



“A Hard Time Seeing the Relevance”: Race and Discourse Identity in Language Teacher Preparation

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Abstract

Perceptions of linguistic deficiency represent an extension of the devaluation of Black and racialized speakers which impacts their participation and representation, particularly within language classrooms. Though racism is directly challenged in current education research, language education remains a fertile space for weaponizing seemingly race-neutral terms like ‘culture’ and ‘identity’ as a means of minimizing the importance of race and other sociocultural factors on classroom language learning. Through semistructured interviews, this critical qualitative case study investigates the racial ideologies of three language teacher educators (LTEs) at Franklin University. Findings suggest the de-racialization of ‘culture’ and ‘identity’ influences the goals, design, and execution of instruction in this language teacher preparation program. Implications include guidance for language teacher preparation research and practice inclusive of centering race and clarifying the roles of race and power in language teacher preparation. Critically confronting who benefits or suffers when we use the term ‘culture’ in lieu of race in teacher preparation is also recommended.

Keywords: teacher preparation, anti-Blackness, language education, raciolinguistic ideology

Introduction

Race and language, while defined differently, are difficult to disentangle ideologically (Baker-Bell, 2020; Baugh, 2015; Smitherman, 1998). Gramsci defines ideology as “the power of the ideas of the ruling class to overshadow and eradicate competing views and to become, in effect, the commonsense view of the world” (Bartolomé, 2010, p. 508). Hierarchical ideologies of race (Omi & Winant, 1993) and language (Baker-Bell, 2020; Baugh, 2015; Flores & Rosa, 2019; Hudley, 2016) are critically engaged in the literature but are challenged to a lesser degree as a unit in the ways it impacts teacher education. This omission poses persistent challenges within teacher education spaces (Chang-Bacon, 2022; Cochran-Smith, 2004). Despite the diminishing white US population (Frey, 2020), the overwhelming majority of teachers (Geiger, 2018) and teacher educators responsible for teaching students characterized as urban and multicultural are white. The absence of Black and minoritized teachers can

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further impose white dominant ideologies (Sleeter, 2017) upon their students that are reflective of the raciodemographic positioning (Milner, 2012) of many white teachers among the ‘ruling class.’ While belonging to a minoritized group does not automatically ensure one’s ability to address the racial and cultural complexities of teaching (Milner, 2010), the likelihood of having personally experienced the material impacts of racism as it pertains to language is not in favor of the predominant demographic category to which teachers and teacher educators belong. Taken together, this raciolinguistic ideology within teacher preparation manifests in ways that reinforce its seemingly natural stratifying power.

Racism is directly challenged in most current education research, yet language education remains a fertile space for weaponizing seemingly ‘race neutral’ terms like *culture* and *identity*, minimizing the importance of race and other sociocultural factors (Kubota & Lin, 2006) upon classroom language learning. While shifts towards culturally relevant (Allen et al., 2017) and sustaining (Paris & Alim, 2017) approaches that dare to name realities of Black and other minoritized populations increase, language teacher preparation often engages in neoliberal multicultural languaging politics which rebrand race and issues of power in terms of culture (Melamed, 2006). Hence, the sociopolitical consciousness necessary to effectively discuss race remains underexplored, particularly through its euphemization as *culture* (Von Esch et al., 2020) despite calls for intercultural (Byram, 1997) and cultural competencies (Ladson-Billings, 1995) within the field’s continued race-evasive (Chang-Bacon, 2022) approach. The inability to connect the legacy of school as a site of racialization to language education spaces due to coded language can prevent critical and thorough research on race in (language) teacher education.

The growing awareness of how race and language are conaturalized (Rosa & Flores, 2017) has sparked language teacher educators (LTEs) to investigate their instructional practices, the impact of centering race in their curricular selections (Austin & Hsieh, 2021), and the explicit design for critical reflection with their preservice teachers (PSTs). Still, investigations centering the ideologies of LTEs themselves are less prevalent in the literature (Bacon, 2020; Chang-Bacon, 2022). The present study addresses this gap by investigating how race conceptually emerges within teacher preparation. To better understand the conceptual and linguistic weaponization of race-evasiveness among LTEs, the following research questions were employed:

- (1) According to self-report, how do LTEs at Franklin University¹ understand ‘culture’?
- (2) How do LTEs at Franklin University discuss *tacitly* and/or *explicitly* addressing culture and identity in the preparation of language teachers?

Theoretical Framework

Language use deemed as unstandard—when and *because* it is produced from Black bodies—forms an intersectional (Combahee River Collective, 1983) racialized language assemblage (Rosa & Flores, 2017) that renders Black language users ineligible for resources (inclusive of acknowledgement and instruction) in US schools. Language remains a site of cultural gatekeeping within a US context where contradictions between race, class, and culture are mature (Leonardo, 2012) and unquestioned. In fact, teacher preparation programs treat the problem of the cultural (Bhabha, 2012) as interchangeable with that of race, absorbing it into a cluster of classifications (Hall, 2021) associated with inferiority.

