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TOWARD A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF ESL STUDENTS
IN THE COMPOSITION CLASSROOM

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Thesis submitted to the
College of Arts and Sciences
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ABSTRACT

TOWARD A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF ESL STUDENTS
IN THE COMPOSITION CLASSROOM

Vladimira Duka

The purpose of this Master's thesis was to investigate the ways in which Composition teachers in U.S. English departments should revisit their teaching practices for native English speakers and the speakers of English as a second language likewise. The recent need for this shift in teaching practices was stressed in the thesis. Particularly, I examined how Composition teachers should reconfigure their teaching practices to redefine the standards of written English. The study aimed to demonstrate that a changing definition of the standards of written English impacted all the classroom participants, particularly diverse learners in various ways. Specifically, how a modified understanding of the students' assessment practices affected diverse students was presented. Another aim was to demonstrate the importance of recognizing current pluralistic teaching environments in U.S. Composition classrooms. In order to accomplish this, the qualitative method was applied. The method relied heavily on a thorough survey of a recent Composition literature available today. Although a various range of literature was used, the study was mostly inspired by the most recent research by the two professors: Bruce Horner and Min-Zhan Lu. The main investigation of the thesis was viewed through the lens of translingual approach, which has been regarded as the most appropriate one in Composition classrooms today. The importance of recognizing this approach was that it acknowledged *all* the students' language and cultural resources studying in the U.S. English departments. The study revealed that the shifting definition of the standards can be attributed to the social factor of globalization occurring all across the globe. Because of globalization, English has become the many national and subnational varieties that Composition teachers must recognize. Therefore, the primary conclusion is that the standards of written English have changed throughout time. In order to improve the quality of education in the Composition classroom, teachers should modify their practices to accommodate various learners.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction to the research problem

Due to the increasing influx of the speakers of English as a second language at the U.S. campuses, the environment is plural; diverse language, cultural and learning environment means that we live and work in the changing environment made up of multiplicities. In her article "An Essay on the Work of Composition: Composing English against the Order of Fast Capitalism," Lu conveys a new message to us: Composition teachers should teach students to be responsive and responsible users of the most dominant present language –English (19). Teachers themselves should be responsive and responsible alike. Moreover, they should teach their students to do likewise. When we teach the students to be responsive, we teach them to pay additional attention to their peers who are speakers of English as a second language. When we teach them to be responsible, we teach them to be aware that every single use of English matters, whether it is a native speaker or a non-native one. The discussion in my thesis will, however, lean more towards the use of English as a second language, and how its use further complicates current Composition practices.

Composition teachers at the English departments all around the U.S. have a unique role as educators in the educational system, as compared to all other teachers of different fields. Namely, as the U.S. academic community knows, Composition classes are mandatory for the majority of college students. All students, regardless of their language and cultural background, have to take introductory Composition classes during their university

education. Therefore, Composition teachers teach a large number of future professionals in a variety of fields. Some of the students may pursue their academic careers, while some of them may prefer non-academic jobs. And yet, as Lu points in her above-mentioned essay, the focal point is that a vast majority of college students have to take Composition classes. They all need to be taught how to write; to be taught how responsibly and responsively to write. Because teachers work with students of diverse backgrounds, Composition may be the ideal place to teach students to shift their goals beyond the necessary Composition requirements; students can be taught how to think beyond meeting the official class requirements only.

In today's plural environment, teaching writing encompasses much more than just teaching the official papers. Composition teachers can thus teach students how to think beyond the official mandatory curriculum only—how to become critical and responsible users of English. Lu stresses that Composition might very well be the only institutional space where we can teach college students to think, reflect on and revise the tacit goals, values, and understandings prescribed by the discourse of flexible accumulation (45). While teaching students to write, we should teach them simultaneously how to become critical and impartial users of English. Responsibility in teaching is reflected in how we teach students to value all kinds of differences around them. Moreover, we will teach them how to *negotiate* which rules and norms to apply in their writings. Both Lu and Canagarajah promote negotiations of norms in Composition classes. I will draw on their research on how to negotiate in classes. While writing, diverse student writers have to meet standards of written English, while at the same time they can hardly erase their native language and background, however hard they try or were taught to do. We, ENGL

101 teachers, need to manifest that we promote all types of legitimate negotiations in our classes as opposed to the ready-made resolutions; if students negotiate, they actually learn to think as critical participants. Our teaching practices need to promote an active rather than passive attitude toward writing. In the long run, if we teach students to be active, they will truly benefit from Composition classes; they will use those skills later in their future career to openly critique other pre-given situations.

As a response to Lu's call for responsible use of English today, my thesis will address the following research problem: What are the ways in which Composition teachers can foster better Composition education for its increasingly diverse students in a plural environment made up of various language varieties and differences? In order to teach students how to think beyond the official standards, teachers should modify slightly their current teaching practices so that they best meet the needs of a huge variety of students of diverse language and cultural backgrounds. Therefore, the teacher's goal should be to negotiate the old and the new teaching practices so that the students can start negotiating which standards of Written English to apply in their writing; which standards teachers should require their students to comply with; moreover, which standards teachers are to use to assess their students' performance in classes. Given the reasons stated above, the main purpose of my thesis is to raise moral and social responsibility of *all* the current and future users of English. My thesis aims to elevate our awareness that how we use English to live and work does matter in a globalized world.

<u>Importance of the study</u>

My thesis will mainly focus on the new understanding of today's multi-voiced environment; it is new because the environment has been changing rapidly. It actually means that Composition teachers are faced with a recent challenging task—how to raise students' awareness of their peers' differences in classrooms? Namely, students live and study surrounded by cultural and language differences. In the same vein, our task, as teachers and educators, is to teach the students how to have an appropriate and meaningful dialogue with their diverse peers. Ideally, our task is to establish an open conversation between all the students in the classroom. I consider this task as the crucial feature of my thesis—how to approach a variety of present differences. Almost every chapter will deal with that socially responsible task. In an ideal scenario, teachers' practices will manifest to the students that a successful rapport involves engaging students with their non-English counterparts. Only such an environment will be conducive to students' intellectual, personal and professional growth. Again, such a moral task is formidable, but still feasible to accomplish. By teaching the students to become accepting towards differences, we teach them important life-lessons that they can definitely apply later on in their life when faced with different life contexts.

We teach the students to take risks while in a dialogue with their diverse peers. Hooks reminds us that student "empowerment cannot happen if we refuse to be vulnerable while encouraging students to take risks" (21). For hooks, we cannot empower our students, if we do not teach them to expose their identities to the different identity of their peers. It means that we need to create such engaging classroom activities that do ask the

students to work collaboratively with all. Preferably, it is the heterogeneous group work where the students are asked to collaborate with their different peers so that they can conduct a dialogue. In that way, they will learn lessons beyond the official curriculum. When we teach them to take risks, our students will later have experiences to critically and impartially engage with almost any single matter, which can be quite different from their own; they learn to be critical and objective listeners on any single matter with any single member of the community, which I regard as my principal teaching goal. Therefore, closely connected to my main research question on the standards of Written English, my thesis will also address the importance of establishing a good rapport and a constructive dialogue between different members of a diverse college community we face today.

The importance of an open classroom dialogue is immense. But, it is not only students' task to learn how to communicate with others; also, it is not only teachers' task to teach them about the importance of conducting an open dialogue today. On the contrary, teachers themselves need to be empowered with the knowledge on how to communicate in an open way. I will draw on Hall's insistence that academics have to be multi-voiced to be effective educators, writers, and publicly engaged intellectuals (190). Hall asks the academics at the colleges and universities to keep an open eye on what is happening around them. To illustrate, academics need to show an active interest in the issues beyond their immediate college community; they should be curious about all kinds of injustice or prejudice in their society. Additionally, they should bring those controversial issues to the classroom so that the students can provide some thoughtful feedback. Overall, those challenging and complex issues should be critically and openly discussed. In that way, the classroom turns into an open, impartial and safe place for all the participants. That is the

classroom I envision in my thesis discussion. Finally, I don't think that this task is impossible, granted that all the classroom participants work and live cooperatively in a dialogic environment.

<u>Delineation of the research framework</u>

I will position the research question of the standards of written English within a translingual approach to language, language varieties and differences. I will also regard the possible resolution to my research problem through a translingual perspective. This approach has recently been defined and released by Horner, Lu, Jacqueline, Royster and Trimbur, in an essay called "Language Difference in Writing: Towards a Translingual Approach" in *College English* in January 2011 (299-317). In short, Horner claims that a translingual approach insists on viewing language differences and fluidities as resources to be preserved, developed, and utilized (300). A translingual approach sees a difference in language as a power or resource to promote meaning in writing; it works across language differences and varieties. Since the standards of Written English are crucial in this thesis, my investigation will start from theoretical insights offered by applied linguistics, then it will consult insights from other related disciplines, and finally I will connect the results with language pedagogy in the last chapter.

