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Universal Design for Belonging: Living and Working with Diverse Personal Names

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LIVING AND WORKING WITH DIVERSE PERSONAL NAMES

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ABSTRACT. There is great diversity in the names and naming practices of Canada's population due to the multiple languages and cultures from which names and name-givers originate. While this diversity means that everyone encounters unfamiliar names, institutional agents who work with the public are continually challenged when attempting to determine a name's correct pronunciation, spelling, structure and gender. Drawing from over a hundred interviews in London (Ontario) and Montréal (Québec), as well as other published accounts, I outline strategies used by institutional agents to manage name diversity within the constraints of their work tasks. I explain how concern with saving face and being polite can involve micro-aggressions which contribute to exclusion and disadvantage for people with certain kinds of names. Repeated mistreatment of names, whether intentional or not, negatively affects the integration of immigrants and their sense of belonging in the new society. I argue that the respectful treatment of names is a small but meaningful step toward making multilingual and multi-ethnic societies more welcoming and inclusive. Informed by the principles of Universal Design for Learning, I offer a set of recommendations for normalizing name diversity in work and social life.

RÉSUMÉ. Il est possible de constater une grande diversité de noms et de pratiques de dénomination au sein de la population canadienne ceci en raison des nombreuses langues et cultures d'où proviennent ces noms et ceux qui les donnent. Alors que cette diversité a pour effet que chaque personne aura éventuellement à faire face à des noms peu familiers, on note en particulier que les agents institutionnels, qui travaillent avec le public, sont constamment mis à l'épreuve lorsqu'ils tentent de déterminer la prononciation, l'orthographe, la structure et le genre corrects d'un nom. En se fondant sur plus d'une centaine d'entrevues réalisées à London (en Ontario) et à Montréal (au Québec), ainsi que sur des comptes rendus ayant fait l'objet de publications, nous présentons des stratégies utilisées par des agents institutionnels dans leur gestion de la diversité des noms en tenant compte de leurs contraintes professionnelles. Nous expliquons que, par souci de « préserver les apparences » et de se montrer poli, ces attentions peuvent donner lieu à des micro-agressions menant à l'exclusion et à une iniquité envers les personnes portant certains types de noms. La répétition de mauvais traitements, qu'ils soient intentionnels ou non, a pour effet de porter atteinte à l'intégration des immigrants et à leur sentiment d'appartenance à la nouvelle société d'accueil. Nous soutenons que le traitement respectueux des noms représente une étape modeste mais significative pouvant mener à l'établissement de sociétés multilingues et multiethniques accueillantes et inclusives. En se fondant sur les principes de la conception universelle de l'apprentissage, nous offrons une série de recommandations pour normaliser la diversité des noms dans le travail et la vie sociale.

Keywords*: Names, immigrant integration, belonging, Universal Design for Learning, Canada.*

INTRODUCTION: NAMES, IDENTITY, INTEGRATION AND BELONGING

Countries like Canada face challenges in creating a cohesive and inclusive society when large numbers of immigrants and longer-term residents engage in diverse linguistic and cultural practices. In the current public discourse, newcomers are expected to "fit in" by learning a new language or dialect, as well as new ways of doing things, and adopting different values, beliefs and attitudes (Proctor, 2016). Successful integration also requires longer-settled members of the dominant society to facilitate this process by creating "welcoming communities," which provide necessary services and resources and which make "a collective effort to create a place where individuals feel valued and included" (Esses, Hamilton, Bennett-Abu, Ayyash, & Burstein, 2010, p. 9). This collective effort to be welcoming includes identifying and removing barriers to the inclusion of newcomers in work, school and social activities, promoting a sense of belonging to the larger group, and meeting diverse individual needs.

The negotiation of individual and group identities through naming practices plays a significant role in the daily experiences through which immigrants are integrated or not into Canadian society[1]. Names are linguistic structures, meaning that there is as much variation in names as there is linguistic diversity within Canada's population. Further diversity exists in the social rules for using names (Aceto, 2002; Pina-Cabral, 1994). When names that do not conform to Canadian norms are problematized, name-bearers may feel that they do not belong. Mistreatment of personal names in speech and writing can be a barrier to integration because it emphasizes difference and reproduces inequalities. As I will argue, designing naming policies and developing ways of treating names to better accommodate diversity is a move toward a more welcoming society and toward a greater sense of belonging among immigrants and minorities.

Names are indexes of multiple social categories including race, ethnicity, nationality, kin group, gender, age, religion, and presumed linguistic ability, as demonstrated in a wealth of anthropological research (e.g., Pina-Cabral, 2015; Vom Bruck & Bodenhorn, 2006; Zheng & Macdonald, 2010). The indexical nature of names makes them ready tools for exclusion, discrimination, ridicule and stigmatization of anyone whose name does not conform to dominant norms, or who is a member of a marked social category. Such experiences are particularly common among immigrants and their descendants whose names mark them as "foreign" (Clifton, 2013; Kohli & Solórzano, 2012). The treatment of "unfamiliar" names by members of the dominant society exhibits how racism, xenophobia and other forms of social differentiation work against social and economic integration at all levels from national policies to one-on-one interactions.

