilingualism so much that they can't stay afloat with English alone.

Chubbyduck < reply to Aardvaroo> (0 diggs):
CHALL-SWIM⇒ And where did you read that? When you first learned to swim did you have floaties? A kickboard? Someone supporting you before you learned how to float? Did everyone learn to swim exactly the same way you did? At a YMCA pool? In the ocean? What Gingrich
REAPP-SWIM ⇒ is asking is that we never let kids use floaties or kickboards. Instead we'll throw them in and if they get hurt, swallow a lung full of water to carry the analogy to an end, then so be it…

Chubbyduck <new thread immediately following reply> (-2 diggs):
Why won't ANYONE take the time to listen to what researchers of ELL students (English Language Learners) are saying? Instead we get a slogan of "learn the language of the society" and wave a flag of patriotism and xenophobia…. Progressives/Liberals and the Neo-Cons both have supported NCLB and standards testing. They embrace some
PATRIOT ⇒ idea that one size fits all and we can teach all kids the same way. We can't. We've lost our trust in teachers and have decided that we can't allow them to make decisions on how to
CLOTHING ⇒ teach their pupils so instead we give them a laundry list of things that these students need to know. Then we punish them with a withdrawal of funding when it doesn't work out.
NEG-INDUSTRY⇒ Well the student is not a product to be churned out and a school is not a factory which treats every student as raw material to send through a process. In the case of an ELL, we need to treat them differently…

We see in this excerpt that Aardvaroo puts forth a metaphor likening bilingual education with flotation devices, framing it as a problematic policy because students learn to rely on their native language and as a result do not become proficient in English. Aardvaroo does this by first asking readers a question – “Remember those flotation devices…?”

Through the use of a question at the beginning of his post, Aardvaroo invites readers to imagine a situation they have likely experienced in the past; this device functions as an involvement strategy by inviting readers to view matters of language education in the same way he does by envisioning a parallel scenario (i.e. swimming education). Once Aardvaroo has drawn readers into this parallel situation, he poses another question, asking them to envision what happens when a pin is stuck in the flotation device,
indicating that the inevitable result is “you drown”. It is not until the second paragraph of his post that Aardvaroo makes the comparison between a “bilingual framework” and the use of flotation device explicit. In this paragraph, he elaborates the metaphor he put forth in the first paragraph by indicating that bilingual education is not just a flotation device, but that it involves never “forcing the kid to jump in the water in a vulnerable state,” implying that bilingual education does not challenge students properly and is thus not an effective educational method.

Chubbyduck posts a reply to Aardvaroo’s comment, which commences with a series of questions. In contrast to the prior comment, however, they are not addressed to the general Digg audience, but to Aardvaroo in particular. He begins by asking “And where did you read that? When you first learned to swim did you have floaties?” These questions serve to challenge the prior speaker’s use of the textual metaphor by asking first where Aardvaroo “read” this information (which implies that he does not have any direct experience with either swimming or bilingual education), and then asking a question related to Aardvaroo’s personal experiences in learning to swim. After challenging Aardvaroo through these questions, Chubbyduck then reappropriates the textual metaphor regarding flotation devices, modifying the presuppositions and claims of the metaphor: “What Gingrich is asking is that we never let kids use floaties or kickboards. Instead we'll throw them in and if they get hurt, swallow a lung full of water to carry the analogy to an end, then so be it…” Through this reappropriation, Chubbyduck maintains the comparison between bilingual education and flotation devices, but reframes it as a problem with Gingrich’s English-only approach to education,
indicating that English-only is equivalent to a complete lack of use of flotation devices. It is significant that Chubbyduck makes overt reference to Aardvaroo’s use of an SWIMMING AND SINKING analogy when he qualifies his reappropriation with “to carry the analogy to the end”; this metalinguistic comment serves to frame his negotiation of the metaphor as an elaboration rather than as a strategy that changes the metaphor.

After replying to Aardvaroo’s comment, Chubbyduck posts a comment immediately thereafter as a new thread in the discussion board forum. In his second comment, rather than further modifying and reappropriating the SWIMMING metaphor as he did in the reply, Chubbyduck poses a variety of alternative metaphors to put forth his point of view on language education policy. After posing a question to the general Digg audience that insinuates his exasperation with their reluctance to pay attention to research, he metaphorizes the view of those who support English-only policies as the PATRIOTIC ACT of “waving a flag”. He then offers two new metaphors that can be classified as relating language policy to CLOTHING: English-Only and the No Child Left Behind act are characterized as a “one size fits all” approach to education, and teaching standards are characterized as a “laundry list”. Both these metaphors portray the policies with which Chubbyduck disagrees as unsuitable for dealing with variability in the needs of individual students.

Chubbyduck elaborates his oppositional stance to English-Only language education policies using yet another novel metaphoric theme – SCHOOLING AS AN INDUSTRIAL PROCESS - to describe what he perceives to be the needs of ELLs (English language learners). He states, “Well the student is not a product to be churned out and a
school is not a factory which treats every student as raw material to send through a process.” This statement contains several textual metaphors, but rather than describing what students are, they are used to describe what they are not. This is the only instance in my data in which a user introduces a novel metaphorical theme in the act of negating a particular position or identity. Other instances of textual metaphors used for negation have consisted of reappropriations or modifications of textual metaphors put forth by prior users.

Alternatively, we might say that Chubbyduck’s negotiation tactic of renewal in his statement comparing schools and students to factories and products is indeed a reappropriation, but rather than responding to an immediately preceding textual metaphor, his industrial metaphors respond to a broader recurrent metaphorical theme in contemporary discourses on education policy. In Goffman’s (1981b) words, this tactic might be seen as a “response” to broader language policy discourses rather than a “reply” to a specific conversational move. In fact, the newspaper and Digg corpora do contain a few instances of textual metaphors that revolve around the same metaphorical theme of industrial processes. These metaphors tend to construct immigrants and speakers of other languages as machines that will not function properly unless they achieve proficiency in English. For example, the Seattle Post commentary by Jose de la Isla (5-SP-c) refers to the effects of language education policy on the “national economic engine” and states that “not all Hispanics are carbon copies”, which are both metaphoric references to the national system and the people it serves as industrial products.

Similarly, Digg user Asian1 claims that “you’re not going to be able to function properly

216
without being able to communicate” in English, and SpenceMasta uses the same textual metaphor to express her beliefs about non-English speakers’ resistance to learning the language: “Non-English speaking people who have been functioning already do not want to be told by English speaking people that they know what is best for them.”

In summary, Chubbyduck’s comments instantiate two different types of metaphorical negotiation tactics. In his reply to Aardvaroo’s coment, he challenges the prior user’s specific metaphoric reference by drawing on presumably shared concrete experiences of learning how to swim, thereby drawing on a literal interpretation of the metaphor in order to call into question its symbolic significance. In his second comment, he provides a response to broader discourses on language policy by invoking (locally) novel metaphors to contest the broader INDUSTRIAL PROCESSES theme in discourses on bilingual and English-Only language education policies.

This analysis has demonstrated that the various types of metaphor negotiation described in past research also occurs in the Digg discussions of language education policy, and that these strategies serve as an important discursive resource through which users put forth their own beliefs about language and language learning. It was also shown that speakers manipulate metaphors to contrast their views with other Digg users and with dominant ideologies of language education and language policy. In addition to metaphor elaboration, modification, reappropriation, and renewal, we also witnessed outright metaphor challenges, which were accomplished through the process of literalization (e.g., when Chubbyduck asks Aardvaroo how he learned to swim) and the tactic of metaphoric negation (e.g., when Chubbyduck expresses that schools are not
factories and students are not raw materials). In addition, we observed that users make metalinguistic references to the use of analogic discourse strategies in their challenges. In sum, this analysis provides us with a window of how metaphor functions as a strategy in the construction of language ideology by connecting micro-level language use in interaction (textual metaphors) with macro-level discourses on language (metaphorical themes) and by constructing situated identities, social relations, and power differentials between Self and Other.

6.8. Conclusion

The study of metaphor has remained a central topic in linguistic research in both the cognitive and critical traditions over the past few decades. It seems that the extensive amount of attention accorded to this linguistic strategy is due, at least in part, to the capacity of metaphor to connect locally defined discourse topics to broader ranges of culturally shared realms of experience. In this chapter, we examined how a variety of textual metaphors indexed particular recurrent metaphoric themes in the newspaper and Digg data and how both textual metaphors and metaphorical themes were negotiated in the Digg discussion. It was shown that metaphor and analogic reasoning serve as important resources that individuals use in positing their beliefs about particular language varieties, language education, and language policy. Metaphors do this by creating vivid and concrete images of complex and abstract processes: learning to speak English is seen as learning to swim, education policies are seen as flotation devices by some and anchors by others, schools may be factories and students are both raw materials and final products.
of industrial processes. In a time period where language in the media is dominated by post-9-11 discourses surrounding terrorism and issues of national security, metaphors of non-English languages as “threats” to personal, professional, and national stability also work their way into discussions of language education policy. Additionally, time-transcendent discourses of the effect of immigration policy on the economic welfare of the United States as well as discourses of globalization enter into these debates through contradictory metaphors of bilingual policies as an economic deficit and bilingual abilities as an economic asset.

In contrast to prior critical studies of metaphor and ideology, which have focused on the role of metaphors in serving the interests of dominant institutions by constructing racist stereotypes of non-dominant groups, this study of metaphor in interaction shows that metaphors serve as both a strategy and a site for the contestation of language ideologies. This finding echoes Gal’s (1989: 329) emphasis that language ideologies are never uniform or agreed upon in society, even within dominant institutions:

Simultaneous representations and assumptions vie and articulate with each other within social institutions of varying scale and temporality. By taking semiosis seriously, it is possible to show exactly how linguistic ideologies create discursive authority through processes of naturalization, detemporalization, and essentialization and thus give substance and analytic bite to broad concepts such as misrecognition, hegemony, and legitimation.

In this analysis of metaphor in the newspaper and Digg texts, we witnessed the discursive construction of personal, political, and moral authority through the way writers positioned themselves and others and framed the central issues in the debate over language education policy. Through metaphoric devices and analogic argumentation strategies, participants crossed boundaries of space, time, and realms of experience to
create images of languages, their speakers, and the process of language learning that simplify, naturalize and universalize issues that are in reality complex, constructed, and locally dependent.
7.1. Revisiting the three strategies

In the past three chapters, we took an in-depth look at the discourse strategies of reference, constructed dialogue, and metaphor in the newspaper texts and Digg discussion board that emanated from Newt Gingrich’s controversial speech on language education policy and his subsequent Youtube apology. As I emphasized in Chapter 2, despite my decision to separate these strategies from each other for the purpose of analytical ease, it is perhaps more appropriate to think of them as three angles for looking at a singular complex discourse phenomenon. For instance, in my analysis of types of language referrals in the Digg data, referrals to “hip-hop accents” and “southern accents” were found to commingle with examples of constructed dialogue demonstrating these varieties. Conversely, it was found in the analysis of constructed dialogue (Chapter 5) that it was important to consider the way speakers’ voices were framed through person reference in the quotative frames that introduce reported speech. The analysis of metaphor in general (Chapter 6) can be considered a specific type of referential practice in which speakers refer to something via reference to what it is not (i.e., language learning was referred to as the action of swimming or floating). We also saw in the analysis of metaphor negotiation that speakers often use intertextual strategies, drawing on metaphors posited by others and reappropriating them in creative and sometimes subversive ways in order to highlight aspects of or create alternative stances in reaction to ideologies put forth by others.
To illustrate how all three of these strategies interact in a singular discursive act, let us reconsider the following sequence of Digg posts that was discussed in Chapter 6:

**Artificial001:**
you have to teach immigrants english. you have to walk before you can run.

**Bizchris:**
Immigrants have to learn English. They have to walk before they can run. It’s not our responsibility to teach them.

In this sequence of posts, Artificial001 puts forth his belief about the importance of learning English using a metaphor that equates English with “walking”, which is constructed as a prerequisite for “running” or achieving success in the United States. Recall that Artificial001’s use of the 2
d person pronoun in these two sentences was not co-referential: the first general “you” refers to English speakers who need to take responsibility and teach immigrants, and the second “you” refers to the immigrants who need to learn English.

Bizchris responds to Artificial001’s statement by reappropriating the prior user’s post, transforming it in certain ways. Most notably, Bizchris does not use the general second-person referral in either the first or second sentence of his post. Instead, he specifies that “immigrants” must learn English, and that “they” have to walk before they can run. The strategy that Bizchris uses in this post consists of an *intertextual* borrowing of a *metaphoric* statement via a *referential* transformation. Instrumental in the user’s interactional move is also the creation of an Us-Them distinction - “It’s not our responsibility to teach them” – which establishes the relationship between Self and Other and emphasizes the perceived agency of the Other in matters of learning English. This positioning move in turn constructs the belief that language education policy should be a
program that makes no special provisions for language minority students, and that they should instead be left to their own devices in learning the dominant language of the United States.

7.2. Other discourse strategies?

It is clear that reference, constructed dialogue, and metaphor are not the only discourse strategies at play in the data examined. One may wonder why I didn’t choose to examine, for example, the strategies of repetition, rhetorical questions, or narrative? While these three latter strategies emerged quite often in both the newspaper and Digg texts, they did not appear to be primary moves in the construction of language ideologies. Instead, they were embedded in other moves that more directly played a role in indexing beliefs about language through the positioning of Self and Other in relation to language. For example, repetition is an element of constructed dialogue in cases where the speech reported did actually occur at some previous point in time (e.g. the repetition of prior Digg users’ posts as grounding for expressions of agreement or disagreement). However, many examples of constructed dialogue found in the data were not repetitions, but instead were completely novel constructions of speech acts. Since constructed dialogue is used to embody an Other’s voice in order to highlight language differences, this strategy has been considered a primary feature of language ideological discourse. Repetition may be considered a smaller building block of this indexical process.

Likewise, narrative elements were observed in many of the newspaper texts and Digg posts examined in the past three chapters, but I did not consider this a primary
strategy for indexing language ideologies. Instead, narrative appeared to be a higher-order structure in which these primary linguistic strategies were involved in various configurations. For example, in Chapter 6 we observed two users negotiate metaphors for language learning by constructing what were presumed to be shared narratives of learning to swim. These “master” narratives presupposed by speakers in the debates do play an important role in the discursive creation of shared beliefs about language, but they do so via the mediating metaphorical link which associates the experience of learning to swim with the experience of learning a new language. Since this metaphorical link is indispensable in the practice of indexing particular beliefs about language due to its capacity to highlight, hide and erase important aspects of experience, this was considered the primary ideological strategy, while narrative was considered secondary.

7.3. Theoretical implications

The reflections above on the hierarchical relationship between different discourse strategies accomplishes what I set out to do in Chapter 2 when I juxtaposed Lippi-Green’s (2001) model of the language subordination process with Irvine and Gal’s (2000) semiotic processes. Recall that Lippi-Green’s model was deemed rudimentary because it did not characterize the relationship between the enumerated strategies in the model. Irvine and Gal’s model was deemed explanatorily robust, but it was more suited to dealing with questions of language ideology on the macro-level of social processes, and could benefit from a closer consideration of exactly how these processes are carried out.
in dialogic interaction. I believe this study responds to these gaps by taking particular discourse strategies and highlighting how they function in the processes of iconization, recursivity, and erasure as they emerge in talk and interaction.

This study speaks to the utility of thinking broadly as well as deeply when tackling issues of language in society through discourse analysis research. Although the approach used here was defined at the outset as an interactional sociolinguistic one, the analysis of the three discourse strategies relied on a variety of linguistic perspectives in uncovering the discursive construction of language ideology. The analysis of person and language reference built on findings in cognitive and psycholinguistic perspectives on discourse processing (e.g. Clark and Wilkes-Gibbs 1992, Fox 1987, Schiffrin 2006a); in contrast, the analysis of constructed dialogue relied on concepts of critical theory (e.g. Fairclough 1989, Kristeva 1980); the analysis of metaphor combined literary (Steen 2007), cognitive (Lakoff and Johnson 1980), critical (Santa Ana 2001), and interactional (Cameron 2003, 2007; Musolff 2004) perspectives in the analysis of recurrent metaphoric themes and metaphor negotiation tactics.

While this study drew broadly on various linguistic perspectives, it also delved deeply into a particular language debate, which allowed for a detailed analysis of the subtle ways in which beliefs about language and education are shaped by the way we talk about them, and conversely, how variation in beliefs is expressed and negotiated through a range of linguistic strategies. I suggest that employing discourse analysis in the study of explicit talk about language is a fruitful avenue for further research in the field of language policy.
7.4. Further directions

I see this study as a starting point in what can possibly be a much larger research agenda in the study of how language ideologies are circulated in public discourse on language education policy. This project could be extended by incorporating additional types of data and methods of analysis. Possible next steps in this line of inquiry might involve the creation of focus groups in which participants are exposed to various types of policy-oriented media discourse, such as advertisements and press releases of English Only and bilingual education organizations. Discussions of language attitudes could be elicited in reaction to these texts, supplemented by interviews with individual participants to get their personal reactions outside the group discussion. Focus group data and individual interviews in which participants are asked to respond to particular texts would provide a rich corpus of data for qualitative and quantitative discourse analysis. This type of analysis would also shed further light on the intertextual processes of consuming institutional discourses on language and appropriating them in casual talk about language policy issues. Furthermore, one might supplement focus group data with pre- and post-focus group attitude questionnaires to gauge whether exposure to the public texts and group discussions of language issues result in attitudinal and ideological change.

