

Inclusive Classrooms & Student Agency



TEACHING WRITING TO MULTILINGUAL INTERNATIONAL
STUDENTS IN A SMALL LIBERAL ARTS SETTING

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Contents

- Linguistic Diversity & Inclusion
- Teacher Awareness
- Standard English
- Implications for the Classroom
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See Module Folder for Faculty and Student Activities & Bibliography

The goal of a liberal arts education is to empower students to learn to “deal with complexity, diversity, and change”

Call for Diversity and Inclusion (2011, 3)



DIVERSITY:

Individual differences (e.g., personality, learning styles, and life experiences) and group/social differences (e.g., race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, country of origin, and ability as well as cultural, political, religious, or other affiliations).

Making Excellence
Inclusive (2011, 4)

linguistic diversity

THE IMPORTANCE OF
ENFORCING A POSITIVE,
INCLUSIVE VIEW OF
LANGUAGE

BEING IN THE VICINITY OF
DIVERSITY IS NOT ENOUGH

MAKING THE INVISIBLE
VISIBLE: THE HIDDEN
CURRICULA OF THE ENGLISH
LANGUAGE

DEVELOP A "
"MULTILINGUAL
ORIENTATION"

Canagarajah (2010)

WHAT DOES
INCLUSION &
AGENCY FOR
MULTILINGUAL
WRITERS MEAN?



ACTIVITY: WORD ASSOCIATIONS

When you think of
"Standard English"
what images and ideas come to
mind?



Standard Written English

LINGUISTIC, OBJECTIVE

- Grammar
- Academic Word List
vocabulary
- Essay Format
- Correctness
- Clarity
- "Templates"
- Benchmark

SOCIAL, IDEOLOGICAL

- English that is more "richly rewarded"
- invisible rules, imagined norms, "fixed"= unquestioned
- social rather than linguistic
- superior, gatekeeping
- assumptions about people speaking it =>
about the language itself



*PRACTICES FOR
INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE
AND
LANGUAGE DIVERSITY*

(5 Dimensions, Salazar, Norton & Tuitt, handout)

INTRAPERSONAL AWARENESS

INTERPERSONAL AWARENESS

CURRICULAR TRANSFORMATION

INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY

INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

TEACHER AWARENESS

HOW MANY OF YOU SPEAK A
DIALECT OF THE ENGLISH
LANGUAGE?

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY
ACADEMIC WRITING IN
ENGLISH?

WHO IS TEACHING, AND WHO
IS LEARNING ?

MAKING THE INVISIBLE
VISIBLE: THE HIDDEN
CURRICULA OF ENGLISH
LANGUAGE WRITING

WHAT DOES
INCLUSION &
AGENCY FOR
MULTILINGUAL
WRITERS MEAN?

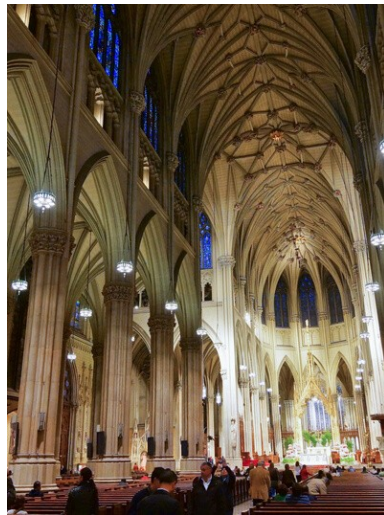


MYTH OF LINGUISTIC HOMOGENEITY

The implicit power, or what Matsuda (2006) defines the "myth of linguistic homogeneity" as the tacit and widespread acceptance of the dominant image of composition students as native speakers of a privileged variety of English" (Matsuda and Matsuda, 2011)

The spread of English globally "was connected for many centuries to the international political power of people who are constructed as White, so that English and Whiteness are thornily intertwined" (Motha, 2006a, 2014)

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INTRAPERSONAL
AWARENESS

My Western scholarly
predisposition to medieval
architecture

INTERPERSONAL
AWARENESS

Religious /Cultural
background of my students
(Asian, Muslim, History etc)

CURRICULAR
TRANSFORMATION

Who does the image
exclude? Hidden oppression
(crusade / colonialism)

ACTIVITY: LANGUAGE IN YOUR DISCIPLINE

How might your discipline implicitly or explicitly use English language writing power relations?

Are there invisible language issues ("shibboleths") that mark someone in your class, discourse, or field?

How is that conveyed to students?

INTRAPERSONAL/CURRICULAR LANGUAGE TRANSFORMATION

DEFICIT TO ASSET ?

If we focus on language **only**, ML writers are seen only in terms of gaps or errors in English language.