In order to address the research problem, the chapters of my thesis will cover the following areas. In chapter two, I will elaborate on the impact of globalization of English on our perception of standards of Written English. The main problem I am addressing in the second chapter is: How should participants in college composition classes handle the tension between the narrow and stable conception of the standards of Written English, and

the increasing global diversification of the English languages? Cameron argues that the

global spread of English has had a two-fold impact: It promoted English language teaching

globally, and influenced what is perceived as the ideal way of communicating in one's

native language (67). Cameron's argument on the global ideal way of communication can

be extended due to the increasing diversity of both students and teachers recruited at

American colleges, and the fact that English has been expanding into various Englishes;

those varieties are part and parcel of the users' identities. Moreover, this chapter argues

that all language varieties of our learners do complicate what is perceived as the ideal way

of communication today. In a nutshell, this chapter most completely demonstrates the

usefulness and applicability of viewing the problem through a translingual perspective,

taking into account the language differences.

Chapter three will seek to describe the disciplinary "division of labor." The chapter

tracks down historically how the ESL students became part and parcel of the U.S.

Composition classroom, and what hurdles that process met. The "CCCC Statement on

Second Language Writing and Writers" from January 2001, revised November 2009,

officially confirms the fact that ESL students are part and parcel of the mainstream

Composition classrooms at the U.S. English Departments:"Second-language writers have

become an integral part of higher education, including writing programs" (p.10). This is the

official recognition of the presence of ESL speakers in Composition classrooms (including

instruction, assessment, and class size, teacher preparation, and support for writing

instructors who have second language writers among their students). CCCC document calls

the teachers to apply the new methods that correspond to the new reality. Matsuda further

explains that during the 1990s, Composition teachers considered themselves as first

language Composition teachers by default regardless of the fact that international students were constantly finding their way into mainstream Composition classrooms (15). It was assumed that the reality was homogeneous and monolithic, while quite contrary was true. I stress the importance of addressing the question of division of labor within the U.S. English departments, which are real multilingual spaces.

Chapter four portrays a practical, ideal resolution to the problem. I will discuss the implication of the research findings for teaching writing, followed by my own perspective and experience in teaching. Finally, I will use the results of the investigation to construct an approach that reconciles all students' differences. I will offer some practical solutions by way of illustration. Although the translingual approach is still under the academic investigation, my hope is that it will be of use in Composition contexts. In order to integrate modified teaching practices in the classroom, the chapter will deal with the importance of addressing of what "error" is in diverse students' writings. In the above-mentioned essay, Lu reminds us that so-called "expertise" has usually been defined depending on the criteria and assumptions historically used to assess the discursive practices of people categorized along lines of class, gender, sex, race, occupation, ethnicity, religion, education, national origin, etc. (36). Writing is stamped with the students' individual values because students come from a wide variety of backgrounds. In order to write, students are faced with power relations that are at play; those power relations vary in terms of class, gender, race, etc. As we see, in such a wide mosaic of differences, social inequalities arise. In such tricky situations, the role of a teacher is crucial.

The conclusion will address possible future avenues for the subsequent research. Particularly, more research can be done how to incorporate all language varieties of our students within the translingual approach, especially the national ones. Regarding the fact that the classroom resolutions I made are only possible options to the problem viewed through my perspective, and the fact that very few practical real-life classroom examples are available, I consider my thesis as a work in progress. Additionally, I view my thesis as one experiment on the applicability of the new translingual approach. This thesis does showcase that the shift in the current teaching practices is absolutely necessary, granted that we live and work in a translingual environment.

CHAPTER 2

ENGLISH WITH ITS VARIATIONS

<u>Present status of English within globalization</u>

The central theme of this chapter is to investigate the present dominant status of English worldwide; moreover, I will examine how its powerful status complicates our current teaching practices. In order to present the origins of the problem succinctly and clearly, I will first explicate the social circumstances that caused diversification of English. Then, I will move on to investigate the teaching challenges prompted by the richness of English varieties. Specifically, I will be focused on how those varieties further complicate the standards of written English. The chapter will conclude with practical teaching implications.

For the time being, global dominance of English is obvious and it can hardly be negated. Kachru says that there has never been a language in recorded history that can match the present global spread of English (15). The spread of English is immense. Because English is increasingly widespread, it can be difficult to predict what can happen due to its inevitable spread in the future. By the same token, Ferguson comments on the lack of one clear path for the worldwide diffusion of English: "We cannot know what the future will bring. At some point the spread of English may be halted, and some other language may spread to take its place….but for the present the spread of English continues, with no sign of diminishing" (xvi). Ferguson's prediction says that the trend of English expansion will nevertheless continue. Due to its pervasive use and influence, it is difficult to assess when English will not be the most frequently used medium across national and cultural

boundaries. In addition, Crystal has argued that "English happened to be in the right place at the right time" to take advantage of the burgeoning economic, technological, and socio-cultural world developments (120). Thus, we see that the English growth cannot be divorced from the non-language factors that have influenced its gigantic growth. Because of its global spread, we need to consider how future linguistic, economic, technological, and socio-cultural trends impact English.

Because the question of the spread of English is so complex, it must be regarded and discussed within the context of globalization. The language and its users keep changing and adapting to the inevitable effects of globalization. Globalization is a social situation. Moreover, globalization is perhaps one of the most troubled and contradictory concepts in the social sciences; it is troubled because it significantly complicates English and its standards. It is contradictory because it creates conflicting definitions, which further complicate both the standards and our teaching practices. In brief, globalization poses new teaching challenges for us.

Defining globalization is not an easy task because each discipline creates its own definition. Similarly, Stiglitz notes that "few subjects have polarized people throughout the world as much as globalization" (295). Regarding its complex interpretations, globalization has been interpreted differently in different places. Similarly, globalization is not solely limited to one center and one territory. Pennycook says that globalization is decentered and deterritorialised (199). Because of its ambiguous status, globalization has impacted English in obvious ways: the language has become fluid and flexible. Its flexible status pervasively permeates global, regional, national and local levels. The argument that says

that globalization is decentered holds true and makes sense to me, and is related to my main question due to one following reason: cultural and political dynamics involving English are varied, and yet interconnected in its multiple locations. Because the participants in a globalized network are increasingly diverse, they are marked by cultural and political difference and inequality. Similarly, we will see that relations of social inequality and imbalance are played out in our classrooms as well. It is because our classrooms are dynamic social spaces with a huge variety of the speakers of Englishes.

English has continually been diversifying into variations called Englishes, identified with nations and large cities (e.g. Singapore English, British English). A logical result of globalization is the presence of Englishes. There is a heated debate about how to name the varieties of English. Again, we need to position this question within the cultural and geographical framework. There are different names to identity the varieties of the English language: World Englishes (WE), New Englishes(NE) and Global English(GE).The terms like World Englishes and New Englishes have been identified in sociolinguistics and applied linguistics in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Crystal uses the term "World English," while Graddol prefers "Global English." In this thesis, I use the term Englishes to include all those different varieties.

Because of their global spread, Englishes do not have one point of origin, but multiple. The users of Englishes create a plurality of languages. Nihalani says that different terms to name variation of English need to accomplish the same goal—to enable effective communication globally among different speakers (26). All these variations of the language are social, in its origin. We need to underscore their communicative function among

different speakers. We want to value language heterogeneity of all the users of English. We see that the language, its use and its users are conditioned by the demographic, geographical, socio-political and cultural factors; many forms of the language vary. Similarly, standards of Englishes vary likewise. The accurate definition of the standards of Written English involves geopolitical, economic, and cultural transactions that we have to take into account, if we seek a relevant and current definition of its standards. English is becoming a plural language itself, and so are its standards as well.

Because of the varied nature of the language and its users within globalization, we should challenge traditional and somewhat static definitions of the standards currently maintained in the U.S. college Composition classrooms. The users of Englishes demonstrate that English is being changing; all language varieties, local and international, impact standards. Therefore, the fluidity of English is highly embedded in local contexts, including those of Asia, Australia, Africa, etc. Similarly, the U.S. Composition classroom mirrors a globalized environment made up of various participants who live and work using Englishes. Globalization informs us that English has been reshaped by the use of its various users worldwide.

In such a vibrant social situation of globalization, English is regarded in a two-fold way: globalization connects and disconnects language differences at the same time. For example, Schneider argues that English is regarded in two-fold terms: On the one hand, it is the world's leading language, while on the other hand it has been damned as a "killer language" (233). Due to the spread of English within globalization, we can define the language as a connecting link between language and cultural differences. And yet, due to its

hegemonic tendencies, English tends to homogenize other identities it comes into contact with. Still, Schneider explains that two seemingly contradictory perspectives we see still have one attitudinal feature in common: They both look at English in an idealized, homogeneous, standardized form (233). This means that English is the main vehicle of international communication, and nevertheless, its homogenizing tendencies can cause the extinction of other cultural and social identities. Despite that, due to its pervasive influence, the users of English inevitably create multiple links on various levels. Obviously, they are the main social links, made as a product of globalization. Throughout the thesis, I will be mostly focused on various types of links created within globalization. Pennycook argues that in a globalized context, we need to rethink language (196). English has been expanding in the heterogeneous reality. The most important fact is that the rate of English proliferation has been drastically changed:

> This suggests the need to articulate a new sense of history and location, avoiding narratives of spread, transition, development and origins, and thinking instead in terms of multiple, heterogeneous and simultaneous histories that the dominant historical narrative has overlooked. (196)

This new reality is the product of the spread of English. The reality is polyvalent; there is a conflux of both national and international varieties. Similarly, our students reshape our classrooms; they reconfigure the current definition of standards.