Some of the data collected in this project were not analyzed due to the focus of the study and problems of comparability across text types. Specifically, the content of Gingrich’s Spanish-language apology and the Youtube videos responding directly to his video were overlooked in the analysis of the three discourse strategies. However, these texts form a rich source of data on their own, and they might be analyzed from alternative
perspectives, such as speech act theory and the discourse of public apologies. For instance, one might consider the Youtube commentaries and parodies as texts that problematize or undermine the assumptions under which a the speech act of an apology may be considered felicitous.

Additionally, the parodies on Digg and Youtube might be considered together from the perspective of mock language varieties and outgroup language appropriation or “crossing” more generally. The body of research on outgroup language use (e.g. Bucholtz 1999, Chun 2004, Cutler 1999, Rampton 1995, Hill 2006) has focused largely on the parodic appropriation of stigmatized languages and varieties, such as Spanish, “Asian” (Chun 2004), or African American English. In the case of the parodies of Gingrich’s apology, however, we find that people mock the non-native Spanish of a particular individual, constituting a variety we might call “Mock Gringo Spanish”, whose rhetorical effects not only reflect participants’ views of Gingrich, but also calls into question the taken-for-granted dominance relations between English and Spanish in the United States. A more detailed look at how these parodies of Gingrich mirror general language crossing and how they differ would be a fruitful avenue for further sociolinguistic research.

The chapter on metaphor, which took an interactional rather than cognitive approach in its analysis, also leaves many avenues open for further research on metaphors for language learning. One might compare the metaphoric themes found in these texts to the use of metaphors in other political speeches and debates on language education policy, or in documents produced by institutions like the U.S. Department of Education.
Notice, for example, that the “No Child Left Behind” Act itself revolves around the metaphorical theme of learning as forward movement. One might also look in more depth at the use of metaphors in state-level official English and English Only initiatives, as well as the advertising of national organizations like U.S. English. We might also seek to understand how the metaphorical themes examined in this study and those considered in past research on language policy (Johnson 2005, Santa Ana 2002, Woolard 1989) are conceptually related to each other in a cognitive framework. For example, the four metaphorical themes I examined might be considered movement metaphors in either the up-down or forward-backward direction. Floating, sinking, economic assets and deficits, and national security threat levels may be conceptualized as orientational metaphors in the up-down direction, while actions such as swimming, getting ahead, falling behind, walking, and running are actions that can be conceptualized as forward-backward movement metaphors. The metaphors used to talk about English language learning may all be reconsidered in a cognitive framework as related to a more general notion of progress, and a better understanding of such conceptual metaphor schemata may be manipulated and negotiated by those who wish to become actively engaged in debates about language policy.

More generally, researchers may also use this study as a blueprint if they wish to delve more deeply into computer-mediated contexts (discussion boards, blogs, interest group websites) to examine other current debates about language. Such texts are a useful site for gauging the wide variety of views and personal and cultural experiences on which peoples’ beliefs about language are based. This type of research can also be extended to
talk about other issues in online forums, such as beliefs about health, economics, religion or politics, especially since linguistic reference, constructed dialogue, and metaphor have been shown in past research to be significant discourse strategies in the construction of various types of ideologies and identities.

7.5. Practical applications

In my introductory discussion in Chapter 1 of how sociolinguists have been involved in popular debates about language over the past decades, I made reference to several linguists who have taken activist roles in their research and have given back to the community by sharing empirical knowledge about language with the public through education and other public interest programs. In this study, we actually came across some well known linguists in the data examined (e.g. James Crawford, Stephen Krashen, Ronald Macaulay) who got involved and interacted with the media in the days following Gingrich’s remarks about bilingual education. Crawford was cited as in the Seattle Post commentary as an advocate of bilingual education, and Krashen and Macaulay both wrote letters to the editor of the Los Angeles Times in response to Gingrich’s guest commentary sharing their own positions on language policy.

One of the motives for taking on this research project was the observed need to better comprehend how laypeople think and talk about language, education, and the nature of second language acquisition so that linguists might better engage in policy debates and communicate more effectively about the benefits and disadvantages of bilingual education and English immersion. As Lakoff (1996) has emphasized in his
work on framing in political discourse, metaphors influence not only the way we talk about issues but influence the way we understand our experiences and the world. Linguists who wish to take an activist stance and engage in political debates about language must begin considering dominant metaphors and ways of thinking about language in order to effectively frame research in a way that is receptive to non-academic audiences.

We saw in Chapter 4 that linguist Ronald Macaulay used many of the strategies discussed in this study in his letter to the editor of the *Los Angeles Times*: he portrayed Newt Gingrich in a hypothetical monolingual Spanish-speaking world, enumerating the difficulties he would have in order to drive home the experiences of non-English speakers trying to swim in immersion programs. However, there were other (self-identified) linguists in these debates that did not fare so well in constructing authoritative stances and convincing their audiences of their points of view. Let us take for example RickyBarnes1960, who posted several comments in the Digg discussion, and examine how users reacted to his rhetorical approach in expressing his beliefs about the personal benefits of multilingualism:

**RickyBarnes1960**

If Americans and their economy wish to remain competitive around the world and even within the borders of their own land, fluency in other cultures and other languages is a must. Those who wish to remain isolated within one culture and one language are one-dimensional human beings in a complex and dynamic world from which there is no retreat despite one's sincerest wish to do so. **As a professional linguist** and having traveled around much of the world, I can confirm the fact that one of the main reasons peoples in other countries view Americans as arrogant is the typical American insistence on imposing their stereotypical culture and language on those who have cultures and languages of their own…

*The following posts are marked as replies to RickyBarnes1960:*
Onyxblaze
@ RickyBarnes1960
What an idiot. If you are a professional linguist you should quit now. I'm still in high school, but I can grasp the basic concepts my ENGLISH teacher has taught me. People in Boston speak English. People in California, and the deep south also speak English. It's this radical new idea known as a "dialect" that has only been around since, oh, i don't know, language was invented. So STFU because you don't know what the hell you're talking about.

Kaiser44
America sucks, thanks again.
You do not know what any one equates with anything, you are only guessing.
QUIT READING CHOMSKY AND GET A JOB.

HappyMax (+3 Diggs)
Your philosophical "But what is English?" doesn't have much to do with the issue. Everyone knows what English is and if you need something translated into your "native tongue" or you need ESL education then you don't know it.

We see in this thread of comments that RickyBarnes’ proclamation that he is a professional linguist does not effectively create a personal stance of authority in this discussion. On the contrary, it earns him ridicule by his interlocutors who hold opposing views about language policy. Notice that each of the users who reply to RickyBarnes responds negatively to his position in a unique way. Onyxblaze delegitimates RickyBarnes’ authoritative stance by stating that he is only in high school and better understands English concepts, and advises the professional linguist to “quit now”.

Kaiser44, on the other hand, delegitimates the linguist’s authority by positioning him as an unemployed intellectual through his command, “QUIT READING CHOMSKY AND GET A JOB.” Finally, Happymax positions the linguist as an out-of-touch idealist through her disregard for RickyBarnes’ critical take on language.

If we compare these responses to many of the other stances of disagreement examined throughout this study, we find that perhaps the harshest personal insults are in
fact aimed at this self-identified linguist. Linguists may benefit from this analysis by borrowing the rhetorical strategies used by the nonlinguists in the debates. For instance, when engaging in public debates on language, they might borrow metaphors of swimming or running (along with the accompanying concepts of kickboards or hurdles) to express their views about language acquisition. Alternatively, they might tell personal stories about students and strategically embody certain characters through constructed dialogue. Or they might avoid referring terms that create distinctions between Us and Them, and reframe their language in more inclusive terms which emphasize the benefits of growing up bilingual in America. They may also reframe Spanish as a domestic rather than a foreign language. These are just a few lessons we can learn from the texts we have examined in this study, but I believe that understanding the structure of these debates and how beliefs about language are circulated in public discourse is an important first step in attempting to change dominant discourses on language and education in the United States.

7.6. Concluding Remarks

We have examined in this study how hundreds of individuals responded to Newt Gingrich’s speech about language policy in a variety of ways, by directly appropriating elements of the speech, by drawing on larger discourses on language and immigration policy, and by drawing on their own experiential knowledge. We saw that some connected questions of language with current economic issues, while other speakers viewed multilingualism through the lens of national security, and others viewed matters
of language education in terms of cognitive or cultural development. These divergent views were nonetheless united in the way the speakers used particular discourse strategies to designate, embody, or imagine Self and Other as they put forth their beliefs about the nature and use of language in society.

The title of this work, *Talking Back to Newt Gingrich*, may at first imply that this study focuses on a debate between an individual politician and a particular audience, but it should be understood as a metonym for a much larger dialogue between official and unofficial voices aiming to construct, deconstruct, and reconstruct a vision of America through the lens of language. While Newt Gingrich officially opted out of running for U.S. president shortly after his 2007 NFRW speech on which this study is based, his voice remains prominent in American politics and the media today. In fact, I was recently in a Starbucks coffee shop, working on the study presented here and contemplating how I could apply my research to real world problems. In a moment of writer’s block, I looked down at my paper coffee cup to find, ironically, Newt Gingrich talking back to me. The cup had Starbucks’ “The Way I See It” Quote #290 printed on it:

*On the battlefield of ideas, winning requires moving toward the sound of the guns.*

---*Newt Gingrich, Former Speaker of the House of Representatives*

This quotation of a metaphor attributed to *Newt Gingrich* not only ties together the three discourse strategies I examined in this study, but it also aptly captured the spirit that inspired this work: if linguists want their voices to be heard in matters of language
education policy, they must begin by engaging directly in the debates themselves. Understanding what these debates are, how they are framed by others, and how people are using material and technological means to engage in these debates I believe is a start.

Figure 7.1. The Way I See It #290
### APPENDIX A. Corpus of newspaper texts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Publication</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Summary</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-CT-r</td>
<td>4/1/07</td>
<td>Chicago Tribune</td>
<td>Bilingual education hit by Gingrich</td>
<td>AP</td>
<td>Reports Gingrich’s NFRW speech, focusing on controversy over “ghetto” statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-WP-r</td>
<td>4/1/07</td>
<td>Washington Post</td>
<td>Bilingual classes teach ghetto language</td>
<td>Kasie Hunt</td>
<td>Reports Gingrich’s NFRW speech, focusing on controversy over “ghetto” statement. Describes reactions from Latino community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-AT-l</td>
<td>4/4/07</td>
<td>Atlanta Journal Constitution</td>
<td>Newt Gingrich clueless</td>
<td>Mary Lou McCloskey</td>
<td>Letter to the editor disagreeing with Gingrich’s speech, stating that bilingual education is advantageous to all students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-AT-l</td>
<td>4/4/07</td>
<td>Atlanta Journal Constitution</td>
<td>Way out of ghetto</td>
<td>Greg Barnes</td>
<td>Letter to the editor calling bilingual education the “way out of the ghetto”, remarking that bilingualism is “American” and Gingrich is doing a disservice to the image of conservatism in the U.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-WT-c</td>
<td>4/4/07</td>
<td>Washington Times</td>
<td>Newt, bilingual ed and the PC police</td>
<td>Tony Blankley</td>
<td>OpEd piece by Gingrich’s former employee supporting his stance on English immersion. Explains Gingrich’s “ghetto” comment through etymological description. Denounces the criticism made by the “cynical PC enforcement squad”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-SP-c</td>
<td>4/5/07</td>
<td>Seattle Post</td>
<td>‘Loudmouth’ wants linguistic shipwreck</td>
<td>Jose de la Isla</td>
<td>Commentary criticizing Gingrich’s speech, recalling his past Spanish gaffes, and citing opposing views in support of bilingual education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-CT-r</td>
<td>4/6/07</td>
<td>Chicago Tribune</td>
<td>Gingrich clarifies 'ghetto' word choice</td>
<td>AP</td>
<td>Report describing Gingrich’s apology and his explanation of his word choice in an unnamed televised interview; quotes Zamora’s response to his apology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-US-c</td>
<td>4/6/07</td>
<td>USA Today</td>
<td>English rates first in Latino families</td>
<td>Paul Reyes</td>
<td>OpEd personal narrative of growing up in a Mexican-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Area</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>6-WP-l</td>
<td>4/6/07</td>
<td>Washington Post</td>
<td>Bilingual education facts</td>
<td>Ashley Hastings</td>
<td>Letter to the editor criticizing Gingrich as “out of date” and stating that research supports bilingual education as an effective way of teaching English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-LA-c</td>
<td>4/7/07</td>
<td>Los Angeles Times</td>
<td>The pursuit of happiness-in English</td>
<td>Newt Gingrich</td>
<td>OpEd piece written by Gingrich explaining his position on language education, emphasizing the importance of English in the U.S, and describing the benefits of English immersion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-CT-c</td>
<td>4/8/07</td>
<td>Chicago Tribune</td>
<td>This column gets 'so ghetto'</td>
<td>Clarence Page</td>
<td>Commentary discussing the controversy over Gingrich’s use of the word “ghetto”. Summarizes Cora Daniel’s argument about the evolution of the word in her book Ghettonation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-LA-r</td>
<td>4/11/07</td>
<td>Los Angeles Times</td>
<td>Kerry and Gingrich have different ideas</td>
<td>Adam Schrenck</td>
<td>Report of debate between Senator Kerry and Gingrich on global warming. Gingrich’s “ghetto” statement and apology is presented as background information regarding his controversial record affecting his decision to run for president.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-WP-r</td>
<td>4/11/07</td>
<td>Washington Post</td>
<td>Kerry and Gingrich hugging trees - and (almost) each other</td>
<td>Dana Milbank</td>
<td>Report of debate between Kerry and Gingrich on global warming. Gingrich’s “ghetto” comment is mentioned as recent controversy surrounding the potential candidate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication Date</td>
<td>4/12/07</td>
<td>Letter to the editor summarizing recent research showing that students in bilingual programs perform better on English reading exams than those in immersion.</td>
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<td>Publication Date</td>
<td>4/12/07</td>
<td>Letter to the editor agreeing with Gingrich and stating that students in bilingual programs are taught neither English nor their native language.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Publication Date</td>
<td>4/12/07</td>
<td>Letter to the editor disagreeing with Gingrich’s stance, noting that it disenfranchises voters with limited proficiency in English.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Publication Date</td>
<td>4/12/07</td>
<td>Letter to the editor disagreeing with Gingrich, arguing that he should try to live in a Spanish-only world in order to understand the consequences of his proposed policy.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication Date</td>
<td>4/13/07</td>
<td>Editorial on the topic of language education policy. Denounces Gingrich’s word choice but finds his argument worthy of consideration. Says immersion programs have had some success and are cost-effective. Advocates allowing schools flexibility to choose program based on local needs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Publication Date</td>
<td>4/17/07</td>
<td>Commentary on a variety of political correctness in language issues, criticizing the public for going too far in attempting to be polite. Argues that before the left and the right can have meaningful conversations about policy, a common language must be established first.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B. Digg discussion board contents

Guillermox (+24 diggs)
He's absolutely right.
Children whose parents speak a foreign language at home are never in danger of losing that language.
Their schooling should be 100% in English.
Bilingual education/government only serves to keep people divided (a goal of the liberals).

30 Replies to Guillermox:

cameron074 (+24 diggs)
"Children whose parents speak a foreign language at home are never in danger of losing that language."
-I agree
"Bilingual education/government only serves to keep people divided (a goal of the liberals)."
-I don't really understand the "government" aspect of it but bilingual education is not a tool used to separate people. It sounds like it scares you for some reason.

Aceg1357 (+146 diggs)
There was a survey done on the parents of immigrants. Something like 95% of them wanted their kids education done in as much English as possible. But lefty white liberals think they know better. English is a big part of being successful in the US as well as the native language of any country you want to be successful in.

Detritus (+10 diggs)
Okay, I'm with you on it being pretty annoying to go to a store and not have the guys understand you and vice versa, but let's be constructive here. Getting uppity and angry isn't helping anyone, and neither is any of this crap Newt is on about. If you want people to speak English, then help them. Make friends with someone who speaks broken English. The reason they're not learning is because they aren't welcomed by most English speakers and so they stay in their own community.

If you can pull someone out of their community just a little bit and present them with a comfortable environment for them to learn to speak English without being judged they'll take it! No one wants to be in a land and not speak the language.