Research and media reports illuminate difficulties faced by individuals with "foreign-sounding" names or with names indexing marginalized groups. These reported difficulties include being called less often for job interviews than those with "domestic-sounding" or "White" names, particularly for professional jobs or those involving interactions with clients/customers. Discriminatory hiring practices based on names have been observed in Australia (Michael, 2011), Canada (Eid, 2012; Oreopoulos & Dechief 2011), France (Duguet, Leandri, L'Horty, & Petit, 2010),

Norway (Midtbøen & Rogstad, 2012), Sweden (Bursell, 2007), the United Kingdom (Syal, 2009), and the United States (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004). Other studies indicate that applicants with names common among certain racialized groups are more often rejected when searching for housing, for example (CERA, 2009). Bertrand, Chugh and Mullainathan (2005) call this practice "implicit discrimination" because the association between the name and the undesirable attribute is subconscious but leads to discriminatory action. Further examples from my own research abound: name-related discrepancies and unfamiliar naming conventions result in some travelers being detained and questioned at international borders; naming errors in institutional databases cause delays or denial of access to health services; teachers rename students according to local norms. Thus, names are made into barriers at every point of integration.

Identity is a concept that is both culturally and theoretically defined. In theoretical terms, I follow Bucholtz and Hall (2004) who argued that identities are attributes of situations rather than of individuals or groups. Identities can shift with changes in context as people take on different roles and perform different actions. Seeing identities as "culturally specific subject positions that speakers enact through language" (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004, p. 369) allows us to focus on the power relations which are integral to every social interaction. In cultural terms, identity is usually understood to have two types of referents: groups and individuals, based on notions of sameness and difference. Anthropological research on concepts of personhood, selfhood and various kinds of group identity indicates great variation in understandings of who or what someone is and is allowed to be, along with myriad criteria for determining and specifying identity (Carrithers et al., 1985; Geertz, 1966; Hallowell, 1960; Rosaldo, 1980; Shweder & Bourne, 1984). For example, among Portuguese speakers, an individual's identity may be conceived as anchored to a soul or essence which is immutable and eternal. In this case, one's name may be attached to one's essence such that any change to one's name is interpreted as a change of identity--a deeply troubling prospect (Pina-Cabral, 2010). For others, one's identity changes sufficiently over the life course that new names are bestowed to mark new categories of personhood. Maybury-Lewis (1984) described how some Central Brazilian societies talk about people entering and leaving their names as they are passed on to others. In cross-cultural examinations of how identities are constructed and negotiated in particular contexts, we can see how names make connections between individual identities and group identities (Alford, 1988). That is, naming an individual may distinguish that individual from other members of a group while simultaneously marking the individual as belonging to larger social groups defined by categories such as kinship (e.g., shared family name among parents, siblings, cousins), religion (e.g., Muslim men named Mohammed), ethnicity (e.g., Koreans with the family name Kim, Park or Lee), and others. That names serve to identify both individual persons and collectives is important when interpreting how names are treated and responses to such treatment, as I show below.

Interactions between individuals and representatives of public institutions or private organizations (hereafter, institutional agents) in which names are central have far-reaching implications for the co-construction of newcomer identities. An important part of this derives from the significance attached to being officially named, and the permanence and presumed

legitimacy of names on institutional documents. For people who believe that names express—and even form—core elements of one's person (Bodenhorn & Vom Bruck, 2006, p. 4), having one's name incorrectly represented on documents or in speech results in a deeply felt discord, which my research participants expressed in statements such as, "that's not my name; that's not me." Furthermore, names are such powerful symbols of identity and personhood that mistreatment of names can be interpreted as an insult or attack on one's person (Pina Cabral, 2010). The significance of the interconnection between name, identity and personhood is revealed in complaints about incorrect naming. For example, Bucholtz (2016) wrote about "linguistic violence" done to names in reference to mispronunciations and misspellings of the Spanish names of Latina students in California schools. The quotes below from my data also describe such linguistic errors as violent acts perpetrated on bodies.

> "If you completely <u>slaughter</u> the name, then people get, some people get very very offended."
> "My name always gets <u>massacred</u>. I'm used to it now."
> "She <u>butchered</u> my name, but then she <u>kills</u> everyone's name."
> "You just <u>murdered</u> my name."
> "How would he <u>mangle</u> your name?"