Such a growing diversity of English forces us to question what kinds of standards should be applied in Composition classrooms. Ferguson explains that two current trends exist, as a result of the worldwide diffusion of English: "English is less and less regarded as

a European language, and its development is less and less determined by the usage of its native speakers" (xvi). I will look at both these two trends as the main indicators of how Composition teachers should treat the norms of the language. Similarly, Graddol in *The Future of English?* identifies two major issues linked to the notion of "World Standard English." The first issue is whether English will fragment into many different languages. The second issue is whether U.S. and British English will still serve as models of "correctness", or whether a "new world standard" will emerge. These current social situations are influential on two grounds: They make us revisit the language use in its present global context; also, they make us start questioning whether the standards of the language imposed upon the non-native speakers of English can still persist as the standards to be emulated in the classroom, or can we find the new definition.

Traditional and new concepts of the standards of Written English

In order to respond to the question of Englishes and teaching, I will position the problem of standards within a translingual approach to language, language varieties and differences. This approach has recently been defined and released by Horner, Lu, Jacqueline, Royster and Trimbur (300). In short, Horner says that a translingual approach insists on viewing language differences and fluidities as resources to be preserved, developed, and utilized (300). Horner starts his new approach by emphasizing that a growing number of Composition teachers realize that a fixed insistence on the "educated English" is at odds with the current linguistic and learning context. Conversely, a translingual approach sees a difference in language as a power or resource to promote meaning in writing; it is working across language differences and varieties. Teachers'

practices in classes should produce meaning out of a wide range of language varieties. Both native and non-native speakers of English, as participants in the writing process, feel appreciated and valued with their resources because they bring their own variety of the language.

I now define several concepts important to the argument that promotes diverse and flexible standards of English: monolingual approach, multilingual approach, and translingual approach. Monolingual approach is a position that allows language users to assume and demand that others accept as correct and conform to a single set of practices with language. Multilingual approach demands that others accept as correct and conform to multiple sets of practices with language. By contrast, the most pertinent to my discussion, a translingual approach teaches language users to assume and expect that each new instance of language use brings the need and opportunity to develop new ways of using language and to draw on a range of language resources (Horner 308). Each classroom participant enriches the classroom discussion using his unique language resources. However, because of a discrepancy between a traditional and new approach to writing in the U.S. English departments and beyond, I will argue that translingual approach is the appropriate method towards differences.

In order to gain a historical sense of the norms in American society, I explore the history of the efforts to standardize Written English. In her essay, "Living-English work," Lu explains that the efforts to standardize English have been around since the beginning of American nationhood (605). If we trace these tendencies back, we see that John Adams proposed that a new American government be formed and charged with two

responsibilities: To prescribe a language standard and to consider political and economic forces critical to the international spread of English (Heath 220). In Adams's view, English had to be stamped with a clearly prescribed standard. His understanding of standards was a linguistically homogeneous situation. And yet, he was aware of the language diversity in the new American nation. John Adams was actually a visionary who made a prediction about the universal role of English, which eventually came true. Actually, the emerging language heterogeneity spurred his desire for standardization in which writers were expected to use standards of Written English. Therefore, he wanted to bring that diversity under the rule of one single standard. However, what disturbs me most is the fact that a strict use of English can be to the exclusion of other language varieties that teachers encounter in their classrooms today.

The United States has always had a multilingual population as part of its heritage. Similarly, Horner says that the American nation and the world have always been multilingual rather than monolingual ("English Only and U.S. College Composition" 595). Due to the increasing number of diverse speakers, multilingualism has been valued more than ever before. Moreover, Horner defines what a norm is under the new social and cultural circumstances. At the same time, he teaches us to view the norm differently: "The "norm" assumed, in other words, is a monolingual, native-English-speaking writer writing only in English to an audience of English-only readers" ("Cross- Language Relations in Composition" 569). However, the current context of writing and writing itself is not monolingual; standards are fluid. Therefore, we cannot continue to apply the prescribed rules.

Diverse students thus prompt Composition teachers to challenge monolithic definitions on standards; teachers are working with a varied group of students who are multilingual. Language standards change throughout time and history. Therefore, writing should not be regarded as passive compliance with fixed standards. In contrast, writing is a personal activity in which writers bring their unique resources. The multilingual framework allows writers to bring their unique resources to English writing. Multilingual writers bring their individual cultures that critically and creatively inform their English writing. Writing now involves the full integration of all the products of globalization: diverse registers, codes, and genres that students bring in the classroom as part of their language backgrounds; after all, they all make up the structure of Englishes.

Englishes and their impact on the standards of Written English

Depending on the region where it is used, the speakers of Englishes reshape the language. Ramanathan, Norton, and Pennycook argue that the discussion on the above - mentioned English acronyms of WE, NE, and GE is important because it makes us pay attention to the shift that has occurred; it is the shift about our conceptualizations about spaces, geographic domains, and the mapping of languages onto them (xvii). We learn that Englishes are the product of history and various language movements. There is a high variety of the users' cultures and a variety of Englishes shaped by cultures likewise. At the same time, while communicating in the classroom via Englishes, geographical boundaries evaporate; students permeate the boundaries via Englishes. Various students' national, ethnic, racial, or class identity is stamped on Englishes due to the communication established.

Speakers of Englishes perform communicative function because they use them on a daily basis. Because people speak more than one variation of the language around the globe, these language varieties constantly intermingle. Therefore, elaborating on the advantages of a translingual approach, Horner focuses more on the communicative function of the language varieties in the modern global society:

> Traditional approaches assume that heterogeneity in language impedes communication and meaning. Hence, the long-standing aim of traditional writing instruction has been to reduce "interference," excising what appears to show difference. Difference in language is not a barrier to overcome or a problem to manage, but a resource for producing meaning in writing. (299)

We should emphasize students' fluency in different varieties of language because we want to promote smooth communication between those differences. Also, students' fluency in varieties of languages is encouraged and promoted. Students' language performance differs because each speaker uses varieties in a new way. In spite of the differences between various speakers, they all *do* the language; speakers become creators of their own varieties of the language.

Socio-political relationship between different varieties and its users is evident in our discussion on New Englishes. Schneider's definition of New Englishes demonstrates that the language and its users change in the mutual linguistic exchange. Schneider says that present-day English as a predominant means of communication is being appropriated by local speakers, diversifying and developing new dialects called *New Englishes* (233). He defines New Englishes:

So-called *New Englishes,* distinct forms of English which have emerged in

postcolonial settings and countries around the globe, have typically been

regarded individually as unique varieties shaped by idiosyncratic historical

conditions and contact settings, and no coherent theory to account for these

processes have been developed so far. (233)

His definition implies that it is very difficult to define variations conclusively. It is because

of their complexity, and various other factors involved. As we see, his definition of different

varieties is characterized by the contact of languages and cultures. New Englishes

encompass language varieties resulting and emerging from the early phases of colonial and

postcolonial histories until they separated as newly recognized and self-contained varieties

(235). This term describes how the users of language continually change the language

while being in contact with the other users. Moreover, those users of New Englishes

prompt us to challenge the standards in a vibrant socio-political context.

In his discussion of Englishes, however, Schneider argues that there have been

tendencies to regard and portray native English countries as the "centers" thus entitled to

establish the norms of correctness, and conversely, "New Englishes" as peripheral,

deviating from these norms. Schneider points out that there are political questions and

orientations behind this, which may be the reason why the opinions are divided (239). New

Englishes are the result of different politics in contact besides languages. Those politics

determine which language will be the most dominant one. In an era of pluralism, I argue in

favor of pluralistic norms. The monolithic definition of standards does a disservice to a

pluralistic classroom environment. We should view those varieties in terms of their social function, and impact exerted.

Students' Right to their own Language Variety

Because we use Englishes in everyday classroom, teachers should take a responsible view of standards of Written English. If viewed as fixed and unchanging, standards can disadvantage students. Applied to education, Algeo says the idea that correctness is relative to a context and that variation is normal in language (502). The 1972 resolution of the Executive Committee of the Conference on College Composition and Communication is the document that affirms the individual students' rights to their variety of the language. By the same token, the document was interpreted as prohibiting teachers from teaching the standards of Written English to the students who use "nonstandard" variety. The position came to be known as "The Students' Right" (to their language) in a 1972:

> It is the students' right to their own patterns and varieties of language—the dialects of their nurture or whatever dialects in which they find their own identity and style. Language scholars long ago denied that the myth of a standard American dialect has any validity. The claim that any one dialect is unacceptable amounts to an attempt of one social group to exert its dominance over another. A nation proud of its diverse heritage and its cultural and racial variety will preserve its heritage of dialects. We affirm strongly that teachers must have the experiences and training that will enable them to respect diversity and uphold the right of students to their own language. No variety is inherently better or worse than any other,

varieties are linked with social structures, and that one's native variety is

part of one's identity.

The Resolution points to the full reintegration of all national variations of language. Hazen

suggests we need "to respect dialect differences for what they are—a natural manifestation

of cultural and linguistic diversity" (317). Although it looks as an ideal resolution, it still

created certain issues. There is an unequal power relationship between the mainstream

and vernacular speakers. This insistence is germane to my main arguments because all

those language varieties work to counter the hegemony of English. Georgieva says global

English is a fact of life, a key feature of the new socio-political and economic world order

(113). In the light of English dominance, this means that we prefer translingual policies to

monolingual ones. Once again, I emphasize that teachers need to incorporate national

dialect diversity in the same way as they incorporate international varieties.