If you can't make friends with brown people, there are plenty of white people who could use your help too. Here in Chicagoland we have a lot of Latvian and Polish folks who are staying comfortably within their own communities without integrating because Americans aren't trying to welcome and integrate them. When I'm in a Chinese restaurant I'll try to chat up the people behind the counter just to give them an opportunity to practice English beyond the mechanized "What you order? Ok, pickup or delivery?". They're usually very grateful for the opportunity, and I've seen a dramatic improvement in the accent of one such new found friend.

Don't go bitching on the internets, or persecuting people who are annoyed by the problem just as much as you are... solve the problem.

Inactive (-14 diggs)
April Fools!

Hbweb500 (+41 diggs)
The study aceg1357 was speaking of can be read here:
http://www.crpc.rice.edu/newsArchive/nsl_11_16_97.html

Personally, I think school should prepare students for the working world. In the US, business is done in English, so in order to be competitive, these kids have to learn the language. That said, how are teachers supposed to teach English without speaking the foreign language of the foreign student? Bilingual education is necessary in early education, but it should be phased out later in the careers of the students.

Radiantbeing (+94 diggs)
Gingrich is right. Before I get dismissed as a racist, I have watched my own first generation immigrant relatives either succeed or fail based on their ability to learn English. People can speak whatever language they please at home, but in academia and business, it's English if you want to be successful. I don't see why people should be allowed to fall back on their native languages in public school. That is only setting them up for failure, alienation, and disappointment. It also dilutes America's culture and creates a "divide and conquer" style of race-based politics. Teaching immigrants our ways is how we welcome them into our society. It is only in the interests of separatists and politicians to create separate linguistic classes. Finally, it is simply impractical to accommodate the hundreds of foreign languages out there.

Cliffzdude (+58):
"If you want people to speak English, then help them. Make friends with someone who speaks broken English."

I'm very fucking tired of every time somebody has an issue, somebody tries to come up with the "then YOU help" solution. Damn it, the issue here is whether the United Stated Government should be going out of its way to help non English speakers.

With this logic, I need to befriend a non English speaker and help him learn better English. Volunteer for Habitat for Humanity (Ok, already do that). Begin a grass roots initiative against the RIAA. Etc., etc., etc. Guess I can tell my family and their hungry mouths to FUCK OFF because I'm too busy being an activist...

Or...

Maybe the USA should help immigrants learn English the most successful way ever invented; TOTAL IMMERSION. If we hand enough aids out to non English speakers they won't learn the language, can't blame them. But if they truly want to get along, if they are forced to learn a few hundred words, guess what? THEY FUCKING WILL.

Elebrio (+34 diggs)
Teaching english is about giving people a leg up to communicate in the language of commerce in the United States. It's common sense.

PepeGSay (+36 diggs)
Being respectful but firm that a person must learn English and letting immersion be the teacher of a new language is the real path to success. This has been proven over and over again in the U.S. through multiple waves of immigrants. It's not because the rest of us are jerks, it is because there is a real and identifiable overwhelmingly dominate language in the U.S.: English. Immersion, and an understanding that it is the language you must learn for success, will allow people to learn it. Everything else is a crutch and a poor one at that.
**Dssstrki (-36 diggs)**

“We should replace bilingual education with immersion in English so people learn the common language of the country and they learn the language of prosperity, not the language of living in a ghetto”

Fuck Gingrich and fuck you.

**Dawnfall (-14 diggs)**

Sorry, but he's simply wrong. They tried to teach in our schools German to Arabic or Turkish kids and wondered why the results were more than poor. In the end they gave them lessons in their mother language and their skills in German rose remarkably. To learn your mother language forms your brain in a certain way and that helps you to learn other languages. The pupils who don't get that kind of education end up with speaking no language properly and fail at school. Bilingual education is the key when you want foreign kids, who don't speak English at home, to learn English.

**Donati (+30 diggs)**

Exactly, I wouldn't go to Sweden and expect my children to be taught in English.

**Y0tsuya (+23 diggs)**

You white liberals just don't understand. We immigrants WANT to learn English. At the very least, we want our kids to speak fluent English so they won't be stuck in ethnic ghettos like we do. We recognize the opportunity presented by blending into society and we want our kids to have a piece of the pie. White guilt must have short circuited your liberal brains or something. FYI our family immigrated from Taiwan. I've lived in various low-income ethnic enclaves throughout childhood. Maybe things were different back then.

**Skew009 (+9 diggs)**

to donatj,

If you went to Sweden then you actually WOULD expect your children to learn English since it is required for all students there.

**Birdoftruth (+14 diggs)**

I never thought I would actually agree with Gingrich on something but he is right on this one.

**Tech42er (+8 diggs)**

An interesting thing is that this non bilingualism in commonly practiced in China where all children are taught only in Mandarin. Now, in China, there is an unbelievable amount of mutually unintelligible languages/dialects. All education is done in Mandarin, however, so that everyone can talk to one another. Many of the children still speak one language at home and one in school, but they all speak, learn, and think in Mandarin. Mandarin is the official language of China. Newt is proposing we do the same thing here in America. It seems to work in China. I am an English-speaking American, by th way, who is learning Mandarin Chinese as a second language.

**Vet4Peace (-10 diggs)**

Keeping people divided is "a goal of the liberals"?

If you can't make a point without resorting to idiotic smears you should just shut up instead.

**Inactive (+14 diggs)**

If I moved to Spain, I would learn Spanish. I wouldn't complain or expect the Spanish government to cater to my native language. I don't see why America should be any different.
Inactive (+15 diggs)
I'm a liberal and I agree. I don't get it. If you have to be a citizen to vote and you have to speak English to become a citizen, why should ballots be in any language other than English?

RickyBarnes1960 (-9 diggs)
100% "English"? Just what is that exactly? Without acknowledging it, ALL Americans live in a multilingual/multicultural community whether they appreciate it or not. This has always been the case and likely always will be.

"English" has not the "purity" you believe it does. The entire language is derivative. Then again, saying a language is derivative is redundant to say the least. "Derivative" is the very nature of all language.

RickyBarnes1960 (-10 diggs)
It's humorous to see dyed-in-the-wool, red-white-and-blue-blooded, flag-waving, patriotic, America-Love-It-Or-Leave-It Americans argue for the widespread use and teaching of English. After all, they will be among the first to tell you that aren't English ... they're Americans. I can assure you, the "english" spoken by the English isn't precisely the "english" spoken by Americans.

As a professional linguist, I can say it's certainly appropriate if Americans - whoever and whatever that is - want to begin saying they speak "american" or in the least speak "american english". There are certainly sufficient differences between what the English speak and what "Americans" speak to justify some new name. Then again, the "american english" spoken in Boston or New York isn't quite the "american english" spoken in deep southern Alabama or Los Angeles, San Angelo Texas, Seattle, Bozeman or Boise. Just what precisely IS the language you speak? Which "english" is the right one? Which "english" are you going to make official? Which gets sanction and what happens to all of the other versions and the people who speak them? Will we penalize them for not speaking "properly"?

At any rate, no matter what name you give to the language you speak, you can be certain that no two individuals speak the SAME language despite the fact they seem to think they do. I can assure you, quite in spite of the fact my father, mother, brother, son, two ex-wives and one present wife are all "native" speakers of "English", none of us speaks the SAME language as the rest ... if you know what I mean.

Asian1 (+7 diggs)
Integration is the responsability of the immigrant, and not of society. Society can't be bending and contorting itself to accommodate each and every personal discrepancy. You want to be accepted, make an effort. The rest of the population aren't going to run their lives around keeping your special needs uppermost in their minds. Don't live in a dreamworld. The world is not going to stop for you, it's not going to revolve around you.

Why immigrate to a country whose language, culture and general environment you don't like? It's like moving to Antarctica while complaining you don't like cold weather, or moving to Death Valley while complaining you don't like the heat. Don't like it? Then don't go. Some people always want to have their cake and eat it too.

When you go to live in a particular country, it's pretty much a no-brainer that you have to learn the language there. Otherwise, you're not going to be able to function properly without being able to communicate. Learn how to communicate with others, rather than hoping the rest of society will have to stop and figure out how to communicate with you. It's all pretty simple and common sense.

This isn't rocket science.
Posneg (0 digs)
@detritus

Everything you said is bullshit.

Inactive (-9 digs)
Right because people who can speak two or more languages always think to themselves "Gee, I really wish I DIDN'T know how to speak \{xxx\}ish"

I'm usually a conservative voter? But Newt Gingrich is a fat bag of donkey crap.

Onyxblaze (+4 digs)
@ RickyBarnes1960
What an idiot. If you are a professional linguist you should quit now. I'm still in high school, but I can grasp the basic concepts my ENGLISH teacher has taught me. People in Boston speak English. People in California, and the deep south also speak English. It's this radical new idea known as a "dialect" that has only been around since, oh, i don't know, language was invented. So STFU because you don't know what the hell you're talking about.

Eonblue (-4 digs)
@Gullermox
"(a goal of the liberals)."
WOW just WOW. What a blatant dumb ass comment. You dont think its a goal of the conservatives either? Just take a look at the last couple of elections. (infact I don't even know where that liberal comment comes from, aren't they for trying to make as many people as possible middle class?)

As for the whole topic. If you're in america you should speak english within a year of being here. Communication is ESSENTIAL.

Kuzotz (-4 digs)
@cliffzdude

Well you try learning English in Mexico... You won't get the fucking chance to its like asking you to learn Turkish in Kansas... I mean fluently, so you won't piss off anyone Turkish when you get here. People want to learn the language. Bilingual teaching I have no problem with. If anything we should have a program better than the ESL one that allows americans whose parents are immigrants to better cope with being bilingual, and improve on their English skills. Sure sure you guys are bitching and whining that you don't wanna fund these programs because they won't benefit your kids, but it will benefit us as a whole. You guys will keep bitching if we keep at our current policy... Its like with the alcohol age..

its 21 because 18-20 year olds drink and drive.

But because its 21 it caused a huge binge drinking culture that developed in the 90s..

Its now used as a form of reinforcement to keep it at 21 even though DUI related accidents would be reduced if we lowered the age to atleast 19, and had striker DUI laws, and stricter requirements for getting licenses.

You see.. Making it to 21 didn't do shit.
Yes this is a good example because all of the white americans are knee jerking into xenophobia which is only going to make it worse. By 2020 rather you like it or not. You're kids/grandkids will know more than one language..

That must be a horrific thing that they will be bilingual within a globalised society.

BTw the average age for a DUI driver is around 30, and only int he suburbs do 15-19 year olds get DUI's.

Drmangrum (+7 diggs)
@skyshock
The point Newt was making obviously went over your head. He's not saying that Americans shouldn't learn other languages, he's saying we shouldn't HAVE to learn other language to placate the migrant masses. America is about accepting other cultures, not bending our own to meet theirs.

Oracle95 (+8 diggs)
I grew up with a family that spoke Italian, my husband, German. Technically, we're not quite bilingual, but if we were fluent, we still would not qualify as such in Texas. That's because for whatever reason, "Mexican" Spanish is considered superior to any other foreign language or culture. Amazingly many jobs here, including government work require fluency in Spanish, even though to be an American citizen, you need proficiency in English. This English requirement was to create a "melting pot" of culture where all people become equal. Requiring bilingualism means that some cultures are "more equal" than others. Anyone from a culture, not Hispanic, is actively discriminated against.

By the way, organizations like Lulac are by definition "bigots" because they are focused solely on the welfare of one race to the exclusion of all others. When their people get caught breaking the law, they scream "RACISM" rather than address the problem, which was breaking the law that everyone else in our society has no problem with complying with.

Mekongcola (+7 diggs)
"Peter Zamora, co-chair of the Washington-based Hispanic Education Coalition, which supports bilingual education, said, "The tone of his comments were very hateful."

Must these people ALWAYS turn to the race card? It makes me want to dismiss their comments out of hand as soon as I hear shiat like this...

He's simply stating a fact that most American speak English and its silly to try to accommodate a million other languages. Not to mention how hard it is trying to live and work in the US without being able to speak English...

Newbee70 (+3 diggs)
Amen!

3 Replies to Newbee 70:

Bartboy919 (-62 diggs)
"Peter Zamora, co-chair of the Washington-based Hispanic Education Coalition, which supports bilingual education, said, "The tone of his comments were very hateful."
Must these people ALWAYS turn to the race card? It makes me want to dismiss their comments out of hand as soon as I hear shiat like this...

He's simply stating a fact that most American speak English and its silly to try to accommodate a million other languages. Not to mention how hard it is trying to live and work in the US without being able to speak English...

Nudar (+60 diggs)
I wasn't aware that race had anything to do with it. English speakers consist of pretty much every ethnicity on the face of the planet.

SlyrEagle23 (-2 diggs)
The only things saving us from being racist when we talk about Spanish are Spain and Argentina. Otherwise, we would be breaking the rule that if you talk shit about anything used, done or said primarily by a minority group, you're a racist... ;)

Slugicide (-45 diggs)
Is this the same Gingrich who was having affair while trying to impeach Clinton?

5 Replies to Slugicide:

29Victor (+29 diggs)
Wow, what a well thought out argument. Now that's a head scratcher. Hmmmmm.
I am just so dumbfounded by your superior logic and eloquence. Golly gee. You really nailed it with that one. Your ability to debate is stunning. Yes, I am indeed in awe.

Junkyyarddawg (-18 diggs)
Yes, this is the same Newt Gingrich who had an extramarital affair while trying to find something, anything, to impeach Clinton for, and whom eventually opted to impeach him for not being upfront about his extramarital affair.

Unloud (-5 diggs)
Yes, of course it's the same Newt Gingrich. Is that a common name where you live or something?

Elebrio (+28 diggs)
Rep's were impeaching him for PERJURY. Not for having an affair. Nice try tho.

Pabster (+6 diggs)
"Rep's were impeaching him for PERJURY. Not for having an affair. Nice try tho."
Perjury, and Obstruction Of Justice, vis-a-vi his coercion of Lewinsky filing and testifying to a knowingly false affidavit.
Don't bother arguing the point, though. Democrats will continue to worship their Saint and insist it was "just a blowjob"...
Hell Clinton himself, to this day, maintains that was all it was. He's as delusional as ever.

Aceg1357 (-6 diggs)
Way to stay on issue. Yes I believe he was having an affair while trying to impeach Clinton for a felony-perjury.

7 Replies to Aceg1357:
**Junkyarddawg (-17 diggs)**

Clinton was being investigated for corruption (google or wiki "Whitewater scandal"). When it turned out that he'd done nothing wrong at all, the partisan special investigator, Starr, and his enablers, among them Gingrich, continued to subpoena Clinton aides for no reason at all other than to find something, anything, to smear Clinton with. There were rumors that Clinton had had an affair, so they latched on to that - they didn't think they could make it stick, but it wouldn't matter, it'd still smear Clinton and obstruct the work in the White House. After subpoenaing and threatening to jail people around Clinton, including Lewinsky, it was found out that Clinton had indeed had an affair, and lied about it under oath to protect his marriage.

And all along, Gingrich had an extramarital affair.

The point Slugicide makes is that Gingrich is an amoral piece of scum, who has no place lecturing others on morals.

**Aecg1357 (+31 diggs)**

Again I'm not exactly sure how his point is related to bilingual education but people with Bush derangement syndrome say the funniest things.

Clinton didn't get impeached for getting a blow job like the myth goes-google that.

He got impeached for perjury.

If you lie under oath for ANY reason, it is perjury.

Clinton lied under oath-check

Lying under oath is perjury-check

Perjury is a felony-check

A president should be impeached if there is evidence he or she committed a felony-check.

One of those people that plays a role in the impeachment process is the speaker of the house-check.

Person involved in the impeachment process cannot commit any amoral acts- not a check.

Again this has nothing to do with adultery. It is about perjury.

**Cliffzdude (+33 diggs)**

CLAP - CLAP - CLAP

FOCUS PEOPLE! FOCUS!

The issue here isn't Newt getting some, or Clinton getting some, its about language.

Thanks...

**Inactive (+3 diggs)**

The point Slugicide makes is that Gingrich is an amoral piece of scum, who has no place lecturing others on morals."

I wonder where junkyarddawg makes the same statements about Gore and his energy wasting opulence?

**Tomboy501 (-9 diggs)**

@aceg1357

Whenever a powerful politician says something incredibly ignorant and stupid in front of a "wildly cheering" audience during an election season, it is a a natural reflex to reference a history of that politician doing or saying incredibly stupid things in the past to note a pattern in that politician's behavior or thought processes. These things should be noted. Sure, it's an issue.

Technically, Gingrich's comments yesterday on languages other than English in America being the "language of the ghetto" have nothing to do with his affair or his investigation of Clinton. It's just another example of Newt Gingrich's offensive ideology and bad judgment. In this case, he is
promoting a shockingly ignorant philosophy...and stirring up the country's worst racist elements. This is Gingrich's idea of "innovative discourse"?

And this view is nothing new for him. He's talking about other languages...not rap-speak. These comments of his in 1995 (FTA) are most notable: bilingualism poses "long-term dangers to the fabric of our nation" and that "allowing bilingualism to continue to grow is very dangerous."