Injuries to one's name are experienced as micro-aggressions, defined by Kohli and Solórzano (2012) as common and subtle insults, which may be unintentional, that "support a racial and cultural hierarchy of minority inferiority" (p. 441). In their study of minority youth experiences with having their names mispronounced, ridiculed, changed or avoided, the authors describe "the cumulative impact of these subtle experiences with racism [which] can have a lasting impact on the manner in which youth see themselves, their culture and the world around them" (p. 445). This is because identity emerges through social interactions in which associations are repeatedly made between particular ways of acting, speaking and thinking on one hand, and social, cultural, moral and physical categories on the other. The accumulation of negative naming experiences, which often coincides with times of intense self-reflection on the construction of one's identity such as during adolescence and the settlement period after immigration, contributes to the feeling among some individuals that they are not accepted as members of the community. Among youth, it can also lead to resentment toward name-givers and distancing from ethnic communities of origin. Betsy Rymes (1999) observed that "a proper name, then, is not simply a useful label, but a repository of accumulated meanings, practices, and beliefs, a powerful linguistic means of asserting identity (or defining someone else) and inhabiting a social world" (p. 165).

Certainly, some individuals are more troubled by negative naming incidents than others and various factors affect how people perceive and respond to such incidents, including age, length of time since arrival in the new country, and socioeconomic status. Summarizing from my research data, I have noticed that recent arrivals report more institutionally based name-related problems, while longer term residents report more socially based problems. This likely reflects their different stages in the settlement process. There is a focus on names during initial settlement when creating identification documents and registering for various services. Later,

when institutional difficulties have usually been resolved, people have time to reflect on social experiences and generalize about how others treat their names. Younger people may feel the effects of not fitting in socially more acutely compared to older adults who are more oriented toward work and family than making friends. Those who are adequately employed soon after immigrating, and who have social support systems in place, may perceive naming troubles as minor annoyances because their sense of worth and personal identity are not in doubt. Someone who is alone, unemployed and struggling to make ends meet may interpret naming errors as micro-aggressions. Multiple exclusionary factors can intersect, such as ethnicity, race, religion, linguistic ability and nationality. For example, Litchmore and Safdar (2015) found that in Canada's current socio-political context, Muslims perceive and report experiences of discrimination more than other groups, independent of their ethnicity. My research supports this finding, particularly among Muslim participants with Arabic names. They observed that personal names can be an index of religious affiliation, just as Adida and colleagues (2010) found in the résumé experiment they conducted in France comparing Muslim and Christian first names. While various factors contribute to individual experiences and interpretations of those experiences, it is clear that names matter in both big and small ways.

The importance of names and the ways they are used for individual well-being merits attention by those working toward increased social inclusion. Names are symbols of personhood (how others see us) and selfhood (how we see ourselves). Fully recognizing someone as a person therefore includes treating their names in respectful ways. The research I describe in the next section further relates in more detail the difficulties that name diversity presents for social inclusion, and the recommendations that follow point to ways for overcoming them.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The main source of data for this research are interviews conducted in London, Ontario, a mid-sized, English-dominant Canadian city with a population of nearly 384,000, and in Montréal, Québec, the second largest Canadian city with 1.9 million residents, where French is the official and dominant language (Statistics Canada, 2017). Both cities receive a high number of immigrants and refugees each year, which contributes to the 21% foreign-born population in London and 33% foreign born population in Montreal (Statistics Canada, 2013a, 2013b). London residents identify approximately 144 different ethnicities and 19% of residents report their mother tongue to be a language other than English or French (City of London, 2013). Montreal is one of the primary destinations for newcomers to Canada and is consequently more diverse than London, with 33% of the population speaking a language other than English or French most often at home (Statistics Canada, 2015). The multiple languages and ethnicities found in these cities produce different naming practices among Canadian residents, while the institutional practices in English-dominant London and French-dominant Montreal have different consequences for individual names. While this means that most people encounter unfamiliar names, individuals who work with the public in particular are often challenged when attempting to determine a name's correct pronunciation, spelling, structure and gender.

Between 2011 and 2013 three graduate research assistants and I recorded and transcribed semi-structured interviews with 65 immigrants and 24 institutional agents in London. Additionally, I conducted 19 interviews with immigrants and two institutional agents in Montreal over a five-month period in 2016. In many cases, institutional agents were themselves immigrants and they answered both types of interview questions. Participants were first asked about their ethnolinguistic background and their experience of migration and settlement in Canada. These questions were explored in relation to the origin, meaning and different uses of their names, as well as how their thoughts and feelings about their names have changed over time and in different contexts. Then participants were asked to describe particular difficulties related to names that they have experienced. Institutional agents described these difficulties in relation to their work tasks as well as what they do in various situations involving diverse names. Interview length varied from 45 minutes to over two hours, depending on each participant's experiences and willingness to share stories. The language of the interviews was either English or French, according to the participant's preference.

Interview transcripts from London and Montreal were combined and as of this writing, I have not yet identified significant analytical differences based on region. The transcripts were coded using Atlas.ti©, a qualitative data analysis software program. Some of the most frequently used codes which emerged from thematic analysis of the transcripts are shown in the Table 1.