How to accommodate English varieties?

Despite the fact that there has been an official recognition of the students' language

varieties I just mentioned, unfortunately, such a document does not fully recognize the

status of all the varieties. The policies of the official document do not completely

accommodate *all* the language varieties, national and international, obviously present in

the classroom within the translingual approach. Canagarajah in his essay "The Place of

World Englishes in Composition: Pluralization Continued" specifically addresses why the

document has to be updated. He also lists pedagogical challenges made by the presence of

Englishes. The main reason why there are some deficiencies in the document is the fact that

it privileges certain varieties. The document is interpreted as a policy of tolerance, but it is

not completely tolerant (596). Canagarajah further acknowledges that though the Statement itself does not make the identity of variant clear, the supplementary document by the committee reveals that the authors are thinking primarily of African American vernacular and what they call "Chicano English." In the future, we have to develop an updated model of plural English where all the varieties (including minority dialects such as AAVE and Chicano English) maintain equal status; they all need to be under the umbrella of Englishes. In conclusion, I take side with Canagarajah that we need to develop multilingual competence for transnational relationships. Equally important is that we understand that academic writing is becoming pluralized as well.

Increasing students' resources

International students are multilingual because language policies in their home countries require them to acquire more than two languages; they have to learn English besides other languages—to be multilinguals in a globalized world. English is usually their third or fourth language they need to acquire. Kirkpatrick remarks that perhaps the most remarkable fact behind the increasing use of English is that the majority of English speakers are now multilingual people who use English to communicate with their fellow multilinguals (1). English is being increasingly spoken by the non-native English speakers.The multilingual speaker thus exerts a significant impact upon the structure of the Composition classroom. Namely, his language resources enrich the structure of the classroom. Strevens holds a strong interest in the varieties of English worldwide, arguing for full recognition of the "'Englishes' which constitute the English language" (90). Englishes are the legitimate part and parcel of language. Because of that, the classroom is

considered multilingual and multi-vocal for two reasons: The first reason is because

international students are multilingual. The second reason is that international students

speak different variations of English to communicate with their American peers. In

communication process, there is a language exchange between students. Georgieva says it

is the reality "shaped at least as much by its non-native as by its native speakers" (115).

Both parties make the new reality. Both parties exert a powerful impact on English. But, the

real pedagogical challenge that Composition teachers face today is: how to equally

integrate national and international varieties of English?

It would be wrong to pay special attention to international varieties only. We also

need to recognize students considered monolingual in the sense they speak only English.

Theoretically speaking, those students are not multilingual because they use one language

on a daily basis; but, those students have a stylistic range that crosses several different

sociolects. Horner, however, claims that they are nonetheless multilingual if regarded

through the translingual framework. His definition says they can be considered

multilingual due to the varieties of English they use and their ability to adapt English to

their needs and desires. Teachers should recognize dialect diversity of the American

students in Composition classrooms. Hazen claims that dialect diversity is significant not

only because of the development of particular skills such as reading and writing, but also in

terms of collaborative dialect awareness programs that focus on promoting an

understanding of and appreciation for language variation on a local level and beyond (296).

Ideally, teachers' practices will aim to incorporate diverse dialects in the classrooms.

Horner's multilingual understanding may be idealistic. Still, I consider his new

understanding as socially moral and appropriate because it underscores that teachers need

to regard all those varieties as legitimate identities. A new understanding of multilingualism is pertinent to Composition studies because Composition teachers can even facilitate various writers' interactions to use the full richness of English.

Teachers should increase students' language resources in a specific way. In a recently published essay on a translingual approach, Horner says that translingual rather than multilingual approach should be the goal of the teacher for many reasons (307). Since teachers are working with multilingual students today, they actually need to integrate the students' number of languages they know in a real classroom practice. I see the application of languages important because the mere number of languages emphasized in multilingualism does not seem to be enough. Rather, a translingual approach is about one's openness and inquiry toward language differences and varieties (307). Therefore, in today's Composition classroom, the most appropriate and productive way to address monolingualism and its tendencies, and even to go beyond multilingualism is to employ an open and flexible approach towards language. Thus, students can become proficient users because they learn to employ language differences and variations in their writings.

Because of the changes and challenges presented above, globalization actually stresses multiplicities. Teachers should make use of those multiplicities to redefine classroom practices in a new way. The new approach to language difference is aligned with multilingual education in two ways: in its emphasis on the students' linguistic resources, and the importance of recognizing them. But, we should know that we do not want or aim to replace the knowledge of one language with another. Rather, we want to build on

students' existing language abilities. Therefore, teachers should support all the varieties of the students.

Let me now illustrate my point using my own teaching experience as an ENGL 101 teacher. In our assignment prompts, we should always leave the option to the students to integrate theirs or their peers', or even some other persons' language resources, or culture. We will always assign open-ended prompts that permeate fixed requirements in terms of genre, voice, or grammar. When we assign topics, we will also avoid possible embarrassment in classes. At the very beginning of the semester, we usually assign the diagnostic paper "Describe the time you communicated well." When we explain the paper prompt to the students, we should refocus on the skills the students gained from that communication. The students should also reflect on the communication by summarizing which people helped them to gain such strong communication skills. In that way, we shift the focus on the effect of the actual dialogue, preferably between the differences.

Implications for teaching Composition

The importance of addressing the standards is huge to the field of Rhetoric and Composition. Schneider stresses that formal contexts, like teaching require norm orientations, but the question is which and whose norms are accepted (238). In a growing Composition classroom, it is crucial for Composition teachers to reconsider that standards should be regarded in less stable and fixed terms. If teachers ask them to comply with standards, they can actually ask them to be silent because some of them cannot apply them. For example, Lu stresses that non-native English students are forced to silence themselves instead of speaking aloud: "Speakers lacking the legitimate competence are *de facto*

excluded from the social domains in which this competence is required, or are condemned to silence" ("From Silence to Words: Writing as a Struggle" 438). Students are told to imitate the ideally perceived model, which obviously some cannot. Composition teachers should adopt a teaching approach that aims to enhance students' performance in all levels. Such an approach does not point to students' errors only. Rather, it aims to convey the message that writing is a recursive process where they can grow as writers.

Different variations of the language mean different understanding of what good Composition teaching implies. With globalization, our understanding of who can teach Composition changes as well. The traditional concept at the English Department said that a native English teacher teaches native English students only. However, there has been a shift related to this trend. Phillipson talks about the idea of the *native speaker fallacy:* "Native speakers of English are automatically the best teachers of English" (126). By implication, it follows that non-native teachers are second-best. Those teachers know how to handle language acquisition problems since they already went through them. Smith concludes that what matters most in the new context is a familiarity with as many Englishes as possible: "Being a native speaker does not seem to be as important for intelligibility, comprehensibility and interpretability as being fluent in English and familiar with several different national varieties" (441). The solution is to become familiar with many variations so as to be a knowledgeable and flexible teacher. Or, the solution can be to be open to Englishes. The knowledge of variations also enhances our teaching practices. For sure, we as teachers want to evade the following unfortunate teaching situation that Matsuda points to: "An incomplete presentation of the English language may...lead to confusion or resistance when students are confronted with different types of English users or uses"

(438). This can happen because various students of English have been taught which language variation is "standard." We want to promote international communication and understanding of different variations.

Speakers of plural English extend the scope of the language; it also expands teaching possibilities. Hall and Eggington argue that it has been suggested more attention has to be paid to "the more macro aspects of English language teaching, which include such political, cultural, and social issues such as language policies and their implications for schooling practices" (1). All these factors definitely impact how we understand the language. First, it must be recognized that language policy is not about language alone (Herriman and Burnaby 13), but that it encompasses sociopolitical and economic issues. This is because language learning cannot be divorced from its "social, cultural and educational contexts" (Pennycook 299). Language is always historically and culturally situated. Accordingly, language policies need to be inclusive, designed to promote the overall cultural and economic development. Language policies need to aim to be cross-cultural. This goal is feasible especially regarding the polyvalent globalized context.

My discussion in this chapter on the shifting standards of the language does not mean that I deny that there are official standards; my question does not deny there is an officially recognized notion of Written English. Of course, writers are expected to do their best to produce a high-quality piece of writing. However, we need to redefine what standards we employ to assess good writing. While underlining the importance of a translingual approach, Horner says that the definition of the fluid and negotiable standards of the language does not deny the ongoing, dominant political reality that posits and

demands "standards" (301). Textbooks still continue to maintain fixed standards. Instead,

my discussion focuses on what teachers can do to respond to the polyvalent classroom

because we are working in a changing reality. Diversification of English into Englishes

described in this chapter furthers me to reconfigure the definition of the standards.

Language and its norms are changeable, conditioned by its varied users.