America doesn't need leaders like this.

**Appetite (-9 diggs)**

a) Gingrich is a giant douche bag.
b) I personally believe he's got a point on this issue. His douche bag syndrome does not prevent me from mulling over his opinion on an issue and coming up with my own opinion and then relaying that back to the community for discussion.
c) Clinton's impeachment was a circus for ass-clowns. It doesn't matter that it was technically "for perjury". It was OVER a "blow job". It doesn't take a Bush-hater to recognize how much of a debacle that whole thing was.
d) I like bulleted lists.

**Kuzotz (-3 diggs)**

we know he fucking lied under oath, but he lied about getting a fucking blow job. My god why the fuck was that even a question under oath?

**Pats1237 (-9 diggs)**

Newt is right...except for this part
"English...the language of prosperity, not the language of living in a ghetto..."

What an arrogant piece of shit. Knowing this country, the deranged righties in this countries will run to this hypocritical ass while the moron lefties will run to slim ball Hillary and yet again, we will have no real choice during the next election except two scumbags.

5 replies to Pats1237:

**Korvan504521 (+12 diggs)**

how is that not right? talking with the sort of accent your hear from rappers is not likely to get you a job as anything *other* than a rapper. and there aren't that many openings in that paticular job market.

**Pintomp3 (-10 diggs)**

korvan: how about having a southern accent? someone is going to base your qualifications on your accent, a hip-hop accent shouldn't be any worse than a southern accent.

**Chicknbot (+34 diggs)**

Accent is a different thing than language.
Who would you hire?
Chump #1 "Zupp pops, I decided to slide my ass into yo' corner to see if you could get gig, ya know, to assist ya' with the shiznit"
[ or ]
Chump #2 "Hello Mr. Williams, I thought I it would be a good idea to stop by to see if you have any job openings in your store, for customer service"

**CourtesyFlush (+23 diggs)**
Please, let's NOT get into discussing a purposely mangled version of racially separatist English. Misspellings, slappin' hoes and calling everyone "nigger" is ghetto. It comes from the ghetto. It is formulated to promote ghetto values. Anyone who says otherwise is in denial. It is NOT an accent. Natural regional accents are not the issue. We are talking about knowing a language and speaking it properly.

**Kuzotz (+1 digg)**
@courtesyflush
You're an idiot, and I can tell you never lived in a ghetto.
ghettos do have a lot of ignorant people, but they sure as hell don't brag about it. All that shit you hear in mainstream rap music today is directed towards one type of consumer. Middle class White Suburbanites.. You guys eat that stuff up, and its the only reason why these shitty albums hit plat.
When I got into University, and saw how a white person would approach me I was appalled that they actually thought I was some unintelligent guy who says yo yo yo. Hell most black people don't do that shit. I say this because the slang within black pop culture varies from city to city.
IF you walk up to someone, and say "wassup" to them in Chicago. You will get into a fight because that's a provocative statement that will cause conflict.
If you say whats up to someone in Houston. They say "they still say that shit?"
Its like saying foshizzle my nizzle in Atlanta. All of that is just pop culture for the youth. You will rarely hear a 35-40 year old use these terms unless they're a platt. rapper.
BTW listen to some underground rap..
immortal technique, Tonedeff
very political.
Icecube is also but thats just old skool rap.

**Sleepingcow (-16 diggs):**
i dint understand why people are even spending time on if we should make English as a official language or not. i think we have a lot of bigger problems to concentrate on improving our country and trying to make English the official language is just a waste of time for politic ans. besides why is it such a big deal?

3 Replies to Sleepingcow:

**Joe122370 (+27 diggs)**
because not having a unified language was the beginning of the end for all of the great civilizations throughout history. The Roman empire being the most notable. If English were declared the national language it would save this country billions of dollars in all the forms and govt services that are now printed in 10 different languages, and hiring of translators. All of that because people love the US enough to come here legally and sneak in illegally but not enough to learn the language and fit in or assimilate

**Sleepingcow (-12 diggs)**
the end of all great civilization? not sure about that. I'm not sure if the roman empire got destroyed because people didn't speak Latin.
anyways, i believe the guy said that something about if they cant do American history in English they cant be citizen or something like that. and you said how we would save a lot of $$.
if you think about it, immigrants help a lot to the economy. immigrants who come here for a better life work hard thus improving the economy. there are a lot of Americans who were born here and speak English well are just screwing up the economy by getting welfare checks etc. and also, you need to know history? seriously i can maybe understand if they said, learn English or math but history.
and as i said, look at screwed up social security issue, education issue, the gap between the rich and the poor, etc. they are a hell lot more important then making one unified language, and don't
forget the current war. if you want to save money, quit the war, you would save many times more then making a unified language.

**Cjhowe (+1 digg)**
@joe122370
"because not having a unified language was the beginning of the end for all of the great civilizations throughout history."
While I'm tempted to argue the validity of that statement, the goal of the experiment that is the United States of America is not to aspire to be a "great civilization". The goal is to simply secure liberty for ourselves and those that come after us. Being a great civilization may well be a by-product of liberty, but liberty is the focus, not greatness.

**Wonderkind (+14 diggs)**
A variety of languages is a stumbling block for the majority of people.
Why not have two or more alphabets? Because that would prevent many from understanding.
People with multiple languages can benefit by using them where they can.
One language unifies most everyone.

**Heavensblade23 (-9 diggs):**
There's nothing wrong with a bilingual education. Almost every western country in the world teaches a second language in addition to the primary native language. As an American, I wish I had been taught French Or Spanish in elementary school.

5 Replies to Heavensblade23:

**consoneo (+17 diggs)**
Yes, but you see, your argument still favors the Newt. Foreign countries DO teach a second language... but they still have their main language as the one and only. You don't see any country with a similar position to the US, except maybe Quebec. They have French and English because that's how the population has evolved. EVERYTHING has to be in French and English. Do they teach both? You bet. Do they teach in both languages? You bet.

Spain, or France on the other hand, only have enough foreign languages in everyday society to make it so Tourists are not completely lost. They do teach foreign languages, but the reason they do, namely, is to better acquaint the populous with a more successful nation's language, AKA English is the number one second language in the world, as far as I know. USA on the other hand, has become almost Quebequois in a way, where we're going to have Spanish and English on EVERYTHING, even the signs that say the Speed Limit. This is a no go!

The problem with the US integrating second languages into schools is that no other language is as ubiquitous as English. Well... I take that back... the only exception is Mathematics.

What language would we make mandatory?

French? No, The benefit does not outweigh any other non-english language. Sure France has some nice stuff, but it's not a superpower or world financial leader (Anymore).
German? No, The benefit does not outweigh any other non-english language. Sure Germany has some nice stuff, but it's not a superpower or world financial leader (Anymore).
Russian? No, The benefit does not outweigh any other non-english language. Sure Russia has some nice stuff, but it's not a superpower or world financial leader (Anymore).
Chinese? Maybe, The benefit may come to outweigh other languages in the future seeing as how their population almost equals if not surpasses Europe + US (English Speaking Countries, through national language or education).

In conclusion... Sure, maybe we SHOULD learn a foreign language during our childhood education. But I do not believe any other language than English, at the moment, is going to be a dominant conversation tool in the near future.

Acedefanbill (+11 diggs)
Me as well. I don't see what bilingual education has to do with official government language.

Consoneo (+7 diggs)
Dlgg me down, without reading my post, if you will, but take this into consideration as well... What makes it so that Spanish is THAT one language? What about all of the other people in the nation that speak other languages? Are we going to have to do everything in every language, as well as speak it?

Popcorndave (+8 diggs)
@HeavensBlade23
So what prevented you from taking a language in junior high or high school? That's what a lot of people do that want to learn a language. Besides that, usually there's a recreation department that offers some kind of language instruction at reasonable rates as well.
So why didn't you?

accticJKL (+1 digg)
consoneo,
Actually French is quite useful. I was the lingua franca for quite some time. There has not been a country I have visited that I did not use it.
I loved the fact that the post office forms in Greece were in french!

Szat (+3 diggs)
Finally...!

Artificial001 (+10 diggs)
you have to teach immigrants english. you have to walk before you can run.

5 Replies to Artificial001:

Foolfromhell (+6 diggs)
Or... make it law to know English to come to the US. After that, people who dont know English will be known to be Illegals...

Pintomp3 (+5 diggs)
damn, your going to kick out all those old italian grandmothers?

Bizchris (+7 diggs)
Immigrants have to learn english. They have to walk before they can run.
It's not our responsibility to teach them.

Spacejack (-5 diggs)
"You have to walk before you can run"
So your point is you can't learn any history without knowing English?
Do you people not realize that is what this is? People are being taught history, math, etc. in Spanish while SIMULTANEOUSLY BEING TAUGHT ENGLISH. What you seem to want is for someone to sit and listen to someone jabber a language they don't understand for six hours a day and be tested on it, and then spend ONE hour a day actually learning the language. It's an absurd position and one look at it will demonstrate that it's going to cripple the kids.

**Kuzotz (+2 diggs)**
@foolfromhell
you truly are a fool. We get tourist here... You do know that right?
REally how we treat our guest matters.

**Andrakon (+22 diggs)**
thing is I am polish, do you see anything in the US printed in polish? no, you rarely see even manuals for the most popular things printed in polish, but with spanish you see it everywhere in raleigh here there are spanish signs everywhere! It's not fair for other countries, if they would allow spanish signs and documents they should have other languagues too! also my mom when she immigrated here she had to know english, but these spanish people when they come here they can't speak english and they get citizenship and an easy ride over here. and some of them even get dual citizenship! my mom had to give hers up! this is how it is they treat the spanish immagrants better then anyone else.

3 Replies to Andrakon:

**Joe122370 (+14 diggs)**
this makes the point explicitly. If you do it for one then you have to do it for everybody mentality will run this country into the ground. Learn english when you come here and then there'll be no problems

**Yotsuya (+6 diggs)**
The very policy promoted by liberal politicians to ease ethnic tension between natives and immigrants is creating ethnic tension among immigrants. How ironic. Or was that the intention? To keep immigrants divided? We have the same issue with giving amnesty to illegal immigrants. Immigrants like us who came here legally do not appreciate special treatment given to illegals.

**Jewmanji (-3 diggs)**
I don't know how they do things elsewhere but in Chicago we provide election instructions in 15 languages. According to the board of elections the federal government requires ballot assistance in English, Spanish and Chinese. At the local level, we have a very diverse population and a heavy immigrant community, so other languages, such as Polish are very important to voters.

If English is declared as an official language, then this would arguably eliminate election instructions in multiple languages, or worse yet, ban them. So, the xenophobes on digg might ask, "What's wrong with that? English is the language we speak, all the other immigrants can learn English or not vote." That's an interesting point ethno-centrists, but the problem with that is that the point of an election is to get full participation of the citizenship. No matter what initiatives you legislate, there will not be a full english-speaking population. Another group of people we protect voting rights for are the illiterate. If you cannot read, you can have an assistant help you with your ballot. If you cannot speak english, you can have an assistant help you, or you will be provided instructions in your language.

Aside from telling people they cannot speak their own language or provide spanish signs on shops in latino neighborhoods because it inconveniences or confuses you, the suggestion of an official
language disenfranchises people. Maybe you could care less about these people because you don't speak their language, but they still have the same rights as you.

**NymphoChik (-19 diggs)**
So America has a huge problem spending, say, an extra $500,000 to print government brochures in other languages but it's o.k. to spend $1 billion dollars every 10 days on the war in Iraq? Why are non-passport holding, English-as-an-only-language Americans so scared of hispanics?

4 Replies to NymphoChik:

**Foolfromhell (+10 diggs)**
Because they have no right to change the lingual structure of the country and make the English speaking citizens learn THEIR language when THEY are the people that come over. They wish to come over, they need to learn the language. Not the other way around. We didnt ask them to come ever.

**No StoppingUs (+7 diggs)**
one billion every ten days versus pelosi spending 28 billion in pork in one day. hmmm. I

**No Stopping Us (-1 diggs)**
heart hypocrisy, and no one else can ever bitch about the cost of the war in iraq again

**MurderMystery (-2 diggs)**
Pork spending is a big deal now? Where were you for the past 7 years?

**Dukeg (-20 diggs)**
Dr. Newton Leroy Gingrich, PhD: xenophobic cocksucker...

1 Reply to Dukeg:

**BabyWookie (+1 digg)**
LOL! Awesome! Just awesome!

**Sqladmin (+2 diggs)**
I LOVE YOU NEWT !!
Finally. Lets have a standard language and move on!

**Taryok (-11 diggs)**
Personally, I think the government should be thought as being subordinate to the nation, and not the other way around. If English is the primary language spoken by Americans, it will be the primary language spoken by government. There is no need to "officialize" anything.

The fact is, there are places in this with a history that deviates from the nationalistic picture of a grand and total conquest by english-speakers, like my native California. Lots of folks here speak Spanish, deal with it. California used to be Spanish territory, and then Mexican territory. There are, to this day, places were folks, descended not from Mexican immigrants, but rather have been living in California for generations, who still speak a lot of Spanish. If Californians want Spanish ballots printed, I don't see what business it is of some busybody in Washington DC. I'd sooner see the Bear Flag Republic independent yet again, than see Yankee nationalism crammed down our throats!
**Soldan (+5 diggs)**

trust me people WANT to learn english....you just need to offer the resources.. I suppose these folks could just watch tv all day and hope to get it...

a huge percentage of people speak another language in the home .... In my area its over 50% and its not just spanish ..we also have enough russian speakers to need a extra section in our library for russian texts

**sbassin (+13 diggs)**

I consider myself a liberal, but this is one issue on which I agree with the conservatives. Nobody's policing what language people speak at home. Please continue to speak in your ancestral tongue there if you like.

I think that a lot of multiculturalism policy ends up being a policy of segregation. Is anybody suggesting that we all start speaking both Spanish AND English? No. Kids who end up not speaking English will be effectively cut off from the rest of society.

**CogitatorX (+11 diggs)**

A good place to start would be teaching so-called native English speakers to speak English as well.

**Chubbyduck (-6 diggs)**

The point of it isn't whether the student should learn English. We can all stipulate to that, but if there are immigrant children who enter the educational system, they are learning more subjects than English. So while their understanding of the English language lags behind, a teacher's inability to explain concepts in Math, History, Science, etc. all will also make them lag behind. They could enter our country or be American and come from cultures (like in LA or parts of Texas that speak predominantly Spanish) with a strong understanding of other subjects, but since they cannot learn new ideas while struggling with English, they can fall behind there as well. Why not clamp an anchor around their leg and force them to swim? Teaching bilingually when they start off can make sure they stay focused on school as a whole, and when their language skills catch up that they haven't fallen behind elsewhere.

2 Replies to Chubbyduck:

**Y0tsuya (+1 digg)**

Problem is people are discovering that they don't catch up. There's no incentive to, so they're not driven. These programs basically end up as dual-track systems. Academics suffer too, because all the intense competition are occurring in the English-track courses with Whites and Asians duking it out. The Spanish-track students are not exposed to that, and they lose out as a result. That may not have been the intention, but it's how things turn out.

**Drmangrum (+1 digg)**

Why is it our problem if an immigrants kids can't speak english or get an education? Last time I checked, our education system is strained to the max, and mostly due to the mentality that just because they are in America they should get everything an American does. An education is a privilege, not a right.

Let's not mince words, we know the most problematic group in regards to non-english speakers are the mexican immigrants. I'm really not too concerned with the legal ones as most of them have already taken steps to do things the right way. However, the illegal immigrants are the biggest problem. Those that bring their families are adding between 2-4 children each in most cases. So now, not only does the school system have to make space for a lot of new students, they have to provide a means to communicate with them. New funds are not allocated, old ones are re-allocated. This means that natural born children are losing a lot of resources for their education. Add to the fact that most of the immigrant students can't understand a bulk of the material due to
language barriers and we have a massive failing in the system. Not only are American children losing out, the immigrant children are losing out as well.

To use an education analogy, do you teach a child algebra if they haven't mastered the 4 basic functions of math? Of course not. Nor do you teach a child history and biology if they can't understand the language it's taught in.

Dime (-2 digs)
My grandfather came here when he was a young man. He only had a 2nd grade education and was basically illiterate. He fought for this country in WWII, opened up an business, employed a dozen people and gave back to the local economy, paid taxes and saluted the flag. Yet, through all that, he never really could grasp English. Even today, most "native" Americans have trouble understanding what he's trying to say and he uses government forms in his own language whenever possible.

So here's a guy... veteran... business owner... patriotic American... who pasty xenophobic chickenhawks like Gringrich think shouldn't be able to vote on a ballot he can understand because it's not "American" enough for them.

Some of you folks should be ashamed of yourselves.