The notion of a single God-given culture derives from European feudal hierarchies (Wynter, 1992) as a means to dissociate the bourgeoisie from the servant class (Stoler, 1995), and still permeates modern institutions both discursively and conceptually. Supposed cultural deficiency, or

¹ Institution and participants were anonymized per institutional review board stipulations.

nonwhiteness, is marked in language classrooms as a failure to produce standard, academic, or appropriate language (Alim, 2007; Rosa & Flores, 2017). This raciolinguistic ideology in schools can result in Black and minoritized language users' placement in long-term English language (EL) tracks (Brooks, 2019) absent from advanced levels of world language (WL) study (Anya, 2011), and pathologized for their use of Black English (Baker-Bell, 2020). These class- and race-based conceptions of culture become weaponized in 'common-sense' discussions about language teaching and learning, encouraging the surrender of nonwhite/dominant ways of being for potential access to social and material educational resources.

Since language teaching professionals demonstrate race-evasiveness (Von Esch et al., 2020) by coding colonial issues of power as 'cultural' deficits, it is essential to consider the raciolinguistic implications of what LTEs mean by the term 'culture' when reflecting upon their identities and enacted practices.

Literature Review

Until recently, a lack of literature on race in language teaching (Kubota & Lin, 2006; Von Esch et al., 2020) has impacted the proliferation of culture as an uncritical euphemism for race within language education (Von Esch et al., 2020). Considering and instructing (language) learners apart from their racialized sociopolitical context (Pascual y Cabo & Prada, 2018) yields negative results for their linguistic advancement (Anya, 2016), their ability to implement (Jacobs et al., 2015; Kohli, 2009) or transfer practices (Martel, 2015) and affirm their racialized languaging practices (Bustamante & Novella, 2019). This separation further diminishes PST ability to refute language learning as ideologically neutral (Bacon, 2020). Studies centered on the experiences of language PSTs and transfer (or lack thereof) of practices outside of university contexts reflects this inability to clearly articulate issues of power and race.

Lived experiences provide a lens through which (language) teaching and learning are understood. The ways that Black and racialized groups experience their contexts, however, are not welcomed in classrooms (Lindahl et al., 2021). Anya's multiple-case study of Black American students studying Portuguese in Brazil (2016) found that failure to recognize that Black students enter classrooms aware of their sociopolitical positioning and nondominant languaging practices limits their ability to advance in proficiency, as they are disinvested in inauthentic representations of communities of practice. For the 42 racialized heritage Spanish speakers in Pascual y Cabo and Prada's (2018) study, service-learning opportunities enhanced confidence in Spanish usage and reinforced preexisting bicultural and bilingual participant identities. Despite linguistically responsive instruction implemented with 50 Latinx teacher candidates across various disciplines, participants in Lindahl et al.'s study (2021) succumbed to naturalized hierarchical language ideologies based on their associations of language policing and schools. These findings build upon Kohli's (2009) work with twelve PSTs of color who recognized the same racial and linguistic hierarchies they recalled from their own childhood classroom experiences being replicated at the clinical placements within their urban teacher preparation program. The absence of critical discussions on raciolinguistic power hierarchies within the educational experiences of these groups did not inhibit their ability to recognize these dynamics, it simply reinforced that the classroom was not a place to disrupt such sociopolitical realities.

Bustamante and Novella (2019) confirm these findings in their qualitative multiple-case study wherein Latina heritage language PSTs had their linguistic practices devalued as not standard or grammatical enough for their WL pedagogy courses. The Black American participants from Anya's 2016 study depended on the nonclassroom community as a preferred context for Portuguese languaging in the absence of discussing sociopolitical realities within the classroom. Still, while the

Latina PSTs from Bustamante and Novella's (2019) study used their language skills in the community, they later found said skills were not valued in their university-based courses, as they were not considered academic enough. Similarly, raciolinguistic ideologies were either transferred, as with Bacon's (2020) mixed-methods study with 127 novice teachers, or endured through societal norms, as with Dobbs & Leider's (2021) qualitative study with fifteen novice and early career teachers. Participants in these mandated structured English immersion courses displayed beliefs in hierarchical racialized monolingual language ideologies (Bacon, 2020) even without direct instruction on the topic. While these studies suggest ontological understandings of race- and language-based hierarchies are strong and hard to shift within teacher education courses, the literature does not attend to the goals or orientations of the (language) teacher educators who either designed and or instructed the courses and the possible influences of their own lived experiences upon their practices.

The goals of (language) PSTs and teacher preparation programs may be misaligned, and LTEs serve an important role in creating opportunities for language PSTs to navigate these differences and create their own practice with sufficient modeling and support. At a college in the Midwest, a case study performed with a single Spanish-language PST (Martel, 2015) sought to determine how a prospective language educator's identity evolves over the course of the teacher preparation program. The qualitative methods employed indicated that the PST taught in ways that appealed her instructors despite the approach failing to center her students, as was her preference. Similarly to Bustamante and Novella's study (2019), Martel (2015) shared evidence of the shifting nature of PSTs' conceptions of language in light of university-based instruction. Nevertheless, findings indicate that the potential agency that language PSTs exert reflects the support they receive in navigating mismatches between their university programs, their clinical placement mentorship, and their individual orientations.