CHAPTER 3

DISCIPLINARY "DIVISION OF LABOR"

Chapter 3 will address the impact of disciplinary "division of labor" on our current

perception of ESL students in Composition classes. Its first part will give a historical

overview of findings to contextualize the problem of this scholarly division. In order to

historically track down this division, I will mainly apply the extensive research findings by

Paul K. Matsuda. A historical background to the problem is crucial because it more

accurately describes the main reasons for this scholarly division. Next, I proceed to draw

further ideological implications that derive from the division. In addition, findings will be

brought in the connection with the main focus of this thesis—standards of Written English.

Finally, the chapter will reveal that the disciplinary "division of labor" that clearly

separated the students has been changing the ways in which Composition teachers view

ESL students.

Position of English departments within disciplinary "division of labor"

With the sudden influx of international students in the latter half of the twentieth

century, second language writing instruction became a serious concern to be tackled.

Namely, the sudden influx was particularly noticeable after World War II when the number

of international students in the U.S. began to increase rapidly, especially at research

institutions. Matsuda claims that contrary to popular belief, ESL students did not suddenly

increase in the 1960s. Their presence was already noticed at the conclusion of World War

II in 1945. According to a 1961 study from the Institute of International Education,

between 1940 and 1950, the number rose from 6,570 to 29,813. Additionally, the problem

of second language learners was prompted by the scholarly division between Second language writing and mainstream Composition.

The presence of a rapidly increasing number of international students resulted in the emergence of instruction in second language writing in U.S. higher educational institutions. Matsuda explains that it was in the early 1950s that the presence of international students in the writing classroom had already become an issue ("Second Language Writing in the Twentieth Century: A Situated Historical Perspective" 36). At most universities, ESL classes are in different departments than Composition classes; they are separate from the English departments. Valdes notes that English Composition profession "includes two large and distinct areas of interest and expertise": Teaching second-language students and teaching mainstream native English speaking students (13). As a response to Valdes's argument on two supposedly separate academic fields, with distinct expertise, I pose the question: What could happen in a Composition classroom if Composition teachers take this compartmentalization between two areas of expertise too literally and strictly? One possible answer would be that Composition teachers may assume that they have to adopt "special" methodology to teach second language writers. Nonetheless, too much emphasis on compartmentalization can only disadvantage both ESL students and Composition teachers. Firstly, students may suppose their issues are peripheral to the mainstream writing classes. On the other hand, Composition teachers may assume that they may be ill-prepared or trained to teach ESL population. The conclusion of this chapter will be that both scenarios are groundless in today's Composition teaching practices.

<u>Historical beginnings of disciplinary "division of labor"</u>

Second language writing can benefit from broad, interdisciplinary perspectives. Even more, we should know that our theoretical and pedagogical practices are always historically situated; they change over time. Matsuda stresses that without knowing the context in which certain theories or pedagogical strategies developed, we will not be able to apply them or modify them in other contexts or in light of new theoretical insights (14, 15). Yet, Matsuda is not the only scholar who underlines the importance of a historical inquiry. Similarly, Casanave claims that historical inquiry can help us identify what issues have been discussed, what questions have been posed, what solutions have been devised, and what consequences have come out of those solutions—and why (133). The field of second language writing was situated at the crossroads between second language acquisition and Composition studies. In other words, the historical genesis of second language writing issues is aimed to enhance the already existing theoretical and pedagogical insights of the two fields: second language writing and Composition studies.

Historical background to the problem moreover contributes to the development of the two fields. Again, in the same chapter, Matsuda argues that the field of second language writing actually needs more studies informed by careful historiography, not just personal hunches based on second-hand information or institutional lore (44). Teachers of both fields should contribute to this common task by being engaged with historical inquiry. It actually presupposes that each teacher should develop a narrative of her or his own. Moreover, we need to share and reflect on our different teaching narratives with members of our teaching communities, and even beyond. In that way, we contribute to the construction of socially shared narratives. By the same token, Atkinson suggests we need to

embrace a living, reinvented, reconstructed, and renewed each time; methodology based on reflexivity (49). It is the methodology that is always changing, never static; it builds upon teachers' experience, and helps us to tackle the upcoming issues is a smoother way. The methodology based on reflexivity and history better recognizes changing social conditions and the needs of our students.

Genesis of writing issues at the U.S. universities

Writing did not become an important component of second language teaching until fairly recently. Before the 1960s, writing was neglected in second language studies because of the dominance of the audio-lingual approach, which was focused exclusively on the spoken language. The neglect of writing was perpetuated by the view of language teaching as an application of scientific descriptive linguistics with a strong emphasis on the primacy of spoken language. This view of the language became influential in many parts of the world. Matsuda claims that the neglect of written language was most conspicuous in the U.S. between the 1940s and the 1960s, when the view of language as speech was institutionalized through the work of Leonard Bloomfield and Charles C. Fries (15).Bloomfield's pedagogy that began to develop as early as 1914, focused exclusively on the spoken language; the emphasis was exclusively on the mere production of the spoken language. The pedagogy focused on the spoken language is problematic for many reasons, the most important of which is its insistence on the production and imitation of the "ideal", "error-free," native-like speech.

Writing issues began to attract serious attention from second language specialists only in the 1960s. Therefore, second language writing instruction became a significant issue that had to be tackled. In 1966 a new organization called TESOL (Teachers of English

to Speakers of Other Languages) was founded to serve the needs and interests of second language specialists. During the 1960s, the fall of the audio-lingual approach and the sudden influx of international students in U.S. universities made writing an important agenda in second language studies—especially in TESOL, where ESL writing gained recognition as one of its subfields. Matsuda expands the problem explaining that it was the creation of TESOL in 1966 that institutionalized the disciplinary division of labor (40). The division was therefore the result of professionalization of ESL between 1940s and 1966. Consequently, due to this academic division, writing issues were classified into first and second language areas.

The basic function of those separately created ESL courses targeted to meet the needs of a rapidly growing population of the ESL writers; it was because those meets were not addressed in mainstream Composition courses or basic writing courses. Still, the compartmentalization between mainstream and second language courses could prompt some conscientious Composition teachers' assumption that "special pedagogy" in second language writing was to be clearly defined. However, the presence of second language writers only signaled that the already existing pedagogy had to be slightly modified to specifically target their special needs. Although the ESL courses were designed to help those students, the teaching methods employed were not commensurate with the real needs of the students; in particular, how to teach writing, and how to tackle writing issues of the students of various writing backgrounds.

The main problem lied in the fact that the teaching methods employed by those early separate ESL courses could not really help the ESL students to overcome their writing issues. First of all, the methodology of those early ESL courses was too limited and even

prescribed by the strict grammar rules to be complied with. Let me exemplify my claim. The limitation of such controlled composition became clear in the choice of teaching materials. The emphasis was on the formal grammar exercises that could not really help students to produce comprehensible sentences; students were strictly guided how to produce error-free sentences. Second language methodology focused mostly on the features of second language written text like orthography, sentence-level structure, and discourse-level structure. Matsuda argues that creating separate ESL courses was a solution that was becoming increasingly popular (39). Nonetheless, all these traditional methods proved to be ineffective for a growing ESL population. Those standard exercises revealed to what an extent ESL students' grammar errors deviate from the standard norm adopted. Rather, the emphasis should have been on less guided composition with less rigid structural guidance. Such composition is free; it is free from a strict demand on what is "right" and "wrong". Such less controlled composition could develop students' critical thinking instead. Neither controlled nor guided composition provided adequate preparation for free composition that fosters students' imagination and critical thinking.

Second language writing and Composition studies hold very different perspectives on "good" writing. Matsuda says that the "disciplinary division of labor serves as the dominant metaphor for the relationship between Composition and ESL" (700). Simply said, this metaphor creates a dichotomy between two interrelated academic fields that deal basically with a very similar focus—how to teach writing to the students of various writing or no writing backgrounds whatsoever. The only difference separating these two fields is the fact that the field of second language writing deals primarily with the needs of second language writers; on the other hand, the field of Composition deals with the writing issues

of *all* the participants in the classroom. This scholarly division complicates further questions about students' identity, placement, and academic achievement. Specifically, Composition teachers are challenged how to assess the ESL students' performance.

In the late 1970s and the 1980s a number of teaching developments were made; the most significant of which is that writing is a process. Both Composition studies and second language studies prompted writing teachers to consider factors other than properties of the texts themselves. In Composition studies, the interest had begun to shift from textual features to the *process* of writing itself. Zamel's approach on writing as a process was crucial. He argued that second language writers are similar to first language writers (51). He ascertained that students can benefit, if taught that writing is a recursive process. As all Composition teachers know, there are innumerable advantages of teaching writing as a process over the view of writing as a reproduction of the ideal discourse structures. The process-based writing approach underscored that writing is a process of developing organization and meaning. This approach to writing includes invention strategies, multiple drafts, and feedback. All these stages became important parts of writing instruction in many second language writing classrooms. The new approach on writing as a process was prompted by the presence of ESL students whose writing gaps had to be filled in some way. ESL students had to be taught how to write in a creative way.

In spite of those teaching developments, during the 1990s, Composition teachers still considered themselves mainstream Composition teachers only. Even Composition itself was regarded only in the context of first language writing. Separate ESL courses led to separate mainstream courses, often called first language Composition. Matsuda says that

first language Composition was an *inaccurate label* for the field of Composition studies because ESL writers were constantly finding their way into mainstream composition classrooms (37). Those students were constantly present in classrooms. We see that the labels were not productive because many Composition specialists of the time lost interest in ESL issues. I would even call labels "inaccurate" because they did not reflect the real picture of all classroom participants in writing classes. However, in the early 1990s, second language writing emerged as an interdisciplinary field. Hence, the nature of second language writing began to change around that time.