Elsewhere (Pennesi, 2014, 2016), I have described in detail the kinds of difficulties immigrants encounter in institutional interactions when their names do not match Canadian conventions, leading many to alter or change their names. I argue that individuals who take a non-assimilationist stance by refusing to alter their names are shifting some of the responsibility for the integration of newcomers to the host society. This anti-assimilationist stance is in line with current national discourses which conceive of integration as a "two-way street" requiring both immigrants and Canadian-born members to adapt, make accommodations and learn new ways of doing things (Frideres, 2008). My focus here shifts from immigrants as clients or customers to institutional agents who manage diversity and ambiguities in pronunciation, spelling, gender and structure of unfamiliar names to perform their work tasks effectively.

The interviews with both institutional agents and immigrants who described encounters with institutional representatives revealed that two main factors contribute to name-based difficulties in institutional interactions: (1) stereotypes about social groups lead people in institutional roles to make assumptions that result in disadvantage for those whose names index the stereotyped group, and (2) uncertainties about particular names lead institutional agents to unintentionally act in exclusionary ways. While there is always a certain segment of the population which consciously holds racist or biased views and which discriminates intentionally and unapologetically, my analytical attention is directed toward institutional agents who are making efforts to "get names right." They want to do their jobs efficiently and in compliance with rules and regulations. They do not want to offend anyone, nor do they want to appear ignorant, incompetent, racist or xenophobic. As I will show, however, their words and actions may still create problematic situations for others.

Code	Description
Institutions	Name-related experiences with institutions, organizations, agencies, both government and non-government; institutional processes or procedures related to names (e.g. forms, policies)
Strategies	Strategies for coping with or mitigating name-related difficulties for self and other
Pronunciation/Spelling Problems	Difficulties with pronunciation and spelling of names of self and other
General Problems	Difficulties related to names of self and other excluding spelling/pronunciation
Shift/Change/Alteration	Description, stories, explanations of shifts, changes or alterations to names; initiated by self or other; attitudes about changing names or accepting "incorrect" pronunciations or spellings
Connections	Connections between names and other issues (e.g. immigration, multiculturalism, provision of services, education, discrimination, social life, relationships, preservation of language/culture)
Identity	How names are an aspect of identity; how people can be identified by their name (ethnicity, family, religion, etc.); suitability of a name for a particular person; the authenticity of certain names; name as soul/essence/self; "real name"
Official Name	Official or legal name as it appears in documents; "real" or "original" name if name was changed legally; the name recognized by a legitimizing authority

Table 1: Top Eight Codes Used in Analyzing Interview Transcripts

NAMING CONSTRAINTS AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES IN INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXTS

This section describes how the constraints of standardization, transferability and (in)flexibility, along with the limits on individual knowledge, create difficulties for institutional agents working with diverse names. In their institutional roles, these individuals exercise power as they develop strategies for deciding how people can and cannot be named, and which candidates are preferred or acceptable for inclusion in a particular category. Despite speaker intentions to be inclusive and respectful, strategies for saving face and being polite may involve processes of Othering and de-racializing, (discussed below) which sometimes result in perceived micro-aggressions.

Standardization, Transferability, and Flexibility

The main principle that guides institutional management of names is standardization. Uniformity in the structure of names enables intelligibility and transferability among different naming systems. For official purposes, Canadian institutions follow the presumed "normative global system" (Reid & Macdonald, 2009), in which "legible citizens" (Scott, Tehranian, & Mathias, 2002) are expected to have unique individual personal names composed of a surname, most often used as the primary identifier, and one or two given names, used as secondary identifiers in situations where two individuals have the same surname. Standardization often includes limiting the number of letters or characters which can be used to represent name components within databases or on forms and identity cards, and the only allowable orthography is usually the Roman alphabet. Having a standardized structure for all names means that institutional agents can search and organize records according to names. Standardization also enables the automatic input of data using software. For example, a large institution such as a university can automatically create identification numbers, user names and email accounts for a group of 5,000 new students using batch inputs from a database of new registrants.

This normative system is problematic for Canada's multicultural and multilingual population, however, because names derive from diverse phonological, orthographic and name-generating systems. Problems resulting from misspellings are common. One participant complained that she frequently missed important messages because her boss misspelled her name in her e-mail address. Ambiguities about how to parse a name into first name and last name components lead agents to use strategies such as guessing based on similar kinds of names, or choosing the first component for the first name field and the last component for the last name field, thus entering names with multiple components incorrectly. This can complicate search and retrieval from databases when it is not evident which strategy a particular agent used. Commenting on the frequency of this problem, one woman with a two-part last name noted in a Facebook discussion about my research, "Quite frankly this is anywhere where they ask for my name to find me in the system. At least if I am in person I can hand them my ID. Over the phone takes a bit of guidance."