When aligned, direct instruction on culture and power within language teacher education can involve both critical reflection and language awareness (Lindahl et al., 2021). For example, in Jacobs et al.'s (2015) study, PSTs defined culture for themselves, reflected on the provided definition of culture with regard to their lived experiences, and connected those experiences to issues of power and race that they saw in their placements. While Bacon (2020) found an unintentional transfer of ideologies, and Martel (2015) suggests ideological transfer may not occur in spite of intent, Jacobs et al. (2015) posit an uneven adoption of critical consciousness despite overt planning and direct instruction on culture. Jacobs et al. (2015), relying on Terrell & Lindsey's (2008) work, clarify *culture* for PSTs as

a set of practices and beliefs shared by members of a particular group that distinguish that group from other groups [including] all characteristics of human description [...] age, gender, socio-economic status, geography, ancestry, religion, language, history, sexual orientation, physical and mental level of ableness, occupation, and other affiliations. (Terrell & Lindsey, 2008, p. 16)

The definition of culture offered to PSTs in Jacobs et al.'s (2015) study did not include racialized and systemic dimensions of power despite efforts to employ culturally responsive teaching within the program. Thus, the literature indicates that while impact is possible between TEs and (language) PSTs, the influence of varying conceptions of 'culture' among LTEs upon their instruction of language PSTs remains unclear.

The literature reflects that beliefs about language and culture among language PSTs evolve, but that they are often not framed sociopolitically in terms of power and race. While these beliefs are influenced by the racialized lived experiences of PSTs outside of classrooms in addition to the institutional rigidity of school, they can also be affected, for better or worse, by LTE instruction. The degree to which this influence is reflective of LTEs understanding of and experience with critical self-reflections of their identities as cultural and racialized beings, remains underexplored. The present

study aims to determine what LTEs report as their understanding of culture (inclusive of their own), and the ways in which they draw from those understandings to address culture and identity in their practices with language PSTs.

Methodology

This critical qualitative case study (Merriam, 2009) drew from a preliminary program review (see Appendix A) from which the interview protocol found in Appendix B was derived. I was interested in the social context within which the LTEs at Franklin University were operating, as well as how they made meaning and understood their roles and approaches. In light of these goals, the critical case study method suited my questions best, as they also aimed to impact positive change (Merriam, 2009) in teacher preparation.

Context and Background

This critical qualitative case study took place at a public university in the northeast of the United States. Demographically, Franklin University's School of Education more closely reflects the state of education across the country (AACTE, 2013) with seventy-five percent of matriculated students identifying as white. An emphasis on urban social justice is a recent shift in the school's mission and vision and has been accompanied by structural and curricular changes. These shifts reflect a commitment to centering class, race, language, sexual identity, and the theoretical and ideological considerations that impact discrimination based on these categories in both pedagogy and curriculum design. Structurally, Franklin University added faculty with practical expertise to support PSTs on-site as they are strategically placed in urban districts for clinical experiences.

I reviewed publicly available program and course information for Franklin University (Appendix A) and noticed varying emphases upon sociocultural factors that impact language instruction. This, in conjunction with the literature on race and language teaching and teacher preparation, led me to address the research questions:

- (1) According to self-report, how do LTEs at Franklin University understand 'culture'?
- (2) How do LTEs at Franklin University discuss *tacitly* and/or explicitly addressing culture and identity in the preparation of language teachers?

Participants

The participants in this critical qualitative case study (see Table 1) were instructors from the large public research institution, Franklin University. Nonprobabilistic criterion sampling was used to identify language education instructors in Franklin University's teacher preparation program (Merriam, 2009). Participants met the following criteria: at least three years of experience teaching in the language education preparation program, including having taught a methods course. I sought to include a representative from each subdiscipline—World Languages, English as a Second Language (ESL), and Bilingual/Bicultural Education—resulting in all language methods instructors from Franklin University's Language Education program as participants in this study (N=3).

Table 1. *Participant Raciodemographics and Discipline Areas*

	Name	Discipline	Self-Identification
Franklin University Language Education Methods Instructors	Sharon	English as a Second Language	White middle-class Italian Catholic
	Noelia	World Languages	White upper middle-class American with (Iberian) Spanish background
	Ana	Bilingual/Bicultural Education	Working-class Dominican and American

Like more than seventy percent of faculty in US higher education (Yakoboski, 2015), the participants are adjuncts. Sharon is a part-time lecturer in ESL methods, Academic English in the Content Areas, and Educational Technology. She identifies as a white woman and has taught ESL in the K–12 setting and served on state-level associations for language educators. Noelia is a supervisor of World Languages in a K–12 district and as a part-time lecturer, has taught World Language methods, among other language education courses, for the past three years. She identifies as American with (Iberian) Spanish background. The final participant, Ana, is a bilingual middle school educator who serves as a state-level representative for a language education association. For the past three years as an adjunct, Ana has taught Assessment of English Language Learners (ELLs), Principles of Language Acquisition, and ESL Methods and Assessment. She identifies as Dominican-American. These three participants represent the entirety of the methods course instruction within the language education program at Franklin.

Instruments

I emailed each participant to solicit one-on-one interviews. The hour-long semistructured interviews were audio recorded, then transcribed and stored on a password-protected computer. I composed data memos immediately following each session, and participants member-checked their transcribed interviews. The transcripts, memos, and review of the programmatic and course data provided a comprehensive understanding of culture and identity as understood by the participants. Over multiple data analysis meetings, low incidences of coding discrepancies were resolved.