If we **only** focus on appreciating the diverse resources multilinguals have, we tend to ignore **student goals** to improve as an ELL. (Shipiro et al. 2016)

Problems to Consider

How can we help students as developing writers without promoting a deficit view of L2 writers and writing?

The Teacher's Dilemma



VALIDATING STUDENTS' VERNACULARS "GETS IN THE WAY"

of the instructor's "professional and moral obligation to ensure that all students leave the writing class competent in school discourse and with the requisite proficiency in SE to be able to pass college exams, write acceptable term papers, and function successfully in the world beyond college."

(Nero, 2010)

Underlying Issues

1. The vernacular is framed as a problem
2. The perception is that allowing the vernacular in class delays, or interferes with the acquisition of standardized academic discourse
3. This standard discourse (SE) is positioned as more powerful and useful
4. The teacher may feel uncomfortable publicly correcting students' vernacular

NERO (2010)

The Hidden Curriculum of Standard English

1. Harms the vernacular speaker because it assumes their language should be fixed, or eradicated
2. There is no evidence that use of the vernacular or first language interferes with the acquisition of SE, in fact the opposite is true-- enhancing the use of the L1 has led to gains in both languages (Jeff Seigel, 2001)
3. The more the vernacular is considered a problem the more it will be corrected,
4. Public, constant correction can be demeaning and counterproductive.

POSITIONS

ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES

Pragmatic EAP: L2 students adapt to Anglo-American writing conventions, preparing them for college and academic discourse (Johns 1993; Helmer 2013).

Critical EAP: critiques pragmatic EAP for reinforcing normative practices that imply they are "value-free, 'natural', and worthy of imitation," with the aim to transform the academy (Harwood and Hadley, 2004).

Solution?

CRITICAL PRAGMATIC EAP

Draws attention to dominant practices in Standard English that tend to maintain the status quo while stressing "that students have choices and should be free to adopt or subvert the dominant practices as they wish"

(Harwood and Hadley, 2004).

SHIFTING YOUR PERCEPTION

- WHAT
USING
THE
ENGLISH
LANGUAGE
MEANS

- AUDIENCE
Know who your
students are!

- CONTENT
How is it used in your
content: textbooks,
materials, authors.
examples. etc?

ACTIVITY: WHO ARE YOUR STUDENTS?

How do you describe your multilingual students in terms of language? How do they describe themselves?

INSTITUTIONAL/ ACADEMIC LANGUAGE IDENTITY

Fixed Binaries

L1 and L2

Native English Speaker (NES)

Nonnative English Speaker (NNES)

Multilingual = deficit in L2

ESL vs Reg. Comp

Our multilingual
speakers as outsiders, the
world is monolingual

LANGUAGE / SELF IDENTITIES

Shifting Binaries

"Micro-level" (f2f) or

"Macro-level" (culture, history,
social norms, ideologies)

Language expertise

Language inheritance

Language affiliation

World is multilingual

(Leung, Harris, and Rampton's model of
language identity, 1997)

SHIFTING YOUR PEDAGOGY

● HEARING
THEIR
VOICES

● OFFERING
CHOICES

INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY

STUDENT PERCEPTIONS ABOUT WRITING

"Written Accents," GMU
<https://writtenaccents.gmu.edu/research-findings/consciousness-about-voice/>

TEACHING META- AWARENESS

Use multicultural authors
Examples of multilingual writers, experiences, issues
Advice from peers

"The onus needs to shift from students, who are expected to adjust to insensitive and monocultural classroom environments, to faculty, who need to change their teaching approaches to benefit an increasingly diverse array of students" (Quae and Harper 2007)

Shifting from
deficit to asset
mentality



ACTIVITY: SYLLABUS & COURSE DESIGN


inclusive strategy?

What are your expectations for, and how might multilingual students respond to

- Course Goals
 - Time allocation
 - Grading
 - Discussion Ground Rules
 - Peer Review Ground Rules
 - Student Faculty Roles
 - Classroom Etiquette
-
-

COURSE GOALS



- Demystify writing in the discipline
 - Identify linguistic patterns in the field
 - Provide examples
 - Demonstrate writing "moves" visually
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AGENCY

"SUPPORT STUDENTS IN
GAINING CONTROL AND
VOICE IN THEIR LEARNING
BY QUESTIONING
STATUS QUO PRACTICES
WHILE SEEKING SOLUTIONS
TO UNFAVORABLE
CONDITIONS"

- EUGENE SCHWARTZ

Reminders

FOCUS ON RELEVANCE.

The idea is to make students feel like they matter and that their difference is exactly what makes them unique

REMEMBER THE POINT.

Being in the vicinity of diversity is not enough.

MISTAKES WILL BE MADE.

Apologize, try again, revise:
remember it is a 'continuum'