Differences in how names are transliterated from one writing system to another also create mismatches in how names are represented on documents and in computer systems. This can cause confusion during search and retrieval as well as problems for the name-bearer in establishing credibility or legitimacy across systems with what appear to be multiple names. For example, one participant described her frustration in "dealing with medical offices that don't get your name right and claim they never had you as a patient, 'til you spell your name five different ways and they find your file." Standardization can also erase crucial differences in pronunciation, spelling or meaning, such as when accent marks or other special characters are not allowed. This can have negative emotional effects on the name-bearer who feels misrepresented and even disrespected. The case of Sahaiʔa May Talbot, whose name could not be written with the glottal stop (ʔ) on her Northwest Territories (N.W.T) birth certificate, illustrates this point. Sahaiʔa's mother felt so strongly about having her daughter's name written in Chipewyan, one of N.W.T.'s official languages, that she pursued the matter legally until the Vital Statistics Act was changed (Bird, 2016)[2].

The need for transferability is one driver of standardization because various institutional systems are linked and names must be decipherable across platforms. For example, payroll systems may communicate with financial institutions, the parking pass system, and insurance systems. This makes it complicated to change a name. If one system allows accent marks but another does not, the name may get altered and fail to match up or the accents may simply not be allowed. Transferability also means that problems get passed on. If a spelling error or misidentification of a naming component is made on a primary document such as a passport or Social Insurance Card, then the same error is likely to be repeated on other documents or forms which use the primary document as a source for the official name. This happened to a London resident, originally from Egypt, whose last name is Huss_ie_n. While the Arabic name is most commonly spelled Huss_ei_n in the Roman alphabet, it was transliterated incorrectly by the passport officer in Egypt. With all her official documents in Canada bearing this mistake, the woman decided to keep Huss_ie_n rather than go through the difficult process of correcting the mistake. She notes that now, however, people sometimes notice the misspelling and correct it to Huss_ei_n, which then does not match her documents. Worse, she has been accused of not knowing how to spell her own name by other Arabic speakers.

The principle of standardization limits the capacity of an institution to make changes or allow exceptions to rules. Usually, the larger the size of the population being served, the less flexible the naming system is. A university working with thousands of names has more flexibility to change data entry errors or to create new single-purpose databases compared to the passport office which manages millions of names, for instance. A doctor's office cannot change an official name on a patient's government-issued health card, but they can adjust practices in the office so that patients are addressed by their preferred name during appointments. Generally, flexible systems are better designed for diversity.

Face Threatening Acts, Politeness, and Micro-aggressions

The concept of face is useful in understanding how institutional agents respond to name-based uncertainties. Goffman (1967) first described face as the positive social value or public image people claim for themselves or the groups they represent. Brown and Levinson (1987) expanded on this concept in developing politeness theory, observing that people engage in "face-preserving work [because it is] in every participant's best interest to maintain each other's face" (p. 61). Politeness strategies are aimed at mitigating face-threatening acts (FTAs), either by making the Other feel good with demonstrations of appreciation and approval or by avoiding impositions on the Other's freedom to act and mitigating challenges to their self-esteem.

Institutional agents engage in a variety of politeness strategies to lessen or avoid FTAs involving names. These can be categorized as on-stage or off-stage strategies. On-stage strategies occur during interactions with the name-bearer to avoid errors while performing the institutional task, such as asking for repetition of the name's pronunciation or verifying spelling. On-stage strategies are potentially face-threatening acts themselves, so they are often combined with politeness strategies. For example, apologies or indirect speech may be used when asking for

verification or repetition of a name. Off-stage strategies happen in the absence of the name-bearer and are undertaken to prevent the on-stage FTA altogether. Some examples include adding more spaces to a client database to accommodate long names and asking a co-worker to verify the pronunciation of a name before calling a client. Off-stage strategies can be discriminatory, such as a case witnessed by one of my study participants in which a store employee threw winning raffle tickets with names she could not pronounce back into the box and chose a new winner with a more familiar name. Thus, it is important to consider whose face is threatened and whether the politeness strategy actually creates another FTA.

When institutional agents primarily work to save their own face, and they are members of a privileged social group, on-stage politeness strategies sometimes result in micro-aggressions. Two types of micro-aggression are relevant to naming practices. *Othering* emphasizes differences between minorities and members of the dominant group, marking minorities as not belonging and thus threatening their face. Interviewees reported that Othering happens frequently with non-conforming or unfamiliar names. For example, students with names a teacher cannot pronounce properly said they are called on less frequently in class, are ignored entirely, or are singled out because of their "funny" or "difficult" name. One woman with a Chinese name, who I interviewed in Montreal, felt excluded by her dance teacher who never once called her name in ten months of taking classes. She was bothered that the teacher frequently addressed other students by name, including her own dancing partner. She commented: "I would feel people really cared about you when they call your name or say your name. . . . So I would appreciate it even though [my name] is not common but it's not that hard either." Sometimes students say they are given nicknames or are called by shorter or altered version of their names while the other students are called by their original names. While children get teased because of their names, adults are made the targets of jokes, humorous comments and puns. Micro-aggressions may hinder the development of belonging because they are rooted in an ideology that stigmatizes difference.