3 Replies to Dime:

Jjesusfreak01 (+4 digs)
Honestly though, ballots are fairly simple, and dont usually need written instructions. Last time I voted, the only thing that had to be written out to understand was that in certain sections you could vote for 2 or more people rather than one. Even then, the numbers were underlined and in all caps, so if you can recognize english numbers, you would still be okay.

Dime (+1 digg)
"Honestly though, ballots are fairly simple, and dont usually need written instructions. Last time I voted, the only thing that had to be written out to understand was that in certain sections you could vote for 2 or more people rather than one. Even then, the numbers were underlined and in all caps, so if you can recognize english numbers, you would still be okay."

Ballots are more often than not more than simply voting for names. Initiatives, referendums and local budgets all are routinely voted on.
Good to see the conservative brigade digg me down en masse, though.

Drmangrum (+1 digg)
The difference between the current problem and your grandfather is your grandfather didn't EXPECT anything. He fought for it, he took steps to succeed on his own. He may not be able to speak it well, but that doesn't mean he doesn't understand it. Effort goes a long way. Many of the immigrants who come over expect to be given a paycheck, education, healthcare, etc, etc. They don't pay into the tax system that supplies such things, they just take.

I'm all for helping a person when they are down, but we have too many Americans who are down and should be serviced first. Let me ask you this:

Is it fair for illegal immigrants to have an easier time starting a business than an American?
Is it fair for illegal immigrants to have an easier time getting a college education than an American?
Is it fair for illegal immigrants to receive welfare even though they have never paid taxes?
Is it fair for illegal immigrants to file taxes, receive the Earned Income Credit and all the child credits (several thousand dollars) for FREE when they paid nothing in?

**Thedpshow (+12 diggs)**
Bilingualism is not a threat to the nation by any means. The real danger comes from only knowing one language other than English and living in the United States. There are no downsides to speaking multiple languages as an individual. Now, if the United States began to discourage non-English speaking immigrants from learning English by printing legal documents in multiple languages all the time and allowing public schools to be taught primarily in other languages besides English, then there's a problem. The article does not clearly specify whether Gingrich is against individual bilingualism or national bilingualism through holding two de facto official languages, but the difference is critical and the article is too ambiguous to draw any conclusions from.

2 Replies to Thedpshow:

**inactive (+4 diggs)**
that was really well thought out, balanced and great to read; thanks

**CaspianXth (0 diggs)**
I've read a lot of Gingrich's stuff. He's not against individual bilingualism, he's for English as the official language of the United States and an aptitude for English as a citizenship requirement. The majority of the American people want it and the majority of immigrants want it for their children to give them a better chance. The majority of the people against it are white liberals who think they know better than the people it affects.

**Gabrielg01 (-12 diggs)**
Banish Newt Gingrich! He's an idiot. The secret to Newt's language phobia is in his name...I mean, isn't "newt" a frog or salamander-like creature? Perhaps Gingrich's parents were really poor English speakers, and they named their kid after a frog. Now 'Newt' wants to revenge his shitty childhood and ban other languages. Multilingual people tend to be smarter. Neocons don't like that. Neocons need a mass of tards, who can be scared by the terrorist humbug, and just sit by quietly as they rape our Constitution. Remember habeas corpus?

3 Replies to Gabrielg01:

**ltkomi (+7 diggs)**
@gabrielg01
Amazing how you left-leaning braniacs can't stay on the topic. It doesn't even matter what it is, rather than have a meaningful dialogue about something you always end up whining about politics and attacking someone or some group that doesn't believe the way you do. Here's a suggestion for you, when you have an intelligent thought - post it here, when you want to just rant - go visit Kos.

**Smallestmills (-6 diggs)**
The only reason he doesn't want bi-lingual ballots is so non-English speakers won't vote (against him).

**CapianXth (-1 digg)**
Yes, let's start attacking names. Supporting Barack Hussein Obama for president? Grow up.

**Jellygraph (-5 diggs)**
I say, abolish Newt Gingrich
he is a vile hypocrite, with no morals and preaches hate, while cheating on his wife who was being treated for cancer
actions speak louder than words, and this guy is bad through and through

**pintomp3 (+11 diggs)**
i think everyone should learn at least another language early on. i was raised speaking only bengali at home, and took latin for 3 years in high school. it's amazing the insight you gain into your primary language. it makes you analyze the roots of words, context, and sentence structure. teaching students only the dominant language, cutting science education, teaching based solely to pass standardized tests, and focusing the curriculum only for the job market is very short sighted and will put our future generation at an even worse competitive disadvantage with respect to other countries.

**Englishganxta (0 diggs)**
This just describes the ignorance of Americans, most countries have two or more languages that are big.
England = English and French
Italy = Italian and English

**Pabster (-4 diggs)**
Newt is looking better by the day. I hope he runs for President in 2008.
He is spot on with his comments, as usual. English IS the language of prosperity.

**MephistoX (+2 diggs)**
I strongly support English as our national language and think all these signs in spanish and other languages should be taken down.
English is the language (even if it's not officially) of the united states and everyone should know how to speak it.
However, I do think being bilingual is good, if only because it lets us communicate with people outside of our country that don't speak english. And apparently it makes kids smarter, so that's good too.
...But outside in public in the USA, there should be no non-english signs put up by our government

**Gabrielg01 (+8 diggs)**
The hypocrisy is that there is an immense number of native English speakers who graduate from high-school, yet they are illiterate or semi-literate.
The problems in our educational system are not caused by bilingual education. The problems are caused by shitty education, irrespective of the language used. So don't take it out on the Spanish, because nothing will improve.

**Salte (-2 diggs)**
Bilingual education helps students learn English and stay in schools. Students take Math, Social Studies and Science in bilingual classes (meaning their native language and English) while they also take the other subjects in regular English classes. Like the rest of the students, the ones in bilingual must take an English proficiency test in order to earn a high school diploma and they do better than the students who do not receive support in their native language and overall better than the so called mainstream students.

**Johnnyfatman (-8 diggs)**
Newt Gingrich - What a name!

**Rickpdx (+7 diggs)**
As a bilingual speaker of English and Spanish (whose native language was Spanish), I couldn't agree more. I think Gingrich has this exactly right. My experience has shown that without strong competence in educated English, people are locked out of top rate jobs and work opportunities. I know people from Mexico who have been here 30 years and still know little English. Of course, they also work in low-paying
It angers me to see signage, government communications, etc., in any language other than English. To which country do these immigrants (legal and illegal) think they are coming? If you go to a country and wish to succeed, you learn its language and well. Except for refugees, no one should be admitted to this country who doesn't have the desire and ability to succeed and contribute. End of story.

I Reply to Rickpdx:

NSResponder (+5 diggs)
I would also just mention that in California, "bilingual education" is a way for hypocrites to segregate hispanic kids while pretending to be looking out for their interests. I've heard of kids who've never spoken spanish getting assigned to these classes just because they had Spanish last names.
It's a dirty secret that California liberals don't like to talk about, which is they contempt they've had towards spanish-speakers ever since the state was land-grabbed from Mexico. Oh, and you can count on any so-called liberal getting positively vicious when you let them know that their racism is showing.
-jcr

ronar (-4 diggs)
I completely agree to abolish bilingual education. It has to be trilingual.

Inactive (0 diggs)
The Northern European countries have continually been honored as the tech leaders for the 21st Century.
In all of these countries people speak at least two languages, if not more.
Sometime I grow tired of living in the fucking stupid, lazy united states where no one demands better public schooling and universal health care.
The fact that other countries have better schooling, better health care and innovation to boot really saddens me.
People will say "well, the United States is unique" -- but that's what got us here in the first place.
+----------------- Pride cometh before the fall. +-----------------
Now let's go into Iran...

7 Replies to inactive:

inactive (+5 diggs)
Your violation of the English language leads me to believe that you enjoyed your time in the US Public School System. For every ten of you, though, there is a child who actually studies and learns.
And in response to your "universal healthcare" and other socialist demands..
What happens if the Post Office loses your letter? Nothing. They won't look for it, and their machines constantly eat letters.
What happens at the DMV? You wait in line, the only line even though there are 5 windows just the one is open, and after 2 hours, the lady says you need a different form or are in the wrong line.
Yeah, when I'm bleeding to death I want the government responsible for my health care.

Inactive (+3 diggs)
corporations are not beholden to anyone.
the government is accountable to voters
fascism is when corporations _become_ the government
when you say you want everything outsourced to "efficient" private companies (Halliburton? Enron?) what you are really doing is being a Stalinist.
the gov't is the only thing that ever made a five day work week, a minimum wage, child labor laws, etc. remove gov't and you remove any last grain of control over our society that we have

bluM68 (+1 digg)
If you're tired of living in the best country in the world then get the fuck out. BTW all those other countries that you love have income tax rates of 75% or more.

Inactive (-1 digg)
keep spewing anger at me instead of the financial planners and you'll continue to take your eye off the ball.

instead making this a black and white issue can you ask yourself "how come I work all the time and yet still have lower standard of living than many other industrialized countries?" or "how come I most likely can't buy a house unless I have a two income family?"
again, its my feeling that you're clearly angry but are taking your anger out on the wrong people. in your world you feel that if government would just get out of the way private business would do a much better job,
in point of fact, however, the government is by-and-large doing exactly what your business "friends" want them to do and has caused the post WWII downward quality of life that you cherish as "the best in the world."
and... in regards to your "love it or leave it" idea(s):

it seems to me that by hating people that are asking questions about the gutting of the middle class you are, in essence, sticking your head in the sand. again, instead of questioning why a country with all our abundance has been essentially run into the ground in the last 20-30 years and demanding answers you will keep us the fantasy that if everyone just works hard that the system, as is, will take care of everyone. now, that might be all well and good for you - you might be (like me) on Easy Street ... but what about all the poor people that are going to lose everything to their [albeit foolish] credit card woes or mortgages when the property value bubbles burst? What happens when basic City and local services continue to be cut (aka consolidated for efficiency) and you or others you care about need those services? Has it ever occurred to you that what we are living in now is not sustainable -- and that, on top of that, people want to extend the current environment even more? Will armed gangs need to be on the street or people literally cooking dogs and cats for food in hobo jungles before you admit that America is fucked up?

At what point would you break down and admit that things are not OK? And, when you did wake up to the loss of the American middle class would you then be willing to do the painful soul searching required in comparing what you want America to be vs. what you see around you? And how would you react to that?

NSResponder (+2 diggs)
"corporations are not beholden to anyone."
Yes, they are. Ever heard of "customers" or "shareholders"? Look it up.
-jcr

inactive (0 diggs)
so you are saying that you have more influence over corporations than you do the government? WTF?

Pabster (+3 diggs)
"If you're tired of living in the best country in the world then get the fuck out."
AMEN BROTHA!
Couldn't have said it better myself.
**Inactive (+6 diggs)**
I work with a man from South America, and he refuses to allow his child to speak anything but English. Even at home, he makes his son speak English. It makes sense, because it forces him (the father) and his wife to improve their English, too. And their son helps them learn it.

**Urusai (-10 diggs)**
Ain't nuffin wrong wit a ghetto accent, wiggaz be frontin it all day long and chillin in da burbs maxin wit da Accord and sippin on Faygo, werd. Eh, woteva.

1 Reply to Urusai:

**pintomp3 (-10 diggs)**
well ah reckin if yall have a problem with folks tawkin differen, then ah guess i'm plum outta luck.

1 Reply to pintomp3:

**1dog (+10 diggs)**
You have to try and educate people in this country. You can't have nonproductive, non hopeful masses roaming the streets. You want everyone to speak English, but you also want everyone on the same page. If we don't want all of these non English people here in America lets round them up and ship them out. Otherwise lets help them become productive parts of American culture. Even if it means bilingual education.

**Notioste (0 diggs)**
Having immigrated to Canada a few years ago, I feel I have a few things to say about this issue. I agree that, since the US is a primarily English-speaking country, the educational system should make sure that everyone who goes to school there can speak it fluently. Submerging students in English classes is a pretty good way to achieve that. When I came to Canada, all my classes were in English and I quickly learned to speak it. It depends on the individual children, but the majority will probably be better off if they are surrounded by the English language when they are learning it. Teaching English, however, is completely different from making sure that people only speak English, which seems to be what this guy is trying to promote.

What really inflames me about Gingrich's speech is his statement that "allowing bilingualism to continue to grow is very dangerous." Bilingualism means being able to speak two languages. It is not dangerous in any way. It is precisely this backwards attitude that lies at the root of problems like racial discrimination. Frankly, I am appalled by the number of comments that support Gingrich's views. English language is not the language of prosperity, and other languages are not 'ghetto' in any way. They are languages, parts of culture, ways to communicate with one another, and if you expect people who come to your country to learn your language, you should also be ready and accepting to learn other languages to communicate with people in other parts of the world.

I may be biased in my views, since Canada is a proud multicultural country, but being able to speak more than one language should be almost mandatory in today's schools. If people of different cultures are to get along, understanding and appreciating one another's views is of great importance. Learning a foreign language is one of the best ways to do that.

1 Reply to Notioste:

**Kuzotz (+1 digg)**
Yea I'm immigrating to Canada once I get my Bachelor's in International Studies. By then I would've done a few internships, and a few study abroad, and I'm working my way through
college so I already have the work experience down. I have my associates right now, and so I could very well score a 67 easily, but I wanna wait until I have a guaranteed job in Canada.

Gquaglia (+1 digg)
I agree with Newt. If you want to live and work in this country then you should learn the language. Refusal to assimilate into this society is the main reason why so many are against immigrants in the first place. Besides most of these people who need bi-lingual education are illegal anyway and have no place in the public school system were their parents contribute nothing in the way of taxes to fund these schools.

I Reply to Gquaglia:

Gquaglia (+2 diggs)
I love how the libs come in here and digg down every comment that is not in step with their vision of the world.

Awseft (+6 diggs)
I think it is important that children get the opportunity to learn another language and get to use it with others that speak that language here or abroad. The problem here is the confusion between teaching children/adults English and allowing them to continue living here without learning English. I have no problem taking in an immigrant who wants to become a citizen and helping them learn English. The problem lies in those that come here, have children that are citizens, children that learn English, and parents who remain ignorant to learn it.

Social security is a program designed to help citizens (no?). Why is the first question "For English press 1, For Spanish press 4". And don't give me this they all want to learn crap. I worked as a manager in a large box retail store. One day an associated called me saying a customer needed help and he couldn't help her. When I get there the lady said (in English) "I need someone who speak Spanish". My response was "I'm sorry, my Spanish speaking associate isn't here. Can I try to help you?". "NO! This is discrimination! I'm never coming here again.". Discrimination?

Irishjohn74 (-5 diggs)
Gingrich is a scumbag. now that I have that out of the way I want to let you know whats going on in California. In the last 10 years the amount of bilingual signage in stores, malls, doctors offices etc has increased to the point where I have to remember what country I'm in. The government Federal, state and local are making it too easy for Spanish speakers not to have to learn English. Spanish speakers should definitely hang on to their own language and culture but should be encouraged to learn English and total immersion is the best way. I am an immigrant to this country and while I grew up speaking English at home I also speak Gaelic. Should my kids be taught Gaelic in school, should the DMV provide me with forms and a Gaelic translator!!!! The answer is NO. English should be taught in schools and it is my responsibility as a parent to teach my kids the language and culture of their people not the fucking government.

Did I mention that Gingrich is a scumbag

Cassius2117 (+14 diggs)
I'm in a romanian community, and a lot of my friends came from Romania between the ages of 7-13 not speaking any english at all. They were put in school and were totally lost at first, but very quickly learned english because they needed to. Now they are all fluent in english and romanian. This seems to only be targeted at spanish speakers, but there are so many other languages that you can't find someone to translate for, and the kids just have to learn english the same way they learned their native languages growing up.... from hearing it. I agree that teaching in spanish is going to hinder the kids later in life, and is actually
taking a great opportunity away from them. It's so much easier for young people to learn languages and less of a burden on them to do it early rather than when they are out trying to work. So I agree teaching in public schools should be done only in English, with special programs to help those who can't speak it learn as quickly as possible.

LeeSoong (+7 diggs)
English Only - or look forward to the total collapse and downfall of the United part of the USA. Around Here, we got Asians, Polish, German, Russian, African, Spanish, Mexican, Indian. The only way any work gets done is that EVERYBODY speaks English, and speaks fluently. If bilingual education is offered to young students, then a full range of choices should be required of the school district: Japanese, Chinese, German, Russian, French, etc. etc. etc.

2 Replies to LeeSoong:

Twinklyjesus (+6 diggs)
OKay: We're not talking about foreign language classes here. Get it straight! We are talking about classes where non-English speaking students are taught in their native languages. They are NOT teaching English-speaker's to speak Spanish. They are talking about teaching American History, Algebra, Science, etc. in Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, etc. This is monumentally cost prohibitive and very unsuccessful. We have always had foreign language classes available in public schools, here in the US. Gingrich is NOT addressing that. The cost of employing a teacher for every possible language that could be encountered from immigrants is prohibitive, not to mention the cost of printing every government document (Federal, State and Local) in every possible language is killing us in taxes.