Data Analysis

After reading all transcripts and listening to the interview audio multiple times, I executed open and inductive coding (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996) to determine emergent codes. I returned to the data for a second pass using the third tenet of culturally relevant pedagogy, sociopolitical consciousness, for axial coding. I isolated this tenet based on the literature, which reflects a tendency towards race-evasiveness (Chang-Bacon, 2022) and coded language (Bryan & Gerald, 2020) frequently used in (language) teacher education. The specific definition I use for sociopolitical consciousness (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 1998) can be found in Table 2.

Table 2. *Coding for Data Analyses*

Pass 1: Open Coding (Sample initial themes & codes)	Pass 2: Sociopolitical Consciousness (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 1998)	Pass 3: Identity as an Analytic Lens (Gee, 2000)
Identity <i>Culture</i> <i>Language</i> <i>Ethnicity</i> <i>Geography</i> <i>Beliefs</i> <i>Nationality</i> <i>Loyalty</i> <i>Pride/ belonging</i>	(P) involves teachers <u>partnering with students</u> (C) <u>challenge a racist curriculum</u> and debunk its presentation as neutral and objective	(I) institutional: “institutional confirmation is secured by authority figures associated with said institutions” (D) discourse: “discourse confirms identity via dialogue with individuals considered rational”
Culture <i>Products</i> <i>Practices</i> <i>Perspectives</i> <i>SES</i> <i>Tolerance</i> <i>Race</i> <i>Social context</i> <i>Values</i>		
Instruction <i>Savior/ helper:banking</i> <i>Superiority</i> <i>Comfort</i> <i>Working together</i> <i>Convenience</i> <i>Cultural adaptations</i> <i>Clarity/ being explicit</i> <i>Responsibility</i> <i>Relevance</i> <i>Values</i> <i>Asset approach</i> <i>Bidirectional learning</i> <i>Modeling</i> <i>Reflection</i>	(S) a pedagogy through cultural points of strength that <u>shift the locus of reference</u> away from dominant white world views	

The first coding pass addressed the first research question: “according to self-report, what are the ways in which language teacher educators *tacitly* or explicitly address culture and identity in the preparation of language teachers?” After coding for sociopolitical consciousness, in the third and final pass, I coded the data using Gee’s identity as an analytic lens (2000) to unpack the discursive systems (Hall, 2021) the participants employed to validate their identities. This constant comparison method revealed racialized and power-affiliated constructions of identity that paralleled the instructional moves the participants described as they distanced from or approximated themselves towards racialized classifications. During interrater reliability sessions, transcript excerpts were lengthened or shortened upon recommendation to better demonstrate these themes.

Findings and Discussion

I present my findings under three themes: (1) Duality and Belonging, (2) Helping You Belong Here, and (3) Limited Experience, Limited Application. Conceptually, each theme explicates the coded usage

of the term ‘culture,’ peripheralizing the sociopolitical realities of race and power in language teacher preparation. At the same time, these three themes attend to both research questions.

Duality and Belonging: Defining Identity

Identities as we perceive and enact them are socially situated (Gee, 2004) and our linguistic choices indicate both proximity and distance from desired classifications, or the ways in which we language the “kind of person” we are (Gee, 2000, p. 99). Conveyed below through alignment with discourse and institutional “values, norms, perspectives and assumptions” (Gee, 2004, p. 69), the participants vied to be accepted and/or removed from racialized identity categories through their lexical choices throughout the interview process. For example, Sharon understood the words *culture* and *identity* as referring to religion, language, and ethnic identity. She shared that her Italian-Catholic roots were the ones with which she most identified.

So, growing up my parents were from two different cultures. My dad’s family was Italian-American, and he was the first generation born in the United States. My grandmother spoke to me only in Italian. I’m guessing I felt more comfortable but, even then, I felt a loyalty to my mom, who did not speak Italian or understand Italian at all. Her family chases back to the American revolution. So, her great-great-grandmother participated in the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Whereas Italian as an ethnicity is important in Sharon’s estimation, she peripheralizes it linguistically by affirming her discourse identity through her ‘loyalty’ to her mother. She then reinforces her belongingness through an institutional validation in referencing the Daughters of the American Revolution. This institution, according to their website (<https://www.dar.org/>), has evolved since its inception in the late 1800s and now overtly focuses on “patriotism” through a “better education” for women from “any race, religion or ethnic background” who have descended from a US soldier who fought in the American Revolutionary War (2021). Still, it is most commonly known for its vigilance against “un-American activities” between the first and second World Wars (Wendt, 2013, p. 962). In aligning herself with this specific institution, Sharon unwittingly relays her sense of belonging not just to a historically exclusive institution, but one known for surveilling and policing ‘unAmericanness’ by banning African American members and seeking to “Americanize” the country’s foreign population (Wendt, 2013, p. 944).

While being descended of a ‘first generation’ Italian, and having roots in the ‘American Revolution,’ were points of loyalty for Sharon, she also identified as being of ethnic Jewish descent—a detail from which she distanced herself in describing her upbringing.

Somebody in the family ... [an] ancestor was married to a man who was Jewish and was then disowned by the rest of the family. And so my mom’s family came from the Jewish side and so they were mostly culturally or ethnically Jewish. So, they did not go to ... I’ve never seen a synagogue and my mom never went to one. So that’s how we grew up. The family knew nothing about Judaism at all.