Another form of micro-aggression is *deracialization,* which erases racial or ethnic differences through renaming, assimilation and standardization of names according to dominant norms. Mary Bucholtz (2016) described how deracialization of "members of politically subordinated groups—including indigenous peoples, immigrants, and enslaved Africans and their descendants" (p. 285) works through a process of indexical bleaching, which reduces ethnoracial specificity of names by altering their pronunciation, spelling and composition to make them more recognizable or pronounceable to institutional representatives. Bucholtz focused on educational institutions in particular, analyzing how Latina youth in California high schools alter their names or employ strategies such as rhyming or spelling, to make their names culturally intelligible to teachers or other school staff. Deracialization can also happen with names which are not difficult to pronounce but which index an undesirable or otherwise marked ethnoracial identity. Deracialization threatens face because it implies that one's ethno-racial identity is inferior or problematic.

Bucholtz (2016) argued that it is the responsibility of those who occupy structurally privileged positions to avoid linguistically problematizing some names and "symbolically dominating others

through misnaming" (p. 286). A Canadian man wrote the following comment in response to a national radio program which discussed how names are problematized: "I am a Canadian ESL [English as a second language] teacher. My name is 'Andrés', but I was asked to 'kindly' change it to 'Andy' so that students would not complain about my not being really really Canadian... Canadians are not as inclusive as they swear they are" (Facebook comment posted on CBC The Current, 2016, November 24). This story illustrates the ideological connections between names, language and identity that underlie deracialization. The nationalist language ideology evident in the comments made by Andrés' employer are that names are proxies for the language one speaks and that language is a proxy for national identity. The imagined Canadian is expected to speak English and therefore have an English name. The employer who asked Andrés to change his name to Andy was anticipating that the students in the English class would question his national identity, and consequently his linguistic ability and credibility as a teacher, because of his non-English name. Instead of challenging the students' misinformed belief that Canadian names all originate in English, the employer sought to reinforce the nationalist language ideology by replacing Andrés with the deracialized Andy. Andrés further recounts that he "left the job and then had to go on and explain why I left that kind of workplace to other employers." His characterization of the school as "that kind of workplace" indicates his negative stance toward the deracialization of his name to legitimize his Canadian nationality.

De-racialization and Othering happen even when people think they are being respectful or trying to save face. Micro-aggressions accumulate in an individual's experiences and contribute to the reproduction of social categories based on race, ethnicity or citizenship. Attending to the ideological connections between names and identity and the ways in which names can prompt micro-aggressions as well as politeness strategies aids understanding of how institutional agents treat diverse personal names. Expanding on the initial recommendations outlined by Bucholtz (2016, pp. 286-7) and incorporating findings of my own research and of others (Dechief, 2015; Hill, 2008) I now present a set of guidelines for the respectful and effective treatment of diverse names.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Universal Design for Diversity

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is an approach to education which is grounded in the belief that more people will be successful learners if the educational environment and experience are adequately designed to allow for diverse needs (Meyer, Rose, & Gordon, 2014). Most of the literature on UDL examines its use in special education contexts or as a framework for creating more inclusive education in general classrooms (e.g., Katz, 2013). My recommendations indicate how UDL can be applied outside the classroom, through workshops or employee training, to contribute to the larger social project of integrating immigrants and minorities with the more established and dominant population. Integration involves learning: newcomers learn new ways of doing things, new values, and new languages; while longer-settled individuals learn alternative perspectives and how to live with linguistic and cultural differences. Successful integration of newcomers means that they participate fully and are accepted as members of society. To

facilitate this, Canadian institutions need to design policies and practices for diversity and variability rather than trying to enforce standardization and conformity. A UDL approach to naming practices offers a useful framework for thinking about how constraints can be made less rigid.

UDL recognizes that cognition and emotion are related. If people feel stressed, embarrassed, annoyed, unwanted or excluded, it is difficult to become engaged in focused thinking. Conversely, "simple affirmation of learners' positive sense of self, of their value as individuals, and of the importance of their membership in a cultural tradition has repeatedly been shown to have positive effects on learning and on performance" (Meyer et al., 2014, p. 58). Getting someone's name right is a simple affirmation of a positive sense of self. Since names are often involved in the beginnings of interactions (greetings, introductions, completing registration forms, creating identity documents, roll call), how names are treated is crucial in establishing an optimal environment for subsequent learning and relationship-building. When diversity in naming is recognized and respected, barriers to belonging are reduced and people can engage more effectively in activities.

The best practice is to do as much of the design work as possible off-stage and to use on-stage strategies which save face for both Self and Other, while avoiding Othering or de-racializing. My recommendations are organized in three sections below, according to the UDL principles for creating a more effective, inclusive learning experience: (1) provide multiple means of *engagement*; (2) provide multiple means of *action and expression*; and (3) provide multiple means of *representation* (CAST, 2011). Some recommendations could be placed in more than one category because they result from the application of more than one principle. I have focused my recommendations on applying particular UDL guidelines that are relevant to names and naming practices and readers are encouraged to consult the UDL literature for more ideas on how to develop more inclusive institutional and social environments. The recommendations are intended for anyone who works or interacts with diverse populations, though some will be most applicable to those in institutional or organizational roles. All of these recommendations have been taken from suggestions made by research participants or from observed best practices in various institutions. The idea behind assembling them in one place and organizing them according to the UDL principles is to present a coherent and consistent framework of reference.