Y0tsuya (+4 diggs)
Bilingual education is a waste of taxpayers' money. We often forget how easy it is for kids to pick up new languages through total immersion. Teaching to them in their native language is just a veiled attempt at segregation (separate but equal). The result is a whole group of people in the country being held back. This while spending taxpayer money through extra teachers and support infrastructure. Whoever came up with this nutty idea should be publicly flogged.

Growler1 (-8 diggs)
"There was a survey done on the parents of immigrants. Something like 95% of them wanted their kids education done in as much English as possible. But lefty white liberals think they know better."
--Your partisan bullshit makes me so tired I could scream.

Rodeosmurf (-4 diggs)
I'm all for teaching just one language in our schools, and I'd support having English declared as our official language; Still, I find it pretty funny that Newt Gingrich can't just say "English should be taught in schools" without tinging his comments with racism and intense stupidity.

Drjekylmrhyde (+1 digg)
I never liked this we had a program in Chicago when I was in highschool which made us take up a second language guess what were the only choices French and Spanish Easy "A" for Spanish kids hard as fvck on me

MSF2 (-4 diggs)
Am I the only one who thinks this is stupid? It's a proven fact that learning a second language can make you smarter, and isn't that the whole point of school?
There are a lot of things wrong with the school system today but a bilingual education isn't one of them.

1 Reply to MSF2:

Origclubsoda (+5 diggs)
But they aren't learning a seconds language. They aren't learning English. And if you print everything in their language, there is no reason to learn English. You can learn a second language in high school and college. And since I live in California, I know that all these multi-lingual material cost a shit load of money to produce.

Ladyarcher85 (+3 diggs)
Well, it is they who decided to move into that country and live there so they should be the one assimilating not the other way around.
Why would the government bend its back just so it could accommodate and please everyone?
"Citizenship requires passing a test on American history in English. If that's true, then we do not have to create ballots in any language except English,"
Indeed! They are required to speak a new language and go through the hassle and expense of just learning it.
Why not use it then?
If they wish to learn a new language that is their own choice but to require the state to print text that would accommodate the language they are most comfortable using is crazy!

Franco313 (-2 diggs)
i think they should abolish English in Schools and start teaching chinese (Mandarin) being that 1 billion speak it more than english. i dunno just being sarcastic i guess

Kyderdog (-5 diggs)
Abolish Newt Gingrich - Bilingual educators say

Pcorajr (+6 diggs)
I'm sick and tired of this liberals thinking that we have to change our way of life to make non English speaking individual feel better about their lack or will to learn the language.

Don't know how to speak / write English? Then get the fuck out of this country and go back to the shit hole you climbed out of.

I took the time to learn the language before i came to this country, I also served in the armed forces. So do not tell me it cannot be done. The problem is that you have idiots like the ACLU and other communist organizations who think that we are the ones that have to change. Fuck you you political correct mother fucker.

1 Reply to Pcorajr:

voyage34 (+2 diggs)
Right on right on.

Twoeyes (+7 diggs)
Learning a language in school is a joke - if they want people to be bilingual there needs to be a program for infants, instead of trying to shove spanish/french/german/latin down people's throats in schools where you're distracted by the girl in front of you with a nice ass or your best friend throwing paper balls at you.
You're kidding yourself if you think we learn multiple languages to "be smarterer", if that was the case, why can't I learn Italian instead of the big 4 that are taught in today's schools? The fact is, the language programs in schools need serious reform, the actual percent of people who learn their language thoroughly in school is pathetic, the number of people that actually go on to use it and can remember it in 10 years is mind numbingly small, and it's just a waste of time that could be spent more on mathematics/science which are far more worthwhile subjects and will probably make you smarter then learning another language. This guy may be going about it wrong but I'm glad he's at least bringing this to the table.

2 Replies to twoeyes:

ladyarcher85 (+5 diggs)

if you speak multiple languages you are smarter?!?! hmmm 0_o
I know 4 languages
Tagalog, English, a bit of japanese and spanish and a few other Filipino dialects like Cebuano/Bisaya and Ilongo so I must be a genius now wheeeeeeepereeee! well I'm NOT! Anyway, kidding aside.
IQ is not determined by how many languages you speak.
I definitely agree with you especially with this statement "time that could be spent more on mathematics/science which are far more worthwhile subjects and will probably make you smarter then learning another language."

Kyderdog (+2 diggs)

>IQ is not determined by how many languages you speak.
No but it does determine how many you can learn...

Sdcdiggs (+5 diggs)

The government should realize that people will always speak there native language at HOME. At work and in the world outside their doorsteps, they will speak english.

Home - Your native language
Outside - English
It's the only way you can get things done, so you might as well use English. However, thats not to say that we shouldn't learn another language, being bilingual isn't a bad thing. It would be beneficial to know other major languages and maybe allow you some more leverage in life among those who speak other languages, but it will always be English that people will turn to.

1 Reply to Sdcdiggs:

Pabster (-2 diggs)

Ok, fine. Learn another language. Or two. But don't force that education down our throats at taxpayer expense.
You want to study Spanish or whatever? Fine. Write out the check, take the courses at night, on your own dime and time.

Mjh2901 (+4 diggs)

There is an old comparison between Republicans and Democrats. Republicans want to give you the opportunity to pull yourself out of poverty. Democrats want to make you comfortable living in poverty. Bilingual education and all bilingual government services is a Democratic plan to make a slave class comfortable in there own poverty. The US Government/State government will teach anyone English for free there are schools in every city with these programs for adults. Those schools are an island.
Every other government service and agency strives to serve those people in their native language not the English language. It's a boondoggle. Every employee that can speak a foreign language receives a higher salary or stipend for the extra service. Teachers who successfully teach students English receive nothing but teachers who fail to teach students English receive thousands of dollars more per year for teaching "bilingual education" Schools that move students quickly into English main steam classes have their budgets cut because they receive extra money for every student that fails to learn English and remains a bilingual ed student.

And most importantly.

People without English skills are locked out of all the news and non government resources where they can learn they are being screwed, abused or taken advantage of. It's all about creating a virtual class of slaves, give them just enough to prevent them from finding out they are slaves.

2 Replies to Mjh2901:

azAZ09 (-2 diggs)
@mjh2901
I don't know where you heard that comparison of republicans and democrats, I don't doubt that someone said it, but I think it's pretty badly fucked-up. Both groups want to lift people out of poverty. Democrats want to do this with more jobs, and higher minimum wages, and free equal access to a good public education with funding for college. Republicans want to lift people out of poverty by lifting those living in million dollar suburban homes into two-million dollar lake-front suburban homes with a bigger yard--by making sure the wealthy don't have to pay appropriate taxes. Republicans assume this will help the working class guy who renovates the house or mows the lawns by insuring he has more house to renovate and lawn to mow. Republicans also fail to see how fucked-up this master-servant class stratification is.

azAZ09 (-3 diggs)
Or if you want another metaphor for the difference between republicans and democrats try this:
Imagine there is a competition to design a device that takes people from the floor of poverty, to the upper floor of sustainable wealth.
The republicans have designed a device for getting to the next level. Their device is a ladder that grows. Its wider at the bottom so more people can stand on the lower levels, and the rungs automatically stretch vertically further and further apart over time. It only works if all of the rungs are full. Eventually the rungs are so far apart that moving from rung to rung is impossible. Not many people try to climb. They just stand there waiting, letting the ladder lift them, hoping it will eventually take their rung to the next level. The republicans are very proud of this achievement, even if the people on the lower rungs never go very far. People riding the top rungs think its great.
Clearly, it only partially fulfills its purpose of getting all of people to the next level. They think it works better than what the democrats have.
Libertarians want each individual to invent their own device and a number of very sketchy inventions show up ranging from human cannonball to trampoline type. None work, but libertarians are very proud of their individualism and creativity. Wacky libertarians.
Democrats, having built stairs, realize their device is not automated like the republicans. People have to work to move from level to level, and there is a handrail for weak, troubled, or clumsy climbers to hold. The republicans whine to the judges--indicating that the climbers are lifting themselves up not the device. Some people are milling about and aren't even going anywhere. The democrats re-read the original written specification from the contest, and point out to the republicans where it very clearly calls for an escalator. Democrats concede that their solution is not ideal, but decide that it is closer to spec.
Social programs are like the handrail.

Robdazomba (-3 diggs)
I never know what side to take on this issue. Both sides seem illogical. One one side, you have overly accommodating, guilty-by-default types claiming that America must cater to non-English speakers as that's the only way for white imperialists to redeem themselves (oh, please don't deny that's what is going on in your head.) I understand the sentiment, but at the same time, it's a little hard for me not to wonder how much more I'm paying for my banking or other services because the phone and web site must be presented in English and Spanish. I have to wonder how many millions of dollars are needlessly being wasted by my government making sure all its publications and services are bilingual in what is ostensibly a single language nation. You can make some very solid, practical, non-racist arguments for being a single language nation.

On the other side, you have what is clearly a veiled xenophobic reaction that seems to come from some sense of impropriety over languages other than English being spoken in America. You can dress it up however you want--pretend you're just concerned for their future, but you know that's bullshit so stop saying it. We've all had that moment where we're in a mall somewhere and we overhear a mom and her kids carrying on Spanish and that sudden, irrational red light that goes on along with a ridiculous sense of being invaded. And you know damn well that's not caused by a concern for their future, but for your own. I can't side with that either.

So what's left? Who do I have to side with? There are ways to work it out, make English the official language and still welcome those from other cultures into our numbers. But with both sides behaving like zealots and putting up false pretenses about their views, it's never going to happen.

If your view is coming from fear or guilt, you're wrong. End of story.

Raidenwolf (+1 digg)

1. The official language of the USA is nothing.
2. Our fore Fathers had insight that we would never be one people, but a republic of united states. This is probably the reason they chose no official language.
3. Hawaiians are bilingual, if there were no non native Americans in that state they would not need English, same with Alaska.
4. The native language of America was various Native American Indian languages, not English. Which we eradicated by thinning the tribes to extinction and placing them on land no one wanted. 5. The great total immersion exodus performed by the USA was where we shipped black people to this country. Then we enslaved them, raped them, took their names, constantly separated families so they could build no bonds and used the "total immersion" system of learn English to serve your white master and don't communicate in your native tongue, so you can't plot against us. Yes that worked great they have been freed and are doing so well across the board because they learned English. (Sarcasm)

We are supposed to be a country that adapts to our environment. 100% English in school is fine with me, but I also accept that it will bring down school grades when they test the school, and some students will have to repeat grades (which I am fine with).

The real problem is not language, it is citizenship. And as I understand it to become a citizen, you have to bring a unique skill to us to help our country improve, that does not take away from a real job. You have to apply and take tests and pay $375.00 This does not include any lawyer fees that I am not aware of. So based on this new skill clause no one is going to ask for citizenship. Because once you declare your self you can be deported. I would suggest really looking at this problem first. A new immigration policy could be the answer. Here are some quick thoughts.

1. Give all aliens 12 months to declare their intentions (become citizen or just visiting)
2. Those that want to be citizens be given amnesty and are charged $2000 per year for five years. Which is used to investigate that the applicant is not wanted for felonies in US and abroad.
3. Those that want to visit are are registered to visit 6 month out of every two years.

264
4. Those that want to stay as citizens must pay the $10,000 dollars over five years not be on welfare, and not abuse the American system.

If we did this would we need fences? Would illegals pay $2000. to have a coyote smuggle them over the border? If there are 30 million illegals and 60% opted to apply for citizenship under these terms that could raise 180,000,000,000 dollars Which would be used to take care of that problem, along with extra help such as language issues that immigrants face. Also it would hopefully weed out "undesirables" by empowering the former illegal alien community into protecting their new country.

I Reply to Raidenwolf:

joannemerriam (+1 digg)
I'm an immigrant - trust me the fees are much higher than $375. It was over $1000 for the various fees I paid (not counting legal fees) and my situation was actually really straight-forward (Canadian spouse of American citizen).

SpenceMasta (+3 diggs)
hahah are you people kidding me? it would be great if everyone in the country could communicate equally, too bad its so impractical, you think if they US makes english its official language suddenly the non-english people will speak english? first generation offspring are going to speak english, their parents and others who arent learning english already wont learn english, its not like non-english people are oblivious to the fact they COULD learn english if they wanted too

abolish bilingual education and the people who dont fucking speak english wont be able to get an education, non english speaking people are gonna be turned off to a public system that is foreign to them now , promote more isolated communities where it will be the only place where they can speak their own language and function

all this will do is create another definitive profile in which to discriminate people in this country, so many will be left behind because their options are now limited to english or nothing, and many will choose nothing realistically, and then it comes down to the same situation currently, learn english or dont

ideally everyone will accept it and start learning english, too bad that wont happen otherwise it wouldve happened already, its not government intervention thats preventing people from learning english, its people themselves

there sees to be an assumption that if you dont speak english you cant be successful, well a lot of non-english speaking people dont equate that because you can become successful in the US without speaking english, you can have english speaking associates and a lot of business is done in that way, sure you wont be an american political success, but you can become a success in whatever industry that is closely connected to your native country/language/peoples etc, speaking english will broaden your horizons within this country, but for many they've already have a goal in which they want to accomplish and it doesnt require english

just because you feel the benefits of knowing english doesnt mean its gonna be as welcomed by other people, non-english speaking people who have been functioning already do not want to be told by english speaking people that they know what is best for them, thats just the way people are

if the government instituted a policy where everyone would be equally provided given they do their equal share of work would you all be supporting that too? cause that sounds great doesnt it?

2 Replies to SpenceMasta:
Kaiser44 (+1 digg)
@spencemasta, evidently you have not been discriminated in this country for not speaking Spanish.
I lived Miami and one of the requirements in government and allot of private industry to be hired you have to be able to speak Spanish.
Why is that.
Why does the responsibility fall on me as a citizen of this country to work for a government agency have to become fluent in Spanish to communicate to people who do not want to learn English, yes they have every right not to learn English, but they do have a responsibility to have at least a basic understanding if they need to access our system, yet you seem to think it is dependent on the rest of us to cater to non English speaking people.

Vhold (+5 diggs)
The cool thing about government services catering to non-English speakers is that it perpetuates the existence and growth of those services.
Obviously it creates more work in terms of duplication of effort in administration dealing with multiple languages, but it also takes away an incentive to learn English. A person who doesn't know English in America is going to be at a very significant disadvantage to get a job, so it they are more likely to stay on social services, live in government subsidized housing, use food stamps, etc.
Fundamentally, these welfare organizations like to cater to as many people as they can, because basically it increases their customer base. Administrators of large government agencies get paid pretty well, they have -zero- incentive to shrink their own organizations.

Doktorzee (-1 digg)
This guy is an asshole.
Newt ar trebui are o mie de pule in curu lui

I Reply to Doktorzee:

Comatose51 (+1 digg)
Yes Newt is definitely an asshole and a hypocrite but I can divorce the message and reasons from the character. He has a point that we need to have a standard language understood by everything in this country.

Comatose51 (+1 digg):
I'm an immigrant myself but I have to agree with Gingrich in some ways. English needs to be the standard, universal language in the US when a language needs to be used in public. For nothing else, making sure everyone speaks English is important for safety. I've been run off the road TWICE while I was out cycling because the parents of the little kids who are running along didn't understand, "Passing on your left". A lot of people don't realize how important English as an universal language in the US has been to the success of this country. If you compare the US with the EU, one of the criticism about the economic cooperation fostered by the EU is that their workers are not as mobile as Americans because they don't have an universal language. The closest thing they have to it is, ironically, English. A Texan, such as myself, can easily move to California with no problem. The average French will have a hard time moving to Sweden and working there. The Dutch and the Swiss are incredible for their fluency in languages but that's not a trait found in every EU country. We are lucky to have one language that unites all of the vast area that is the US and we should encourage that. It's good for us and people who want to be Americans. In making our immigrants become fluent in English we are helping them.

Kaiser44 (+2 diggs)
I am from Russia and I smuggled myself, wife and 3 kids in to MEXICO. I have found since living there a short time I can not own land, it is very difficult to rent an apartment, I will never get to be a citizen ,I will never be able to open a legal business.
I will be in fear for my life and my kids lives if ever caught due to the nature of my crime.
I have found Mexico to be one of the most restrictive places in the world for illegal immigrants.
I am hoping I can convince more of my Russian countrymen to come to Mexico illegally so we can demand social services and schooling for our children. Then I will start a group to demand that Mexico offer Russian education to our children because as you know we do have rights even though we came in illegally.
I will also call anyone in MEXICO xenophobic and a racist if they do not give me my rights as an illegal immigrant in my new country.
I will march in the streets and carry the Russian flag because That is the country I love and the only reason I came to Mexico was to take the jobs Mexicans will not due, because they left to go to the states, and as we all know the states have always been a sucker for a sob story and the government and corporations are such whores they would offer up the fabric and sovereignty of the U.S for a cheap buck.
I guess now I think about it I will head north also, and join the club because there is no sense in staying here when America is ripe for the taking.
Stupid Americans.
/sarcasm, I think.