To round out her ‘two cultures’ comment, Sharon elaborates on her Jewish background by sharing that her Jewish-by-marriage ‘ancestor’ was ‘disowned.’ The distance between Sharon and this ethnocultural designation is far in time as well as relationship, and she completes the sentiment by clarifying how unfamiliar Judaism is to her religiously since she has ‘never seen a synagogue.’ Belonging in this way is constructed discursively through family members for whom Sharon demonstrates a sense of closeness. Both her institutional and discourse identities are planted in a socio-political context that has, over time, aligned her with whiteness, and both religious and linguistic privilege. She has no facility or need to describe herself in terms of race, based upon her understanding of the terms *culture* and *identity*.

Noelia used language and geography markers to define her culture and identity. As she routinely summered in Spain, she described feeling ‘between two worlds,’ yet only the spelling and pronunciation of her name set her apart within US classrooms.

I’ve always identified myself as an American, but an American with a Spanish background. Very often when people look at my name or they don’t know me beforehand, they wonder, who is that? Like who is this, Noelia Martínez? Like, what does she look like? And then when they meet me with my blue eyes and very pale skin, they’re like, Oh, wait a minute. Okay.

Noelia’s self-description depends on the institution of school to solidify her identity as American. Phenotypic markers of ‘blue eyes’ and ‘very pale skin’ affirm this belonging. While never naming race, Noelia precisely identifies these physical features that offer assurance to those around her and affirm her Americanness. Neither Sharon nor Noelia used “white” to describe their race until I specifically asked in a follow-up interview to use race as a descriptor. Both participants, when asked, provided the direct response, “white,” without further explanation.

Ana described her culture and identity in a complex, situated way. Her response depicted relationships and the impact of environment upon individuals as a means of making sense of who she was and how she understood herself.

When I define [culture] for myself, like not the academics, it’s the way I view and live life. It’s the perspective with which I view and interpret and live my life perspective. That’s my [definition] ... and what does that perspective run on? Traditions, histories, experiences ... the people around me where I’ve lived, where I’ve worked, how I speak, who I speak with and speak with my languages ...

Ana also alludes to geography and mentions language in her definition, yet neither are described as stable categories. She is the sole participant to mention traditions and histories, which extends her understanding of culture as evolving and contextual, and the through-line of her response is plurality rather than duality (i.e., this or that). It is Ana alone who affirms her identity, ‘not the academics,’ or any institution—and race, still, was not a part of that description.

All participants described their identities through belongingness, but Ana, in contrast to Noelia and Sharon, identified herself as belonging more expansively to dynamic histories, perspectives, languages, and traditions. Avoiding race terminologically in these ways either, in Sharon’s and Noelia’s cases, approximates them institutionally to power and whiteness by surrendering the foreignness of language and physical features, or, in Ana’s case, distances her from dominant categories through disidentification with a fixed monocultural norm.

Helping You Belong Here: The Role of Culture

Sharon used examples from previous cohorts with current ones to explain how she supports ESL PSTs in tolerating differences among themselves. These differences for her are centered upon class, and she shares that it is the role of the institution to provide resources to PSTs who may lack them in order to promote equality within the learning context by ensuring learners can execute tasks.

A lot of our teachers tend to be middle class [...] so they tend to teach through the eyes of a middle class person [...] They come to me shocked, they’ll say things like, I remember one [PST] saying “Well, what’s the big deal if [the university] doesn’t give you the \$50 you need for some kind of resources?” [...] And I said some people don’t have \$50 and some people feel that it’s not their place to put out the \$50. I said, so you’ve got 2 things happening here: the schools should make sure that the resources are there, but they don’t always have the money [because] it may have been allocated elsewhere.

Sharon offers institutional critique in highlighting that resources students need ‘may have been allocated elsewhere’ to encourage her ESL PSTs to be more tolerant of class-based diversity. In the

interpersonal critique, Sharon highlights that one's experiences may limit the way they understand people around them and identifies that 'teachers tend to be middle class' and therefore teach 'through' their middle-class 'eyes.' She encourages an additional layer of discretion when a similar theme materializes from her reflections on her direct instruction.

We talked about how when somebody doesn't have something how you can quietly give that to that person. And you don't have to say, "Well, you don't have it," you can say, "I forgot mine as well. I sometimes cannot place my pencil. I know I put it somewhere, but I forgot where I put it." That type of thing, you know, give them suggestions rather than say, "I can't believe he comes to school every day without a pencil."

The limits of Sharon's institutional critique appear to be where they meet possible solutions. She encourages student teachers to 'quietly' provide what students need thereby helping them fit into an institution that she also acknowledges may not allocate resources properly. Thus, her instruction suggests individuals should adjust to the system, rather than challenging that system through asking critical questions about resource allocation. Through her instruction, Sharon tacitly suggests language PSTs assimilate to gain belonging within the institution.

In discussing the role of culture in instruction, Noelia too offers institutional critique in that she finds the gendered nature of the Spanish language a barrier to students who do not fit the binary of ending feminine nouns and adjectives with an 'a' and masculine ones with an 'o.'