Engagement

Two of the UDL guidelines that help promote learner engagement are (1) "to minimize threats and distractions," and (2) "to promote expectations and beliefs that optimize motivation" (CAST, 2011). To help newcomers learn effectively, both in formal educational settings and in social and cultural contexts, and to promote expectations that motivate engagement with the community, we need to minimize distractions (e.g., comments and questions about their names) and threats (e.g., name-related obstacles, prejudice and discrimination). The first set of recommendations below aim to do this.

1. When someone tells you their name, make no comments or questions about the name or its spelling (e.g., "that's different," "that's pretty," "what does it mean?" "where are you from?"). These are forms of Othering.

2. Verify spelling or pronunciation as necessary in a matter-of-fact manner as if you were asking for a phone number.

3. Don't avoid difficult names by pointing, looking expectantly at the person, or using generic phrases like "whatever his name is." Don't ignore the person because you are uncomfortable with the name. These are forms of Othering which result from trying to save your own face. Instead, ask the person to pronounce their name so that you can learn it and then repeat it. The more you practice the name, the easier it will get. If possible, make pronunciation notes in your database or list and make an effort to remember the name for next time. One caution: if you don't get it right by the second attempt, do not keep insisting, turning the name into a spectacle. Try again at your next encounter.

4. When hearing a name for the first time, don't ask if there is an alternative (e.g., English name, nickname, shorter or easier name). This is a form of deracialization, which suggests that there should be a more "normal" form. Note that this is different from asking about preferred names, which recognizes their power of self-identification.

5. Never blame someone (or their parents) for their name, if troubles arise. This is an overt form of Othering. Here are some examples of blaming from my data:
   - "Is that really your name? Why would your parents do that to you?"
   - "I'm sorry this is so much trouble but your name is too long."
   - "Why don't you just pick an English name? That would be easier for everyone."

6. Don't correct someone else's name, telling them it should be pronounced or spelled a different way according to a particular language. The right way is always the way the individual prefers it.

7. It is inevitable that we have certain expectations about names that come from our past experiences and knowledge of the world. Be aware of making assumptions about people based on their names and avoid acting on these. Some common assumptions are based on the following attributes:
   - Level of competence in a language: e.g., "Someone with a Korean name likely knows how to speak Korean and may not be fluent in English."
   - Religion: e.g., "Someone with an Arabic name is Muslim."
   - Ethnicity: e.g., "Someone with a French name must be Québécois/Haitian/European French."
   - Race: e.g., "A boy named Tyrone is probably Black; a girl named Megan is probably White."

8. Don't ridicule or criticize the name of a person or group when talking to others. This kind of Othering contributes to exclusionary practices and an unwelcoming environment. Such comments include describing names as "weird," "ghetto names," "unpronounceable," "stripper names," and more.

Expression

Names are an important form of expression of identity, culture and values. The next set of recommendations suggests ways to accommodate people expressing their names in different forms.

9. When reading names written on official forms, ask what people prefer to be called to give them the opportunity to use short forms or other names that they choose. The key is to recognize their choice while not suggesting that they *should* use a different name. Make no comment about that choice (e.g., "that's easier," "that's funny," "why?"). Off-stage, modify forms and databases to include a preferred name field. Ensure that the preferred names are actually used by institutional representatives and on documents such as identity cards, employee or student lists, and email addresses.

10. Whenever possible, respect name changes and the use of multiple names by one individual in different contexts. Do not ask what someone's real name is or was. Let the person decide when or if they will share other names with you.

11. When faced with checking names against a list in a group setting, have people say their own names first rather than trying to read them aloud and verifying after. This way everyone in the room has a chance to learn the names correctly and attention shifts away from your inevitable pronunciation difficulties. In a small group where people will be addressing each other (classroom, workplace, meeting), start by introducing yourself and taking time to explain the correct pronunciation and spelling of your name. Do not assume you have an easy name that everyone can say and spell. After providing your example, ask each person to do the same so that everyone is treated equally and all names are given respect. If you must read an unfamiliar name, make a careful effort to pronounce it by looking at all the letters. Not all letters will be pronounced as you expect but this will help avoid errors due to inattention and it will show that you are trying in a respectful way. After initial introductions, do not insist on verifying pronunciation of particular names in front of the group. Focusing attention on someone is an FTA and asking whether you got their name right obliges them to reply. Instead, tell people you would like them to correct mistakes in the pronunciation or spelling of their names and give them the choice to correct you in front of others or wait to do it more discreetly later.

12. Don't give a nickname or otherwise deliberately change someone's name without them suggesting first that this is the preferred form. This is deracialization because it takes away the ethnic markers of their name.