The division resulted in situating second language writing issues almost exclusively in Second language studies—in the area of Teaching English as a Second Language (TESOL). Thus, the *disciplinary division of labor* between Composition studies and Second language studies was firmly established. The metaphor can be expanded on the division of duties and responsibilities between first and second language teachers. In addition, the "division of labor" also implies a dichotomy between first language and second language writing. However, in today's vibrant learning and teaching environment, there can hardly survive those strict divisions between the two interrelated fields; we cannot strictly divide either the areas of expertise or the duties and responsibilities of the scholars of the two fields. Instead, we should aim to cross disciplinary divides of any kind. Let me illustrate my point further. We cannot strictly differentiate professional organizations like TESOL or CCCC. Both organizations deal with teaching, with a slightly different focus. Teachers should be in a position to actively participate in both these organizations, without having to pick between the two.

Further relationship between Composition and second language writing and the problems
caused by their division

There is an official recognition that ESL students are a legitimate component of the
mainstream Composition classes. The "CCCC Statement on Second Language Writing and
Writers" from January 2001, revised November 2009 officially recognizes the presence of
ESL students in Composition classrooms. This document confirms that ESL students are
part and parcel of the mainstream Composition classrooms at the English Departments:
"Second-language writers have become an integral part of higher education, including
writing programs" (10). The issues addressed in the CCCC statement include instruction,
assessment, class size, teacher preparation, and support for writing instructors who have
second language writers among their students.

The CCCC document calls for teachers to reconsider their existing teaching methods.
This document affirms that Composition teachers have a professional responsibility to
understand and recognize the needs of an increasingly linguistically and culturally diverse
group of students. Let me further elaborate. The decisions on the students' university
admission procedures should not be based solely on the scores from standardized tests of
general language proficiency. Instead, the decisions should be made on multiple writing
samples, and courses that aim to integrate native and non-native speakers of English. Also,
the document speaks to a changing sense of how language and writing were beginning to
be viewed.

Despite the official recognition of ESL students, their writing issues still persist.
Fundamentally, there still exist problems to be resolved. Firstly, Matsuda points that

Composition scholarship within the English departments has been slow to reflect the influx of second language writers in Composition classrooms. Moreover, Composition classes are obligatory for all. So, teachers have to tackle their writing issues. Although the intensive language programs and special second language sections of writing course may be helpful, writing teachers still need to address their issues. Namely, ESL students usually attend the intensive language programs before they officially start attending Composition mainstream classes, as regular freshmen. Nevertheless, even after finishing the intensive language programs, students' language and writing issues remain; those language issues are even more visible because students are required to produce four main papers, and a couple of short writes to complete the class in a satisfactory way.

Even if we place ESL students into mainstream classes, we still need to observe possible problems. Silva remarks that the unreflective adoption of mainstream composition materials may seriously disadvantage ESL writers by assuming knowledge they do not possess (360). My point is corroborated by the following illustration: ESL students' writing is often simpler, less effective and sometimes broad; they plan less, write with more difficulty owing to a lack of resources, and exhibit less ability to revise in an intuitive manner. At the discourse level, their texts frequently exhibit distinct patterns of argumentation, and narration. In terms of lower level linguistic concerns, ESL writers' texts typically exhibit a style of writing simpler than that of Native English writers; ESL writers' sentences often include more coordination, less subordination, less noun modifications, and fewer passives. As language learners, ESL writers usually use shorter words and less specific words and generally manifest less lexical variety and sophistication. As an ESL student myself, I can say that the principal issue is their lack of directness in writings.

Because of the issues listed, the mere inclusion of ESL learners into the mainstream Composition classes does not resolve the problem; teachers still need to tackle how to teach ESL students to write, and which standards they are to comply with. Silva states that ESL writers' rhetorical differences may be manifestations of their cultural backgrounds rather than cognitive or educational deficiencies (155). ESL students simply do not share the same cultural background as their Native English classroom counterparts. The point can be clarified by way of the following example: When teachers ask the students a simple question "Who is your favorite character on television and why"? Some students are not familiar with Western popular characters, which may cause their embarrassment in the classroom. After all, we should avoid discussing inappropriate topics such as the current conflict resolution, political issues, or particular ideologies. If the students are put in the mainstream Composition classroom without adequate methodology, the effect may be counter-productive.

There are growing numbers of bi- and multi- lingual students raised in the U.S. for whom traditional ESL programs and courses, often designed for international students, may be ill-suited. Furthermore, in a translingual approach, Horner stresses that it is increasingly inappropriate to make simple identifications of students' languages and to categorize and place them in courses of instruction purely according to their native linguistic factor as the main point (571). This binary can be further questioned due to the changing demographic environment in Composition classes; the binary includes not only the distinction between the native and the non-native, but also our perception of what these labels imply for Composition teachers. Hence, we do not want to apply clear-cut

dichotomies, but to recognize a whole spectrum of factors that can help us facilitate learning process for all.

Socio-political implications deriving from the fixed insistence on the standards

If we apply labels, we align our students with complex cultural and linguistic realities. Moreover, when we use those categories like "ESL," "international," "foreign," or some others, we determine how various students are represented. Chaid and Schmida conclude that "categories like ESL, bilingual, and linguistic minority do indeed serve to delineate some students, but these categories are inadequate when it comes to capturing the literacy journey of students whose lived realities often waver between cultural and linguistic borderlands" (94). Language itself is not a stable category removed from the relevant context. There is no clear criterion whether someone has reached the "desired" level of linguistic competency or not. When we use the binaries like "native" and "non-native," we imply categories like the "citizen" or the "immigrant," which can be particularly awkward for both teachers and students in the classroom. Therefore, in order to avoid possible embarrassment that "other" students may face in the classroom, we should use labels sparingly, only when all other options are exhausted. Or, we should even avoid using them, if possible. In other words, when we split students into groups, or when we invite students to visit the Writing Center, we should avoid naming their labels, and their issues; the individual students' identities should not be singled out in any way. In this way, teacher's attitude exemplifies how all the students should treat each other in classes.

When we use labels to reify binary oppositions, we inevitably stigmatize students, especially in today's complex social atmosphere in our classrooms. ESL students may

suppose they are subordinate to their native-English counterparts in the classroom, which may or not be true. I believe it all depends on a teacher; how a teacher resolves the underlying tension, and how a teacher treats those complex language and cultural differences. Spack has noted that the terms like *foreign, international,* and *Other* used to identify ESL students, assume specific socio-cultural identities for the students and their languages. When we use those binaries, we position the "native" English speakers, as "the norm against which the other, the different is measured" (766). In such a scenario, English norm is to be imitated; it is, furthermore, the criterion to evaluate students' performance. Using those binaries, we separate all the students.

 ESL students have their own cultural conception of what standards of English are. This, however, does not mean that they should not comply with the standards that the teacher prescribes. Purves lists the reasons why ESL students have different rhetorical patterns from their native English counterparts. He also further elaborates how ESL students view the standards. His results reveal that "the fact that the compositions come from good students suggests that these students have learned and are applying the norms of their rhetorical community" (43). When we ask students to write an essay assigning the same topic, we realize that "good" student writers write those essays in different rhetorical modes; those modes can vary in levels of quality. The study demonstrates that those students lean to relate to the standards of their native communities. When we ask ESL students to comply with the standards of English, we notice to what an extent their native background plays out. While completing the task, they struggle to find the balance between the old and the new, which can be particularly upsetting for the students. Although Kaplan says that the rhetorical conventions of students' first language interfere with their ESL

writing (276), a translingual approach works to overcome those "interferences." In order to meet the official requirements, students may assume that their native background is an "interference" that prevents them from producing a coherent argument-driven piece of writing; in such a scenario, their native background "interferes" with the "target" background they are supposed to master. Students and teachers should not regard their unique native backgrounds as a hindrance to be overcome, but as a viable option.

The users of national and international English varieties intermingle in a complex social environment, and consequently, there is power relation between them in the classroom. Power relations between supposedly superior and subordinate languages are dynamic. We can even talk about the underlying clashes arising between them. In those encounters between varieties, students may presuppose that their variety of English is subordinate compared to the Western culture or language of their American counterparts. Although Pratt does not address ESL population specifically, she invokes students' various culture clashes. So, I use Pratt's idea to exemplify how I envision the polyvalent classroom of today. Pratt observes that "cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power" (34). Instead of focusing on the clash, we should be preoccupied how to establish an open dialogic encounter with all. Again, because English is plural we should reconnect all our students. This task is attainable because users of Englishes break the dominance of only one "proper" language variety. Because teachers are working with the users of various Englishes in the classroom, there can be no power takeover.