I feel that teachers themselves need to be aware of who they are, and they need to also be aware of who they're serving and then they can start to bring to light all of the different aspects [...]

Not related to culture, but related to language is the gender neutrality that has come up. There might be various [barriers] related to sexual identity that might need to be broken. So, the classroom climate is super important [...] creating a comfortable, safe space for every single student [...] what we as teachers need to allow for with these languages that are masculine, feminine. So, do we let the kids put Es and Xs on everything just so that way, if they're identifying as gender neutral, they can go ahead and choose the appropriate letter that they feel works for them.

Noelia, like Sharon, centers on the lived experiences of teachers as affecting their instruction. She then clarifies that gendered language, to her, is not cultural. This response is a musing rather than a reflection of Noelia's instruction. Still, Noelia's dual role as a WL teacher educator and supervisor at a local district suggests that these insights influence her leadership with in-service Spanish (or Romance language) teachers.

So, in Spain, [the] 'Real Academia' is rejecting everything. But, I was just having a conversation with my director of curriculum about this [topic] this morning [...] that languages evolve, as new cultures and 10,000, 50,000 people are using the X, well then we're using the X. So that is also a part of *your classroom environment* [...] being open to allowing kids to choose at this...

Noelia directly challenges The Royal Spanish Academy (RAE), which self-defines as "una institución cultural dedicada a la regularización lingüística entre el mundo hispanohablante" (RAE, 2019, para. 1), a cultural institution dedicated to linguistic regulation in the Spanish-speaking world—and concludes that it is within the teacher's responsibility to take up this challenge on a classroom level by 'allowing kids to choose' even without the expressed sanctioning of the use of *x* in place of *a* (for feminine) or *o* (for masculine) by the RAE. Unlike Ana, Noelia's response suggests that she finds immediate resistance to the institution a valid means of creating belonging at a classroom level, even if the larger context does not respond in kind.

For Ana, preparing Bilingual/Bicultural teachers prioritizes the visibility of bilingualism through her own embodied experiences. She describes her role as one of advocating for bilingual youth with monolingual language PSTs to counter deficit assumptions about bilingualism.

We're able to assume that you don't have a language. People still look at you like, Oh, your English is too good—wait, where you from? No, no, no. Really? Where are you from? Where are you from? What is, what does that feel like? I can speak to that. A kid might not be able to speak to it [...] I can trouble it.

In reflecting on experiences and how they inform her role in teaching culture and identity, Ana, like Noelia, has personally been rejected as a language user. Whereas Noelia's name seemed to not 'match' the whiteness of her physical appearance, it was Ana's English proficiency which caused a similar level of racialization. While yet unnamed, it was race that caused Noelia's belongingness to be confirmed in the same way it delegitimized Ana's. Still, Ana finds this purported languagelessness (Rosa, 2016) a valuable opportunity to 'trouble' the racially typified 'cluster of classifications' that render her unintelligible as the legitimate user of any language, through leveraging her institutional power as an LTE.

I have one student who is adamant about English and English only and she's very deficit minded and we're working through that. I'm hoping to do that through the reality of the policy—"Here is the EdTPA [Educative Teacher Performance Assessment] rubric."

Despite Ana's affiliation with Franklin University, in her role as a Bilingual/Bicultural LTE she relies on an extension of institutional power in the language of the teacher preparation assessment (i.e., EdTPA) to discourage deficit beliefs about bilingual students. Whereas Ana can be questioned and delegitimized despite her role due to her racialization, policy offers her an institutional identity (and credibility) that monolingual language PSTs must acknowledge.

Reflecting on one's identity caused Sharon and Noelia to feel a need to choose (among ethnicities, languages, geographies, etc.). Yet, shifting the topic to culture revealed a level of engaging said binary differently for both participants. Sharon equated culture to class and suggested that those who have more, individuals or institutions, should provide for those with less and in a discreet manner, even without institutional support. Alternatively, Noelia supported resisting the either/or binary of gender altogether, and while accounting for gender outside of her definition of culture, found it important enough to address during the interview, an additional demonstration of resistance towards upholding the status quo. While acknowledging that teachers teach from who they are, neither Sharon nor Noelia found this institutional tension a space to unpack in their own identities, but under the guise of 'culture' felt more at liberty to engage ideas about power and privilege instructionally. Ana, while implicitly affirming that one teaches who they are, was the sole participant to rely upon her institutional identity, in this case, to further the mission and vision of the school towards social justice and equity through the teacher licensure exam.

Limited Experience, Limited Applicability: In Practice

In discussing her practice, Sharon explicitly uses the term 'culturally responsive teaching' (CRT) to describe her goals with ESL language PSTs. Her methods for demonstrating said practices are lecture- and video-based.

We have a lot of articles that we have them [PSTs] read dealing with CRT and I showed them examples. I give them personal examples as well as using various videos of classroom teaching where they can see CRT and then we dissect it. What aspects of CRT do you see in this video? What do you see them doing? What could she do to improve? We always try to take it one step further, so that they understand because they're going to be dealing with Danielson as well as EdTPA, where it's always going up

another step. So, they need to know that even though that looks like a good lesson, there's always something you could do to make it better.