13. If someone asks advice about their name, emphasize that it is their choice and remember the power your advice may have if you are acting in an institutional role. Restrict your comments to offering potential interpretations if you think their choice is inappropriate (e.g., Tommy is a childish form; Gertrude is usually a name associated with senior citizens; Cinderella is fictional name). Don't suggest that they should change their name or that things will be easier if they alter it. Avoid speculative comments such as: "no one will be able to say it" or "people will think you are a terrorist." Do make them aware if the original name sounds or looks like something that would be inappropriate in the dominant language (e.g., in an English-speaking community, Wifaq or Titi could be problematic).

Representation

Adhering to the UDL principle of providing for multiple means of representing names, the final set of recommendations highlights the importance of making an effort to respect how people wish their names to be written and spoken by others.

14. Use all components of first names and last names, unless otherwise instructed by the person. For example, do not shorten Juan Carlos Mendes Ortega to Juan Ortega. If names do not fit on forms, use initials rather than omitting or truncating names. If you are not sure how to separate the components into first, middle and last names, ask someone or look it up. Consider labelling fields on forms and allowing for multiple components or blanks in each field.

15. Institutions and businesses can promote understanding across languages by ensuring that online forms, databases and documents allow various name structures, accents or diacritical marks, and even different writing systems. The World Wide Web Consortium has made an excellent start on the technical requirements of designing web-based forms and databases for "personal names around the world" (Ishida, 2011). For example, whenever possible, allow at least 40 characters per name field when creating a form.

16. In correspondence, pay attention to how people sign their names (i.e., in an email) and use that form of address and that spelling.

17. Learn correct pronunciations of names before meeting someone for the first time by asking knowledgeable others or looking them up on web sites such as www.pronouncenames.com/ or www.howtopronounce.com or www.hearnames.com/. While there will be variations, your pronunciation will likely be acknowledged as acceptable at least to some people with that name.

18. Don't make self-deprecating comments about your own difficulties pronouncing or spelling names. Emphasizing your difficulties can threaten the other person's face if they see that they are causing you trouble or embarrassment. It also threatens their face by

highlighting difference. If you make a mistake, correct it quickly, apologizing with minimal comment. This is especially important if you mispronounce a name while making introductions. The audience will take cues from you that the name is too difficult or not worth trying to say.

19. Use names from various linguistic origins when providing generic examples, such as in teaching or instructions on forms. Avoid choosing exclusively English names like John Smith and Mary Jones. This fosters inclusion and helps to normalize name diversity. As Jse-Che Lam (2017) observes in her article "Every Name is a 'Canadian Name'", "we are a nation of Shrevalis, Hamsas, Kurias, Bodes, Danijelas and Mei Lings."

CONCLUSION

This analysis enriches our understanding of the intricate ways in which our names shape and are shaped by our encounters with institutions, while also emphasizing how names are deeply personal and basic to our sense of identity. One aim of this article is to draw attention to who is doing the work of resolving name-related problems: who is making things easier for whom? It is imperative to be aware that naming is an instantiation of power (Bodenhorn & Vom Bruck, 2006, p. 11), particularly for those who occupy positions of authority. When someone is already marginalized or treated as less powerful, name-related problems take on more significance. Each incident becomes a reminder of this power differential, working on a person as they accumulate like bricks in the walls of exclusion, making differences real and acting as barriers to belonging. Sometimes there are material consequences for the named person, such as denial of access to services or resources, which contribute to the powerlessness. Other times the consequences are less tangible influences on social relationships. This is how micro-aggressions work. When someone already holds a position of power, it is much easier to simply laugh off the mispronunciation, ignore the misspelling or dismiss the episode as a mere annoyance because identity and status are not in question. But for immigrants, non-whites and other stigmatized groups, names act as triggers for negative categorization in the form of judgement, stereotyping, or avoidance. The normalization of name diversity contributes to a more positive environment for learning how to live as Canadians.

This research is intended to help institutional representatives and others do their part in accommodating diversity and making newcomers feel welcome rather than troublesome or foreign. The UDL model urges us to assess the current design of the learning environment and modify it to improve outcomes for all, not just for the benefit of the struggling few. Names are not an immigrant problem that only affects a minority. Names are products of tradition, heritage and institutional practices. Surnames are passed down through generations so names that once belonged solely to immigrants are now used by three or more generations of Canadian-born citizens. Given the trend toward increasingly high immigration levels and growing linguistic and cultural diversity in Canada's population, there is a clear and pressing need to address the technological and social challenges of including all Canadians now, and in the future.

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[1] This article develops ideas initially presented in a paper entitled, "Strategies of Institutional Agents for Reducing Difficulties with Diverse Names: Saving Face and Reproducing Race", given at the annual meeting of the Canadian Society for the Study of Names in 2014, and in a post written for the BILD blog on 8 May 2016.

[2] Recognizing that members of First Nations are not immigrants, I chose this example to illustrate the problem of attempting to standardize names from diverse linguistic origins.