Since the structure of the classroom has been changing almost on a daily basis, power relations played out are dynamic. Cameron further argues that power relations are influenced by politics and international relations of power, which construct discourses about which language should be the model to emulate for effective communication (69). Power relations are inextricably related to my focal question of the standards to be emulated in the classroom; the question of the standards is a socio-political issue. The insistence on the "idealized" standard consequently reflects the linguistic and cultural relations of power, creating a linguistic and cultural hierarchy. Namely, the "ideal" style of communication is increasingly modeled after the Western Anglophone standard that prescribes the criteria to be met—direct, explicit and clear style in student writings. I stress the importance of recognizing a shifting nature of the standards, which is influenced by socio-economic and political forces. We must highlight the dynamic and political nature of the standards.

When teachers require ESL students to comply with the standards, they can ask them to immerse themselves into the Western world, completely alien to some. Those Western conventions have their own unified and standardized standards. My point will be clear by the following example: students have to start making logically coherent arguments, which may be foreign to some of them due to their different cultural influences. By the same token, Purves says that in demanding that students write standard Written English, and use a deductive, linear argument, we are asking them to situate themselves within a particular sociopolitical context (10). Actually, we require them to resituate themselves in order to produce a crystal clear and argument-driven piece of work required in classes. We require our students to reproduce a Western world view. Equally important is the fact that

students will be graded to what degree they comply with the standards of the target community. In demanding standard Written English with its use of a deductive, linear argument, we ask them to position themselves to a Western sociopolitical context; we will respond to their writing using Western criteria. In evaluating ESL papers, teachers will often encounter "problems" of clarity, focus, and organization. While responding to them, we need to avoid labeling their work as "poor organization," or even "completely incomprehensible." Thus, we prevent students' frustrations and embarrassment in our classes.

New teaching environment as a result of changing socio-political conditions

A language develops and changes in a dynamic social process. Bourdieu says that students must be encouraged to cross ideological and political borders in a setting that is pedagogically safe and socially nurturing rather than authoritarian and infused with the suffocating smugness of a certain political correctness (33). Teachers need to provide a safe classroom space for all the students to speak differently so that their narratives can be engaged critically by all. When I say students, I mean both native and non-native students alike. In such a reciprocal social process of communication, they learn to respect and express their differences in opinions in a democratic way. Again, I put a lot of emphasis on the teachers themselves; they model the classroom atmosphere. Teachers should not only hear the voices of the students who are silenced, but also they should take seriously all their claims; ideally, teachers will pay attention to the implications of their discourse in broader historical terms. In such a dialogic encounter, teachers deepen their own and their students' understanding of complex socio-political and cultural issues; the presence of

various differences is apparent in the U.S. classrooms. Teachers can even create open panels on the sensitive issues of class, gender or race by actively involving all the classroom participants.

Non-native English teachers deterritorialize the classroom in a specific way. Their non-English language and cultural background in the classroom is the result of deterritorialized globalization. In the classroom, the binaries between the native and the non-native evaporate. Kachru explains that English loses its supremacy because English is acquiring various international identities and multiple ownerships (241). A non-native English teacher may speak some variety of English. The presence of such a teacher teaches students to be more receptive toward the other users of Englishes. Students learn that there are many international varieties of English. Moreover, students start being receptive toward the non-English culture of their teacher. The teacher can openly integrate his culture in the classroom discussion, which can help students erase some prejudice about the cultures. Students' positive experience with a Non-Native English teacher erases prejudice about his/her culture, which I experienced working as an ENGL101 teacher.

We must take into account that any language should always be socially contextualized in terms of its use; its use varies and depends on a particular point in time and space. So, we cannot territorialize language. Moreover, we do not want to define one's social identity in terms of nationality, which itself is defined in terms of a single language (Horner "English Only and U.S. College Composition" 596). When we territorialize language according to national borders, we inevitably limit its language use. In that way, a shifting nature of language and its use is reduced and restricted to the standards of "proper"

language. Conversely, we should use students' and teachers' varieties as a powerful and rich teaching resource to challenge monolingual limitations of the U.S. culture. By doing so, we will argue for the benefits of a translingual language approach. A language use changes and expands, which impacts how the students are presented in the classroom. We should avoid categories based on language and identity in our current classroom dynamics.

Because of a polyvalent nature of our classroom and its participants, students' language multiplicities are to be stressed. Even the context of writing and the writing itself are defined in terms of students' multiplicities. In such a context, the resources of a monolingual writer are not to be viewed as a disadvantage. In contrast, such a writer possesses national dialectal diversity we should recognize and integrate; his writing is pluralistic as well. Hence, students and teachers alike should learn to work across a variety of Englishes and languages. We should recognize complex social environment that does impact what the norm is. Accordingly, we should shift from monolingualism to translingualism. This movement toward trans-relations in Composition can be understood as a response to our changing environment.

Treatment of ESL issues

The Statement does not imply that Composition teachers are not trained enough to tackle the issues ESL students face. The emphasis is, however, on the teachers' openness towards diverse students' issues; in that process, learning is a mutual process. Learning to write in a second language is a complex and time-consuming process. Matsuda explains that this is not to say that writing in second language is essentially the same as in the first language (19). After all, even native speakers and writers come from diverse cultural,

educational, and sociolinguistic backgrounds. I would not call the treatment of the ESL

issues "special" in any way because it can imply that special methodology needs to be

reconfigured. Conversely, I would call the treatment of the ESL issues integrated; we adapt

the old teaching practices to create new or modified methodology, which will hopefully

accommodate the needs that different students encounter. Teachers should not aim to cure

their issues, but to try to tackle them with the appropriate treatment.

The integration of ESL students has somewhat resolved pedagogical issues of the

time. Matsuda explains that second language writing issues are much better suited in

broader programs or departments, such as composition studies, or applied linguistics (15).

Instead of placing second language issues in specially designed programs, the field can

benefit more if seen as comprehensive. We need to position the issues in broad

institutional contexts; we should search for the possible resolutions to our dilemmas in

theoretical, ideological, socio-political, and methodological perspectives. We cannot

compartmentalize second language writers and their issues by viewing them in a separate

field. In contrast, we should integrate second language students and their writing issues

with second language teachers teaching Composition classes within the English

departments. Disciplinary "division of labor" cannot be divorced from the tendencies to

standardize and homogenize English. This scholarly division does a disservice to teachers

and students because it disregards a multicultural and multilinguistic picture of a

Composition classroom; it is the classroom that is the mosaic of differences.

There is a demonstrable increase among Composition teachers as to how recognize

multilingual students. There are interactions among different languages and varieties of

language in and through writing. Kachru reminds us that whatever the reasons for the earlier spread of English were, we should now consider it as a positive development in the current world context regarding the fact that English spreads globally (51). The increasing users of English put an additional responsibility on all of us who use it actively on a daily basis. All users are becoming more responsible how they use the language. Native English teachers understand that there are many language variations of English that do not need to be assessed as "right" or "wrong." On the other hand, non-native English speakers do not need to feel pressed to speak without the "accent." Kachru terms the responsibility "attitudinal readjustment" (67). The question of the standards becomes easily challenging in a pluralistic environment. English diversifies and makes us reconsider its role and its active users.

In order to respond to these recent challenges, the field of Rhetoric and Composition has been shifting its lines of inquiries. Atkinson comments on the need to broaden the conceptual scope of second language writing beyond its usual pedagogical concerns. We need to forge links with "current and emerging areas of local, global, and political concerns that are part of the landscape in the 21st century" (15). All of us within the field should engage with real-life issues we encounter in the classroom; the field itself is part of such a vibrant environment. Likewise, we consequently change our conception of the standards due to the changing situations around us.

In this chapter, I have systematized historical beginnings of the scholarly division between the two closely interrelate fields. In brief, it has been ascertained that the separate placement of the ESL and native students does not alleviate the writing problems that ESL

students encounter. On the contrary, it has only resulted in the aggravation of those issues and unnecessary frustration by the both parties. I also investigated the socio-political impact of the binaries; moreover, I have questioned how our perception of the ESL students' performance in classes changes when we reify binaries. In particular, I tied the connection between the labels and the standards of English. In the ensuing discussion, I will look at the standards from the position of teaching writing.

CHAPTER 4

NEW COMPOSITION CLASSROOM

<u>Modified teaching practices in a Composition classroom</u>

This chapter is focused on the modified concept of error in various students'

writings. First, I will explicate the significance and necessity of a modified approach;

moreover, this modified approach changes our teaching practices because we slightly shift

our teaching focus. In order to fully present a modified approach towards teaching and

errors, I will use the paper prompts that we assign in ENGL 101 classes. Then, I will modify

slightly their requirements and focus so that they fit a translingual approach. In particular,

this discussion will corroborate my argument to teach our students to negotiate fixed

standards. In addition, findings will reveal that negotiation toward errors inform us that

writing, as a powerful medium, should serve the students to create a space for their

personal ideas and values.

In order to present how to reconfigure the concept of error, my discussion will

mostly focus on peer review sessions. Peer reviews are crucial part of the writing process.

I will use peer reviews because they teach our students the following two lessons: what

should and/or what should not be corrected in their peers' papers, and how to respond to

their peers' papers in an appropriate way.