Diggiz4kids (-2 diggs)
Newt, the man who did indeed have an affair in part because his wife refused to join him in Washington [He later Married his lover], was mostly right ...
"The American people believe English should be the official language of the government. ... We should replace bilingual education with immersion in English so people learn the common language of the country and they learn the language of prosperity, not the language of living in a ghetto,"
The problems here are that
1) most equate the ghetto with blacks
2) most Americans agree with Newt
3) Many commenters in this topic HATE so much that they cannot think straight.
4) Hiding from the fact that those illegally coming to America are coming from Mexican ghetto's
5) Failing to realize that people who really do want to be Americans work at learning the language, not at making the language of the country where they had no chance of getting ahead America's.

Newt's 1 mistake is that what Americans speak is not English but an Americanized version of it. EX: In England a fag is a cigarette. In America ...
Digg me down if you prefer to live in ignorance. I've only stated the facts. :oP~~

I Reply to Diggiz4kids:

Kaiser44 (0 diggs)
America sucks, thanks again.
You do not know what any one equates with anything, you are only guessing.
QUIT READING CHOMSKY AND GET A JOB.

Neevo (+1 digg)
Buried for this:
Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich equated bilingual education Saturday with "the language of living in a ghetto"
Dugg for this:
and mocked requirements that ballots be printed in multiple languages.
People in the US speak English - I don't see what the big fuss is about. Why would you want to teach someone in Italian or Spanish or Pig Latin when those languages are useless in daily life as soon as they walk out the door. If they can't speak English, what are they doing in school anyway? If I moved to Paris and went to a school, should I demand that they teach me in English instead of French? Hell no. That would just mean I was too lazy to integrate myself into their culture. I hate how this country has to keep making it even easier for the lazy people to become even more lazy.

Schwit (+2 diggs)
If the discussion were about money and not language would there be any debate? Of course not. Nobody with 3 living brain cells would expect US businesses or governments to accept pesos or rubles. The US dollar is the currency of commerce. The English language is the currency of communications.

I Reply to Schwit:

Pintomp3 (-4 diggs)
not every country trades in US dollars. when those who do try to stop, we declare them part of the axis of evil.

SadMartigan (+2 diggs)
I am currently living and working in Spain, which I never would have thought of attempting, unless I had first learned how to speak Spanish. As an American and an English-speaking native of the U.S., I can say that we go way to soft on all the kids in our education system. Part of this 'softness' includes the counter-productive practice of trying to teach people to speak, read and write English, and at the same time allowing them to lean on the crutch of bi-lingual education. I love bi-lingualism, tri-lingualism, etc. etc. But, it is bi-lingual EDUCATION that cripples the students' capabilities to reach the real potential they are capable of, NOT vice-versa.

DaveLaMorte (+1 digg)
I think a lot of people are mistaken about what Bilingual education is. Bilingual education is using both English and Spanish in the classroom. Bilingual education is really good at getting kids to learn English faster, and allows English speaking students to learn Spanish.

TDR25 (-1 digg)
In other news, Newt Ginbitch and other neo-conservatives/Republicans also believe that White Skin, blue eyes, blonde hair, heterosexual, marriage orientated, Christian base, militarized males should also be the American standard...what else is new. These neocons sound more and more like Hitler every day!

2 Replies to TDR25:

azAZ09 (-5 diggs)
Sorry I dugg you down by accident, but I agree with what you said.
Damn you close together digg buttons!

CaspianXth (-3 diggs)
You., sir, are a raging lunatic. This is about helping people have a better opportunities in America, not destroying other races. He's not saying kill all immigrants, he wants us to communicate more effectively. By the way, all those other countries you liberals love so much? Most of them have an official language and a language requirement for citizenship.

Juliocgrajales (0 diggs)
Bullshit complete Bullshit Newt Gingrich needs to find something else to do then to worry about my son speaking both Spanish and English... As person who grew up in a Bilingual Household and benefited from a Bilingual Education I don't really care what a person who speak one language has to say, my taxes and the taxes of many one language speakers "Spanish" mainly is also going towards a Bilingual Education, These are the same people who want to remove gym, music and any other extracurricular activity... This is just plain racist in its subtlest form. Don't get me wrong the English language is a very important language especially in the US but having the ability to speak another language gives the individual and our country an advantage. I know that it easy to throw the racist and xenophobia card, and I have but lets put that to the side for a second. If the issue is whether Bilingual Education is not as effective as single (or English only) Education, then I would recommend you do your research on Proposition 227 bill passed in Cali, and ultimately concluded that Proposition 227 "did not improve academic outcomes for English Learners. Rather, the researchers found that what matters for English learners is not the language of instruction but the quality of instruction"... Issues like these are irrelevant and makes our country look less civilized then we try to portray ourselves to be. Peace

3 Replies to Juliocgrajales:

juliocgrajales (-3 diggs)
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bilingual_education#United_States

tech42er (+1 digg)
I think the issue is more that quality of education in the US s best done is English. As a result, in order to get the highest quality of education, subjects should be taught in English, which is the main educated language in the US. It's wonderful to know more than one language, but English is necessary in the US for education.

Kuzotz (-1 digg)
yea dont say that in puerto rico..
Language has nothing to do with the quality of education... If so then Spain's education system wouldn't be better than ours.

Jasonlyvers (-2 diggs)
I'm going to try to be brief
1. Many of you (Radiant Being) are obvious Republicans, based on the anti-Democrat stories you have dugg. You should admit this up front, because it warns people of your obvious bias. (I am a Democrat.)
2. I couldn't find a credible source that said bilingual education is bad. I found several (http://www.kidsource.com/education/ten.fallacy.biling.ed.html) that indicated that it is good, and they were cited.
3. Most European and South American countries (I'm not sure about Asian) teach all subjects in the native language and in English. This gives them a communication advantage over the United States.
4. What happened to the US being a melting pot? I'm not sure what prior generations thought, but I see a lot of xenophobes posting here. Not everyone who speaks Spanish is an illegal Mexican.
This debate isn't about language, learning, or communication. It's about skin color and prejudice. I suspect that all of the people who say, "This is America, speak American” will one day be in the same socio-economic situation that those "foreigners" are right now.

2 Replies to jasonlyvers:

kaiser44 (+2 diggs)
I would feel the same way about this situation if we were being invaded by 11/20 million, non English speaking French, or Russians or any European country.
You my friend work on the basis of seeing the world through a scenario that this is a bigoted and racist country, and then you blame all the Republicans for being racist and xenophobic. Why. This country has and still has problems with Racism as all countries do in one way or another. Yet you choose this as you're basis for you're argument because you are grounded in the belief that America is bad and Americans are the worst. You look through the lens and see all the bad things this country has done, yet you can not look outside that short sighted view and see that this is more than a white brown issue. you are prejudiced against America and will never see anything that is not racist or bigoted because people have very different opinions on matters such as bilingual education.

Kuzotz (+2 diggs)
most white americans are racist pricks nothing new.

Kaiser44 (+5 diggs)
@juliocgrajalas,I see it as a bilingual education is necessary for people who come to this country and can not speak English.
Most of the people who are entering the U.S legally have for the most part a working knowledge of the language before they arrive.
This is not only recommended but saves the immigrant a lot of problems when they get here.
What you are not understanding is most of the people demanding bilingual education are groups who support and defend illegal immigration.
I also understand there are hardship cases we allow in to the country and these people do not have a working knowledge of English but they seem to be willing to learn without demanding it.
The people of Mexico and south America are not hardship cases, they are people who will not stand up and demand that their government , that is corrupt and filled with corrupt politicians, to do what is in there best interests as citizens of there own country.
So they come here and demand rights that they should be demanding at home , and all citizens here pay the price.
The problem is with people not strong enough to demand the leaders of their country of origin, to do the peoples business that is inherent as a right of them being a citizen of the country of birth..
If the 11 / 20 million illegal aliens who have come to this country and used there strength to throw the corrupt governments out I would have more sympathy, but to leave and not try to change the circumstances at home , shows they do not deserve my respect or money, when they break the laws of this country.
Why do the Mexican people refuse to fight for there own country, rather than come here and demand rights they can not get at home?

RickyBarnes1960 (+3 diggs)
If Americans and their economy wish to remain competitive around the world and even within the borders of their own land, fluency in other cultures and other languages is a must. Those who wish to remain isolated within one culture and one language are one-dimensional human beings in a complex and dynamic world from which there is no retreat despite one's sincerest wish to do so. As a professional linguist and having traveled around much of the world, I can confirm the fact that one of the main reasons peoples in other countries view Americans as arrogant is the typical American insistence on imposing their stereotypical culture and language on those who have cultures and languages of their own. Ironically, the United States has NEVER been a country of only one language and only one culture and isn't likely to be in the future. For that matter, never has there been a country or nation of only one culture and language. "One nation, one country, one language" is pure fantasy now, in the past and is certain to remain fantasy forever. Despite the most adamant insistence of the more traditional and conservative individuals in our population, strength and survivability either within the individual or in large groups of individuals such as a country or nation lies in diversity in experience, diversity in knowledge, and diversity in expression.
On the subject of "English", if you study it a bit more, what you call "english" is itself a conglomerate of concepts, sounds, letters, words derived from a plethora of other languages. It continues to take, borrow and steal from other languages even today. That is the nature of languages - they evolve by a wide variety of means. "Purity" isn't a term that has ever applied to language and neither has it ever applied to culture ... or the people who create them.

I Reply to RickyBarnes1960:

HappyMax (0 diggs)
"On the subject of "English", if you study it a bit more, what you call "english" is itself a conglomerate of concepts, sounds, letters, words derived from a plethora of other languages."
What does that have to do with anything? However you want to define it, learn and speak English, BEFORE you come to this country.

RickyBarnes1960 (0 diggs):
"Personally, I think school should prepare students for the working world. In the US, business is done in English, so in order to be competitive, these kids have to learn the language."
Point in fact, in the United States, business is conducted in practically ALL of the world's languages and on a daily basis. Certainly, English is the predominant language used day to day by the individuals who live and work here, however, it has never been the ONLY language. The market within the United States depends on multilingualism and most likely always will.

I Reply to RickyBarnes1960:

Kaiser44 (+3 diggs)
All i can say before you get down on this country, check out Quebec, Canada.
I am not for this but to sell America down the road as xenophobic and hateful and mean, look at what has happened up their.
Why are do so many people have such dislike for this country that have benefited from it want to turn it in to something that is not in all our best interests.
If we were smart we should be teaching Arabic, and Chinese as the second language here.

Fetusburgers (-5 diggs)
wow. Dick move Gringrich, Dick move.

RickyBarnes1960 (-4 diggs)
"It's wonderful to know more than one language, but English is necessary in the US for education." English and schools are only a small part of one's overall cultural education. It's true, in the United States, learning English is necessary, however, it's also essential to learn a bit of Spanish, French, German, Chinese, Japanese, Arabic, Russian, Greek, etc. Most Americans use terms from those languages everyday without giving it much thought.
Think about it. When you're speaking or using "English", what exactly is that? Are you sure? Aren't you multilingual without acknowledging it? Where did you acquire that knowledge, that ability? In school only? Elsewhere?

I Reply to RickyBarnes1960:

HappyMax (+3 diggs)
"When you're speaking or using "English", what exactly is that? Are you sure?"
Your philosophical "But what is English?" doesn't have much to do with the issue. Everyone knows what English is and if you need something translated into your "native tongue" or you need ESL education then you don't know it.

Inactive (-3 diggs)
PS
hahahahaha Xenophobes -- all your grandkids will HAVE TO LEARN spanish
"The South SHALL rise again!!"
fucking idiots

catchphrase (+5 diggs)
English should be the only language in which USA government documents are printed.
And dammit, English has the widest variety of profanity of any language.
Proud American,
Catch

I Reply to Catchphrase:

RickyBarnes (-3 diggs)
"And dammit, English has the widest variety of profanity of any language."
---------------------------------------------
Really? There are about a few billion people who would argue that point with you. Having substantial experience with Russian, I can confirm that certain quarters in that culture have profanity that would put most English speakers to shame. No language has a monopoly on color.

One has to wonder how you can make such an arrogant statement without complete knowledge of ALL languages that exist on the planet. As a professional linguist, none of my knowledge of any of the 7 languages of which I have experience is complete even after some 27 years, however, I have more training and experience than most and yet I'd never make the statement above about English profanity. American arrogance perhaps but never American profanity.

Tjblaze (-1 digg)
Come on down to Miami and you'll see that this issue is not so simple.
I am sick and tired of people who are sick and tired of liberals. George Washington was a liberal and so was Thomas Jefferson.
It will be interesting to see how the Cuban exile community here in Miami responds to Gingrich's comments.
What Kaiser44 said about getting work here in Miami is generally true. Many or perhaps most positions require Spanish. But according to the statistics, 62.5% of the population here in Miami-Dade is of Hispanic origin.
Here, many documents are printed in English, Spanish and Creole.
I am proud to be an American, but there is no removing America from this great and glorious planet.

I Reply to Tjblaze:
natbumpo (+4 diggs)
"I am sick and tired of people who are sick and tired of liberals. George Washington was a liberal and so was Thomas Jefferson."
This is an impossibility. GW and TJ did not get along, in fact, TJ did much to undermine GW and hated Alexander Hamilton, who GW held is very high regard. Read "His Excellency" by Joseph Ellis and you'll see how wrong you are.
If anything, GW was a GOP because he believed that the US should do what is in our best interests, not what fits into our "values," whatever that means. TJ was a liberal in every sense, he was quite a jealous person.

Redmonkey (+6 diggs)
As immigrant from former soviet Union I am 100% agree with it. We want ours kids integrate. Also, English exam for citizenship should be changed. it should check real knowledge of the English. Current exam is joke.

Khyberkitsune (+3 diggs)
I agree partially with Gingrich but I have one thing to say.
Teaching a secondary language opens up one's mind. I speak five languages (English, Latin, Thai, Japanese, and Cantonese) and the fact of the matter is knowing several different languages makes for a more open-minded person, not to mention you start thinking out of the box more often.
I taught one of my pals some Cantonese, and lemme tell you what, his intelligence seems to have boosted significantly. His grades in high school have definitely improved, and he's doing better in his foreign language class (German.)
Teaching other languages helps to bring us all together. Hell, perhaps America could stop acting so high and mighty and just go ahead and write everything in a different language, just to force people to learn and open up their minds, instead of keeping them closed shut. Latin is a good start, because more people will understand the terms in law better.

2 Replies to khyberkitsune:

pabster (+2 diggs)
I don't have a problem with secondary languages being TAUGHT. But I do have a problem with taxpayer money (millions and millions) being wasted on interpreters and printing 25 different copies of the same forms. There's no excuse for it. You come to America, you learn the language of the land. That's English. You learn it and YOU LEARN IT WELL. You want to study French or whatever on the side? Fine.

Namuoqm (+5 diggs)
Take that you bilingual Korean, Polish, Greek, Spanish, Cherokee ...etc speaking unpatriotic unAmerican Saturday school ghetto punks! I feel safer already knowing that the Republicans want to protect us from the "long-term dangers to the fabric of our nation" from these malicious bilingual schools (they are just like those wacky madrassas). Just look how screwed up Switzerland is with all those languages they have to support. That has got to be the most ghetto ass country I visited in Europe. Remember if you hear/see a child speaking a foreign language, walk away and call your local Dept of Homeland Security agent. DHS will pick up the little critter up shortly. A public service message brought to you by, Uber-Patroit.

Natbumpo (-1 digg)
My fiancee is first generation American (her mom is Italian and mom Portuguese) and her dad refused to
even have anyone speak to HIM in Italian when get get here about 40 years ago so, much less teach his
children in foreign tongue.

I Reply to Natbumpo:

Netant (0 diggs)
For the record, let me say from first experience, I believe this is a mistake.
Kids will readily realize the importance of learning the native language. Only the parents
COERCING them NOT to learn could possibly be an impediment for them to not learn the
language.
The consequences of not learning their parent's language is thus:
I feel that acquiring/retaining the language of your parent's birth is a critical component in
retaining any cultural connection to your parent's birth. If you don't, even if you're more aware of
aspects of the culture than the average person outside the culture, you will not have the same grasp
of the culture as a native speaker, and you will be looked upon as an outsider to that culture.
Not having the same command of language as a native is the social kiss of death in Asian cultures.
You will always be looked upon as a gaijin. Hell, in Japan, Koreans born in Japan are looked upon
as low-born foreigners, and second-generation Japanese of Korean heritage still experience
discrimination among the Japanese natives (or so I hear). Its not radically different in other Asian
countries (other than the Phillipines, perhaps).
My parents were so concerned about their kids succeeding in their adopted country, they would
not teach Korean to any of us, in fear of us experiencing a language barrier when entering
kindergarten. Unfortunately, the studies showing benefits of bilingualism did not come out until
the late '60's, well after I was going to school. The result, I am about as Korean as the average
American. If I ever need to flee this country, Korea will probably not be in the top twenty of
countries I would go to. I know its difficult for people to understand what I don't have, but it is a
loss and a needless loss.
Unfortunately, I belong to a country of citizens too stupid to realize that its not the gov't job to
preserve an alien cultural heritage on behalf of its new immigrants, and that coddling the mentally
defective that refuse to make the effort to assimilate only harms both parties.
So to those newly immigrated couples raising their kids in the "New World", I offer them this
advice: Have the parent best at speaking English speak to the kid in English, and the other parent
speak to them in their native tongue. (Even better if they have grandparents living here). The kid
will learn both languages, and by four or five years old, you can switch off. It will help the kid
become more effective in communication, they will gain an advantage on the monolingual native
kids, and your kids will not feel deprived of a sense of cultural heritage of your birth.