Using videos and lectures, Sharon elicits ideas from language PSTs to identify possibilities for CRT and allows for institutional alignment through the Danielson Framework (a teacher evaluation instrument commonly used in the region and at Franklin) and through the teacher licensure test, EdTPA. This is meant to encourage student compliance to 'go one step further' with their instruction. To determine active rather than passive practices that might reflect Sharon's explicit teaching of culture, I asked about instances of resistance she has experienced.

Sometimes they're able to make connections and sometimes not. There was a section of it about translanguaging, which you know is a hot issue. The students had a hard time seeing the relevance of that and understanding the difference between code-switching and translanguaging. The relevance issue went to the lack of interest maybe on the part of the clinical field observation teachers. Some of them came back and told me that the teachers outright came out and said that they felt that it was a deterrent to English-language learning. Some of the classroom teachers told the students that they felt it was something that wouldn't actually be feasible in the classroom because [...] we have several different classrooms where several different languages are being used. The classroom teachers' concern was mainly in comprehending what the students were saying.

Here, unlike Sharon's previous willingness to challenge an institutional or individual class-based sentiment, she concedes to the discursive construction of translanguaging as 'a deterrent to English language learning.' Per Sharon's explicit description, it is the clinical placement (Jacobs et al., 2015; Kohli, 2009) which serves as institutional resistance to this progressive language learning approach, and the infeasibility of translanguaging was 'the classroom teachers' concern.'

In teaching WL PSTs about culture and identity, Noelia discusses her practice through activities that honor student names. She offers personal reflections about how she was academically miscategorized based on a racialized linguistic assumption—that her physical appearance as white meant she was not bilingual *enough* to be in advanced language classes. Noelia muses that this resulted in her not being challenged in her Spanish classes. This mismatch between perceived identity category and language ability is a theme maintained from Noelia's insistence on languaging gender in a way that students experience it rather than relying upon the linguistic binary that exists in Spanish (despite a lack of institutional support). Her approach to affirming names is through ice-breaker activities.

I've always been very cognizant of pronouncing names correctly to really make sure that the students know that I value however different their name is. Because very often my name is mispronounced and it's just chopped to pieces [as a student] especially in my, in my Spanish classes, I remember very often the teachers would turn to me or relied on me or sometimes the students would gravitate towards me [...] because of knowing Spanish, they were like, "Oh, well, you know, you'll, you'll get a hundred on this" or "I should work with you cause we're going to do awesome on the projects; you know everything already." So, my Spanish courses never really challenged me, and you know, the language or the, the context of learning the language.

The ability to partner with students and challenge racist assumptions reflects Noelia's previous stance on gender binaries. To better gauge additional instructional moves along other dimensions of identity inclusive of race and class, I asked that Noelia share some practices from her instruction.

We talked a little bit about self-identity, but I could have certainly done more as the instructor of how we can know ourselves better and who we are and then how we can also tap into our students more. We did 'getting to know you' stuff like the first day of class, like and I just did different world language activities with cards and dice and icebreaker sort of things. But I could have definitely emphasized that a little bit more.

The limits of Noelia's instructional moves match her experiences with identity-affirming language. She acknowledges that she 'could have certainly done more' beyond the first-day and icebreaker activities, and there is evidence in her responses that she finds language which matches one's lived realities worth fighting for. Still, she did not explicitly provide instruction reflective of those beliefs for her WL PSTs.

Ana's work with Bilingual/Bicultural language PSTs reflects her embodied experiences in navigating a pluralistic identity. She anticipates a tension, and insists upon it for the sake of instruction.

It helps to be bilingual when you're talking about what it feels like to be bilingual [...] I helped the students, my particular student, to think different. I changed her perspective of Latinx people and culture and that she now understands that we have many histories and many different traditions and it's so beautiful. [...] So, with this Methods [course] they're gonna find that I'm going to force them to bring in their experiences, what they're seeing and they're questioning into their readings and have those debates and really grapple because the expectation is that they will see value and tolerate honor or appreciate and harness [their experiences]. And I think that's where the conflict is going to come up and helping them work through that because they are mostly white coming from upper middle-class backgrounds.

Ana suggests that her own bilingualism can affect the way Bilingual/Bicultural language PSTs understand their students, and that she will 'force them [PSTs] to bring in their experiences,' not to discuss, but to debate. Without directly being asked, she contrasts this plurality with her teacher candidates 'white' and 'upper middle-class backgrounds' implicitly suggestive of monoculturalism in the way their racialized subject positions present a conflict for the 'histories and many different traditions' of Ana's Dominican-Americanness. While Ana, like Sharon, suggests her pedagogy is anchored in readings, due to the active description of her instruction, I asked Ana to explain what her goal was in explicitly partnering with teacher candidates in this way.

I sincerely hope that I am effective in doing two things: giving them a critical perspective so that they can highlight culturally sustaining practices, and pedagogy and advocacy. I want to empower their voice to speak for the kids and for themselves; that's my objective. And every single course that I teach, a critical lens, I will create cultural sustainability and equity and advocacy.

Culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP), like CRT and translanguaging mentioned by Sharon, is a progressive equity-based approach which aligns with Franklin's mission where the participants teach. The "cultural and linguistic flexibility" however, that is central to CSP is not only terminologically important for Ana, it is reflected in how she self-describes, as well as how she approaches instruction with Bilingual/Bicultural language PSTs in terms of repositioning power. Race is central to understanding power, language, and identity (Deroo & Ponzio, 2021; Paris & Alim, 2017) and Ana expresses this implicit knowledge in her response by shifting the locus of reference away from white middle-class norms in her instruction. Similarly to Noelia choosing to fight the RAE's gendered linguistic binary despite a lack of institutional support, Ana invited 'conflict' as an opportunity for modeling teacher candidates to 'speak for the kids and for themselves.'

These findings reflect the constancy of race and racism, implicit or explicit, as a central determinant in the goals and practices of LTEs. These analyses lay bare how the racialized experiences of the participants animated their understanding of culture and identity and manifested in their capacity to instruct language PSTs. The concept of culture was expanded or contracted through alignment with valued institutions or individuals to dis/include class, gender, language, and race, demonstrating that in many ways, you teach who you are. Ana's description of her identity and instruction resisted racial Black/white binaries in addition to conceptions of language as bounded systems. She languaged her approaches through progressive and pluralistic scholarship (e.g., CRSE [culturally responsive and sustaining education] and translanguaging), which reflected her description

of self. All participants drew from ontoepistemic expertise, yet Ana, who identifies as Dominican-American, drew from her racialized experiences (Anyia, 2016; Kohli, 2009) to deepen her practice with PSTs studying to become bilingual/bicultural teachers. The participants' ability to employ the term 'culture' to signal sociopolitical issues without naming race or colonial histories and their impacts undermines the ability of LTEs to norm, discuss, and grow their understandings of complex issues related to racism despite structural and curricular shifts towards equity and justice at Franklin University.

Conclusion and Implications

This study sought to address the ways LTEs at Franklin University understood 'culture,' as well as how they tacitly or explicitly addressed culture and identity in their preparation of language teachers. Findings suggest that participants understood culture as racialized, and particularly so through their conceptions of self in accounting for various class markers including phenotype, language, gender identity, citizenship, ethnicity, and nationality. Drawing upon the passive institutional power of Franklin and/or the teacher licensure exam, these relative categorical allegiances or enmities reinforced white monocultural ideals, rendering discussions of those ideals impossible through coded language. Thus, language teacher preparation at Franklin is cast as an incubator of neoliberal multicultural anti-Blackness through coded representations of race as presented through 'culture.'

This study further suggests that within the urban social justice teacher preparation program at Franklin University, LTEs are agentive irrespective of institutional support toward ends they espouse and in the ways they understand said ends. In this case, changing structures (curriculum and clinical placements) to center equity and social justice was helpful for participants, but the success of their agency could have been further buttressed by receiving ongoing institutional support for reflection and racially conscious instruction. The tendency for LTEs to use the lens of self to make sense of race and power despite not seeing themselves as racialized reinforces the need for teacher preparation programs to establish and norm how 'race' is understood by instructors in order to address social hierarchies, particularly within programs that center urban social justice.

Participants in this case demonstrated a common-sense, albeit racialized, understanding of 'culture,' upon which there was no universal agreement. For recommended future study, it is important that we investigate under which culture paradigm language teacher educators are oriented—culture as ethnoracial associations solidified politically over time, or culture as a state-endorsed politics of difference (Bennett, 1992) in which instructors are an instrument of government. Without this distinction, application of progressive CRSE frameworks within language teacher preparation are destined to falter due to a postracial multicultural tendency to evade discussions of race.

Teacher educators who feel distanced from the practical implementation of CRSE despite their theoretical knowledge may not deem progressive culture-based frameworks as relevant based on their own identity formations working from a "do as I say, not as I do" (Lindahl et al., 2021) approach. To counter this, (language) teacher preparation must increase Black and minoritized educators within their ranks whose real-life experiential knowledge and expertise (Austin et al., 2021) can amplify and center those that more closely align with K–12 student populations. It is important, however, that these professionals be tenure-track faculty to increase the likelihood that they truly possess the power to affect structures and curricula. Finally, to address race in language teacher preparation, we must avoid the euphemism of 'culture' and center race by specifically asking, *Who benefits from collapsing sociopolitically, geopolitically and historically contingent categories of race into commonsensical and static hierarchies of 'culture'?* We must further take notice of who can claim cultural and linguistic difference as positive and for whom this remains a mark of inferiority. This line of critical questioning is a starting point

towards acknowledging the centrality of race as an enduring anti-Black colonial construct in language teacher preparation.

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Appendix A: Franklin University Distribution of Credits

<i>Urban Social Justice Teacher Preparation Program</i>		Total Credits	Percentage of Culture & Identity credits
ESL	M.A.	54	35%
	Certificate	15	20%
Bilingual/Bicultural Education	Certificate	12	50%
World Language	M.A.	54	35%

Appendix B: Interview Protocol

1. What is your name and your position?
2. How long have you held that position?
3. How would you define culture?
4. What understandings of culture do you think preservice teachers need to be effective teachers of language and culture?
5. What activities do you plan to help preservice teachers understand culture(s)?
6. What misconceptions about culture(s) do your preservice teachers have?
7. How do you help them overcome these misconceptions?
8. How do you see your role with regard to helping future teachers teach about culture and identity with their future students?
9. What is the role of identity in language learning?
10. How do you help future teachers understand the importance of the role of identity?