Stevedodd (-3 diggs)
Wow....
A presidential candidate actually suggested that languages OTHER than english are "ghetto languages"???
And he hasn't been ousted or publicly shamed?
Based on the track record of the USA electoral system, he'll probably be your next president.

One2gamble (+2 diggs)
hes ummmm right

Bensdad03 (+1 digg)
Ghetto - go look up the word on Merriam-Webster.
Spanish - hello, what is the native language of the only country we are physically connected to where
people are trying to escape daily?
Immigration - if you're here legally, you will do everything in your power to make a better life and to be able to understand the language.

Culture - I don't have a problem with being proud of your heritage. In fact, I think it is really neat when folks embrace their history. However, things that may be OK in the culture that are actually illegal acts here should not be allowed.

Language - When I went to Germany, I had to speak German. Everything was not written in 2 languages. The only Spanish they know in Europe is spoken in SPAIN..... Putting everything in both languages is empowering more illegals to survive.

Education - I hate to inform you, but illegals do not help you as a tax payer. Sure, they may not get to apply for welfare (although some get away with it), but when a a great number move here, guess what happens? Schools get crowded - that means that more buildings have to be built. More teachers have to be hired - but not regular ones - no - special teachers that have fewer students and have to spend extra time with them.

And, of course, with the No Child Left Behind program, if the school is not up to par on its testing, then the system has to bus students from they're regular route to a different part of the county which costs more gas. Guess what, that is coming out of your pocket.

Medical - How fair is it that I have to pay ridiculous health care prices, but someone can walk across the border and get completely free health care? Hmmm.... I'm here legally, pay my taxes and obey they laws, but my taxes go to take care of someone else's medical bills? No wonder health care costs are so high....

Gingrich - people are so afraid to admit this man knows what he's talking about. Conservative or Liberal, it is your pockets that are being picked, and your dollars you worked hard for being stolen....

Drewts (-1 digg)

English should be our official language. It's such a freak in' no brainer!! And the fact that it actually shows political courage in America today just to SAY so is pathetic. Who cut off America's balls? Liberals! Same gutless wonders who think fighting for our freedom in Iraq is a bad idea. Check out the main page of Drudge Report today (4/1/2007) and read up on intelligence pointing to more terrorist attacks here in the US. When we're kicking the terrorists asses over there they can't get it going on over here. I for one refuse to be emasculated by some "PC" cowards who act like they know everything and hide behind the same "all knowing" government which brought us the wildly successful (tongue firmly planted in cheek) welfare state. You can take your "open mindedness" and shove it up your gutless asses. In fact libs - get out of my country all together - head on over to some commie state - you're only a breath away from being a freakin' commie anyway.

Proud American in York, Pa!

I Reply to Drewts:

Chubbyduck (0 diggs)

Jesus was a socialist! He believed in helping those that needed help. If someone doesn't speak the language you don't pull away his opportunity by making it extremely difficult to learn to read. You neo-connmen get out of my country and realize that by taking over Karballah and Najaf along with stationing troops in Mecca and Medina we are creating more terrorists everyday in Iraq and Iran. What if they put troops in your holy cities would that make you mad. What if a turbaned Muslim with a sub-machine gun was standing in your church? Learn about cultures outside of the US you're red-neck dumbass!

LoneRanger85 (+4 diggs)

As long as fast food restaurants have drive-thrus, there will be a place for people who can't understand or speak English. I call it "random cuisine" because they almost never get my order right.

Juliocgrajales (+2 diggs)
I want to add to my original post and say Thank you Newt Gingrich for bringing up this issue and I hope this issue dominates the headlines for the next couple of years, please people, republican or not, try your best to make sure this issue is in the front pages...

azAZ09 (-5 diggs)
He's not correct. I forgot what a mean-spirited idiot this Newt can be. His rhetoric plays right into the bigoted core of arrogant elitist retrograde republican underdeveloped ethos.
I can tell you that teaching students specific to their individual needs helps them with English comprehension and critical thinking. Critical thinking, and questioning authority are apparently not priorities for republicans. Why should they be? Teaching these skills cuts down on the number of people who blindly follow their ideology.
The idea of a multi-lingual America still intimidates republicans. The American culture evolves. Get used to it. You may have to learn a little Spanish or eventually Chinese. Boo-freakin'-Hoo.
One can be a US citizen born in the borders of the united states, or child of a US citizen, and a non-English speaker. That person is no less "American", just because of the language and culture they were born to. That person should have the same rights to government services and privileges as any English speaking US citizen.
Why is this so hard for republicans? Businesses get it. Just Dial 411. Open a new product. How many languages are the instructions in?

Fieri (+2 diggs)
I'm pleasantly surprised by the comment digging trend on this story. Digg is becoming more and more pro-logic every day. Hurry in, internet masses, and overwhelm these leftist geeks. =D
Bilingual education is likely the most idiotic program the government runs (an honor not easily won). It's like shackling immigrants' hands behind their backs.

1 Reply to Fieri:

jewmanji (-3 diggs)
we don't need a metaphor for shackling immigrants' hands, we already do that: http://www.guardian.co.uk/worldlatest/story/0,,-6519633,00.html
xenophobia != pro-logic

inactive (0 diggs)
Newt is right on this issue. There has been research to show that bilingual education is actually INEFFECTIVE as a teaching tool. Most non-English speaking students, in fact, learned better through traditional education than bi-lingual education.
Source: http://eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/custom/portlets/recordDetails/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true& &ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=EJ519666&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=eric_accno&accno=EJ519666

Peterinjapan (+3 diggs)
I am a bilingual person, fluent in Japanese, and I was involved in teaching ESL for many years, mostly in Japan but a little in California. I hate to say it but I totally agree with this -- English should be taught, and the language that should be taught is English. This is called "kindness" since a legal or illegal Mexican child who can't speak English will have many fewer prospects than a well educated 2nd generation Korean child whose parents embraced English.

Spursauto (0 diggs)
que!

276
AndrewDB (0 diggs)
I think Newt is right too. (Something I never thought I'd see myself saying honestly.)
People who are taught two languages, when they're on their own, refuse to speak the second language
unless it's absolutely 100% necessary. Even then they struggle with it. The way we make it understood that
we're not going to take a second language into the United States is say that 'If you don't pass a standardized
English test, both spoken and written, you will not be granted access into the nation.'
I know that's a bit harsh, but when you deal in a market where all they can do is let their kids speak a
language, or point to an object and expect the person to know what you want, it needs to be fixed.
I work for a retail joint currently and it's gotten so bad with Spanish, we actively use FreeTranslation.com
to translate into Spanish because we can type faster than we can struggle with the people who don't
understand English. Even then, there are certain things that don't fly, like trying to get cellular phone
minutes for a prepaid phone.. I rarely understand what they're talking about unless they grab a prepaid
minute card off the shelf, then point to their phone.. After that, we go back to FreeTranslation and asking
them how many minutes they want or how much they want to spend.
Abolish Bilingualism, at least, here in the States when in the public environment, the home environment, I
don't care if you speak Spanish, Japanese, German or whatever, but when you get into a public space, if you
don't speak English, I won't take the time to speak with you, because I can't understand you to begin with,
and that's coming with a few years in retail and trying to pick up your language.

Teelar (0 diggs)
I'm surprised and happy that so many people agree that English should be learned. It gives me hope that
liberal shrills aren't again putting our society into the crapper.

Phillymozart (+2 diggs)
Why is it that we like to assume that Spanish speakers (re: Mexicans) are the only ethnic group in US
history too dumb to learn English? African slaves learned it without much help. The same holds true for the
Eastern Europeans and especially Asians, whose alphabet and structure has no similarities to our own
Germanic language.

Aardvaroo (+2 diggs)
Remember those flotation devices you used as a kid to keep you above water? Well guess what happens
reality if you stick a pink in those flotation devices and they deflate? You drown. That's why it's imperative
to learn how to swim.
Teaching kids within a bilingual framework is like using a flotation device, without ever forcing the kid to
jump in the water in a vulnerable state. Eventually, they rely on the accommodations of bilingualism so much
that they can't stay afloat with English alone.

1 Reply to Aardvaroo:

Chubbyduck (0 diggs)
And where did you read that? When you first learned to swim did you have floaties? A kickboard?
Someone supporting you before you learned how to float? Did everyone learn to swim exactly the
same way you did? At a YMCA pool? In the Ocean? What Gingrich is asking is that we never let
kids use floaties or kickboards. Instead we'll throw them in and if they get hurt, swallow a lung
full of water to carry the analogy to an end, then so be it. It saves us money and he has the baseless
belief that all kids can eventually learn to swim, and I guess any damage we do to them along the
way is okay as long as they eventually learn to swim in the pool. Let them have a support system
to start of with, don't abolish all of it. Let them learn science and math to start of with, and
eventually (I haven't seen you at the pool so I don't know if this is true) they'll throw away the
inflatable ring and swim on their own.

Chubbyduck (-2 diggs)
Why won't ANYONE take the time to listen to what researchers of ELL students (English Language Learners) are saying? Instead we get a slogan of “learn the language of the society” and wave a flag of patriotism and xenophobia. The researchers say that the best way we teach these children (that is the goal isn't it? not to reduce costs, or make you feel good about yourself) is to gradually help them assimilate. Let them learn science or math or any other subject where they may already have some knowledge in their native language as we simultaneously build up their language skills. When they can and do learn English then they will not have fallen behind elsewhere. Progressives/Liberals and the Neo-Cons both have supported NCLB and standards testing. They embrace some idea that one size fits all and we can teach all kids the same way. We can't. We've lost our trust in teachers and have decided that we can't allow them to make decisions on how to teach their pupils so instead we give them a laundry list of things that these students need to know. Then we punish them with a withdrawal of funding when it doesn't work out. Well the student is not a product to be churned out and a school is not a factory which treats every student as raw material to send through a process. In the case of an ELL, we need to treat them differently. I'm sorry if you don't like that, I'm sorry if you think that some egalitarian Utopian ideal means that we treat every kid the same way, because that isn't how education works. So fine dig me down, but until we realize that we are not creating faceless nameless academic worker products, but are dealing with actual kids that might need to have a teacher explain something to them in a language they are familiar with, at least at the start, then we are dooming our society to bland stupidity. Allow teachers a little autonomy and stop mandating things like no speaking any other language other than English in a classroom. Let teachers do what is best for kids and save your slogans for the uninformed knee-jerk radio show hosts.

I Reply to Chubbyduck:

kuzotz (+1 digg)
thank you but we are losing the battle my friend. America before 2015 will enter into a moronic age(bigger than this one for all smart people would've immigrated by 2015, and the ones who haven't will be idiots,xenophobic, or those who still think they can make a difference, and fight against this trend of idiocy.

Bearsaurass (-1 digg)
The thing that just about every person here is missing is that in other countries (not all but a good majority) english is now taught in school. Being Bilingual is becoming more and more of a skill that is very desired by employers and by society. Phasing it out is a bad idea, the states are becoming more and more of a melting pot every day and if people were more linguistically advanced things would become more and more efficient.
I could list all of the benefits of a bilingual society but I chose to avoid the ricule.

I Reply to Bearsaurass:

Drmangrum (+1 digg)
Nobody is suggesting that other languages shouldn't be taught or learned. It has been proven that children who learn multiple languages at an early age tend to have higher IQ's and learn much more quickly later in life.
However, what IS being suggested is that we stop pandering to onslaught of whining immigrants who come into this country expecting us to re-mold our system to fit them. Sorry, real life doesn't work that way. You want to come into my house, you abide by my rules. If I say to take your shoes off before entering, then you take your damn shoes off. We spend BILLIONS dealing with illegal immigrants. We feed them, we house them, we give them money, we help them in starting a business, we heal them when their sick. What do we get in return? The bill.

Inactive (-1 digg)

278
I don't have a problem with printing ballots only in English. But think about it-- abolishing bilingual education? What will that do to us? Did he specify who couldn't? If it means everyone, how will we learn another language? Should the government legislate what you can learn? That sounds more like totalitarianism than democracy.

I Reply to inactive:

Drmangrum (+3 diggs)
You need to polish your reading comprehension skills a bit. It was never suggested that other languages never be taught.

Inactive (-2 diggs)
when I first read what newt said I thought I had my mind already made up. I mean, I am from Georgia. I've had to listen to this sort of small minded bigoted crap since I was a kid. But after reading all the comments I am not as sure as I was before. There was a comment from an immigrant father who said he wanted his kids to learn English. There was another that pointed out that in spite of state mandated Mandarin classes, all the different dialects in China still survive. There is no denying the fact that speaking unaccented English does give you advantages. Remember, I am from Georgia. I know linguistic bigotry exists. Strong English classes will benefit and help the ESL students. but that should be the motivation behind it, to help and benefit the student. It shouldn't be motivated out of hate and ignorance. The language Gingrich used clearly shows his own motivation. For the record, I am proud to be from Georgia. I am sad Gingrich is as well and ashamed of the fact that people in Georgia voted for him.

Inactive (-2 diggs)
newt is such an idiot!!!

Harbeas (-1 digg)
It's about time Newt said something right!

Harbeas (-1 digg)
What the hell do you mean by HTML tags? Furthermore, why do I have to keep entering the damn test below before I can submit a comment?

P3T3RK3Y5 (+1 digg)
Q: what do you call someone who speaks 3 languages? A: tri-lingual
Q: what do you call someone who speaks 2 languages? A: bi-lingual
Q: what do you call someone who speaks 1 language? A: an American
there isn't one right language and we American's don't need to be mono-lingual (to the point of ignorance) to have a national identity... unless... wait, i think that is our national identity: ignorance! if any of us really believed in learning / respecting the native language and culture we would be speaking Cherokee.
time to admit American culture (as well as other mixes) are a unique amalgamation... and that is ok. too many of us don't respect another culture enough to bother learning its language. any wonder we don't have many friends?? now go get your passport (< 20% of us do), just start to learn a language, and start traveling!
p.s. bi-lingual education is the best chance for success for ESL-ers. What is the point in giving these kids anything but the best chance for success?

Hyperlexic (+1 digg)
Only in America is it frowned upon to speak more than one language.
Chubbyduck (+1 digg)
If I took you and plopped you down in the middle of Africa where everything is in Swahili, and you don't know any of it. I taught you Math and Science and History in Swahili, how long would it take you to get up to speed? All the tests and texts are printed in Swahili, all the teachers speak only Swahili, the government can't tell you what laws and rules you might be breaking or what your rights are in any language other than Swahili, would you ask for a little help? Would you be frustrated as everyone around you progressed in subjects you used to be good at while you struggled to understand the concepts presented simply due to the language barrier. Maybe we should have a few opportunities available to you at the start to learn in English until you built up your Swahili skills and could actually understand the Math or Science lesson in Swahili. Maybe we should understand that the United States can educate these children well if we adopted a more measured response to the problem of teaching English language learning kids than the Gingrich "no bilingual" approach.

Marby (+2 diggs)
The strongest impression I got from the CNN story was how it subtly changed the tone of Gingrich's remarks by using the term "ghetto: differently than he meant it. He seemed to be saying that by not learning the dominant language immigrants force themselves into a ghetto lifestyle to the detriment of themselves and the larger society. The article made it sound as though he was putting down immigrants. Clearly that was not his intent.

I am not much of a fan of Gingrich's and in general my politics are opposite to his. I basically agree with him on this point though but I feel much more strongly about the demonization of certain points of view and the detestable cult of political correctness than I do about the issue of bilingualism itself. We need to be able to debate one another with some degree of comity.

Inactive (+1 digg)
Same damn problem here in Canada. They are pushing French down our throats. If you don't speak it, you can't even get a job in some places (even at a McDonald's).

Mikehartor (+1 digg)
Perfect post! I couldn't see any graphics in IE7 or FF.

Cayennenator (0 diggs)
Unbelievable! But I'm not surprised.

Sportfan99 (0 diggs)
Good thing we didn't because in oklahoma we have six native languages and they are literally native.... Let the states decide. 
John - Essay
http://www.essaytown.com

Mikehartor (+1 digg)

Samsmartjir (+1 digg)
The government mandating that only English should be taught but no other language is like the government mandating that people should only drive vehicles with automatic transmission and make stick shifts illegal.
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292


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