My discussion calls for the new: a new understanding of writing, a new predication

on the standards, teaching practices, and students' and teacher's identities. Most

importantly, my discussion aims toward a new understanding of what good writing *is,* and

what a new definition of writing *does* in a Composition classroom, made up of varied

classroom participants. Still, I prefer to use the term "modified" rather than the "new" definitions or the new conceptions. The main reason is because the "new" implies completely erasing the old practices, which does not work for the translingual approach. I am leaning towards an all-inclusive approach, which is comprehensive; it is inclusive of all national and international language and cultural varieties. Therefore, in my discussion, I call for *modifications* of the following: of the existing teaching practices, of what writing is, and what student writers do while writing today under the new socio-political and cultural circumstances. Changing teaching practices will demonstrate that writing is a social medium where students express their personal and social values and interests.

The ways in which teachers grade the papers reflects how they view the standards of the language. Again, we can pose a question what should be taken as the standard that Composition teachers should apply to evaluate their students' papers. Bartholomae clearly says that Composition teachers need to take the native English students in a broad social context arguing that even the native students may produce the work that is off the track: "to understand the significance of "error," we need to "return attention to institutional processes of selection and exclusion" (68). Moreover, we need to evaluate students' work on the content rather than formal and abstract rules, as is often the case. Horner underlines that we need to refocus lightly on what we think about the students' errors: "As long as students are judged not for what they write or think but how they write (with correct spelling), no "political" controversy need ensue" (*Terms of Work for Composition. A Materialist Critique* 77). In a multicultural setting that we encounter on a daily basis, one-sided approach towards grading can hardly be justified. Rather, teachers should work to develop students' open stance to differences around them in their papers.

The question of error is a focal one; students will thus change their long-held perception of error while assessing their peers' papers. In that way, students will start challenging the official rules that prescribe what good writing is. When teachers adopt a modified understanding of error, all students will start doing the same; students will start thinking beyond the requirements of the official syllabus, which should be one of the teachers' goals. Once again, such flexible teaching practices do not mean that there are no official standards to be complied with; on the contrary, it means that our teaching practices should demonstrate that the official standards and the course requirements change over time. Also, I will present the role of the Writing Center in our discussion of error because we should also view the Center in a new light; students and teachers will benefit to the utmost, if they regard the Writing Centers as the places to gain new writing ideas.

What can be considered as "error" in diverse students' writings

The syllabus is the official document that the students are to consult on all the official requirements of the class. Still, this document can be modified to a certain extent so as to introduce students to the presence of others. To illustrate, in the syllabus section of my ENGL 101 syllabus called "standards of work," I included the following section: "This is a college level course. You may be working with the students who come from your own or a foreign country. I expect both parties to do the class activities in a polite manner." The main reason why I inserted the sentence on diverse students is to facilitate respectful ways that classroom practices are to be conducted. While doing the peer review, all the students will hopefully know about the presence of one another, which could preclude some possible

embarrassment about the ignorance of each other's cultural or any other differences. In a nutshell, I wanted to promote mutual cooperation and respect in the classroom.

Peer review activities are designed to be conducted as collaborative work between the students. While doing the revision in such a classroom, collision of different students' voices may occur. Lu explains there is the voice of a "foreign" and a "native" student writer ("Professing Multiculturalism: The Politics of Style in the Contact Zone" 454). A "foreign" student writer may suppose that he is someone lacking "proper" English; thus, he may be less powerful than his counterparts. Again, power relations are at play. The formal insistence on "correct" English may create embarrassment with non-English students. Judging by their non-English language and cultural background, they may assume they are less competent to provide an extensive feedback to their American peers who have been trained to expect a formal feedback in terms of the writing style. One of the models to do peer review is by giving students a formal sheet of paper with the questions they are to focus on. Usually, such formal feedback covers questions on style, or meeting all the paper requirements in terms of length, citation, depth of research, or the genres practiced. However, I am most concerned with the question of proofreading and abstract grammatical correctness. The requirement on the "proper" English grammar should be flexible.

Modified teachers' practices can alleviate writing issues to a certain extent. The students usually comment on technical issues to be fixed. However, the dilemma that arouses a larger question is: what should all the students do if they notice a grammatical error, or even "incomprehensibility" in their peers' writings? As a response, we can simply ask all the students to shift their focus on their peers' "unusual" features in writing, unless

it obstructs understanding of the content, of course. I also ask them to discuss or write a short reflection about the aspects of their peers' styles that deviate from the style of the native-English students. Native-English students usually do not struggle with grammar or word choice. However, their non-English peers often have difficulty in making correct word orders in a sentence trying to explain complex concepts. Above all, very often ESL students' issues result in awkward word choices. In short, I gear towards all students' active engagement with their peers' errors.

There is a list of possible options how to treat students' errors. One possible resolution may be that teachers give an option to non-English students to provide a footnote, or even a small, less official note. Canagarajah considers an idea of a footnote as a form of compromise as it acknowledges that the writer is aware of using the structure in a peculiar way for a unique rhetorical purpose (610). So, "unusual" grammar is used for a specific purpose— to convey the meaning important to students. As we see, students may reshape the official standards when there are not enough options available for them. In particular, Lu and Canagarajah have done an extensive research on how and why to negotiate errors. Sometimes, because students' backgrounds are so diverse, the standards of Written English may even be inadequate for their writing purposes. Even for the teachers who are unwilling to modify their teaching practices, the idea of a footnote should be most easily applicable in a classroom. Using a footnote as a possible resolution of this thorny issue means that we negotiate the old and the new standards. Moreover, we all use a footnote as a valid convention of academic writing while doing our own research. Footnote as a type of negotiation should be treated as a sign of independent and critical writing. While using a footnote, students insert new knowledge and values into their texts.

After peer review sessions, students can craft a short one-page reflection paper on the lesson learned in an "unusual" paper. Particularly, they can think about the reasons why error should be forgivable or unforgivable. The main point I am conveying is that all students should be receptive toward their peers' "deviations" in writing—differences in writing.

Notions of "expertise" in writing are social constructions. Canagarajah explains that grammar is ideological ("The Place of World Englishes in Composition: Pluralization Continued" 609). Because of discrepancy between "good" and "bad" writing, students feel pressed that they have to produce "error-free" writing. If teachers discover why their students use a strange structure, they will reveal hidden motives behind "deviant" structure. I would not call it "strange" or "peculiar" but "new." It is a new structure because it has been invented by a student for a particular reason. We should enable students to use grammar purposefully instead of opting for the solutions imposed on them. Those creative skills develop students' awareness that they can openly express their unique ideas; while doing so, they do not need to be mainly preoccupied with "correctness" in writing only.

In my discussion, it is very important to distinguish what error is. While teaching, I try not to regard every "deviation" from the norms as error to be corrected immediately. I teach the students to do the same. Rather, I try to focus my attention on how the assigned text, or a students' paper communicates to the readers in the classroom. For this reason, teachers should encourage students to preoccupy themselves with strategies of appropriate communication. The students' personal voice should be at the forefront of their writings; it is the student whose ideas matter. Therefore, while doing peer review,

students should focus on the following aspects: how their peers voice the paper, how their peers' ideas communicate in the paper, and finally, how their peers express their voices in terms of genre and style. While doing the reflection on peer review, I ask them to ignore the errors for some time, and to focus on the ideas; I ask them to elaborate on the nature, purpose, and the importance of those ideas to them.

We should now redefine what good editing skills are. Lu says that good editing skills help the students to become critical reviewers who think deeply about error ("Professing Multiculturalism: The Politics of Style in the Contact Zone" 443). Teachers should start combining editing skills with the students' voice expressed; how those two correlate and why. Furthermore, editing can help students to clearly distinguish which errors matter. Lu correctly explains why we should reconfigure editing skills. Traditionally defined, editing skills are designed to free the paper from technical errors. Students can really benefit from editing skills if they combine them with content—with the students' voice and ideas expressed.

If we focus exclusively on students' "incorrect" grammar, we could assume that any "strange" sentence is the result of students' incompetence in English. In such a predetermined scenario, ESL students will certainly make "errors" to be corrected. It seems that their native unique resources prevent them from mastering "correct" grammar. Even while doing peer review, ESL students may believe that their papers have to be necessarily corrected in every single detail. It is because ESL students are always regarded in terms of their proficiency in English. However, not every instance of nonstandard usage by a student is error; sometimes it is, Canagarajah says, an active choice motivated by important cultural

and ideological considerations ("The Place of World Englishes in Composition: Pluralization Continued" 609). Students actually evaluate what works and what does not work for them in order to present important ideas; cultural or ideological nature. I had a student from Saudi Arabia who passionately wanted to write the paper on the position of women driving in that country. Saudi Arabia is the only country in the world that prohibits women from driving. Of course, that paper was emotionally loaded because he talked about his immediate female family members. So, I had to intervene by saying that he should try to brainstorm his ideas first, and do the paper without thinking about the errors. Later on, I told him that he would benefit a lot from the peer review where his peers will comment on how to express the ideas in a more persuasive way to convey his emotions. That Saudi student critically presented the pros and cons of women prohibition from driving a car in that country. In certain cases, students' "errors" can be ascribed to students' rhetorical independence and critical thinking, which is certainly an advantage. That is one of the reasons more why I stress the importance of giving the students some sort of writing freedom. This writing freedom actually shows that our students cannot benefit much if we strictly divide form and content in students' writings; conversely, we need to embrace a holistic approach towards the texts students compose.

So far, I have elaborated on the significance of a modified approach. At this point of my discussion, I am about to provide one specific example on the focus of the feedback sheet in peer review sessions. The Multi-Genre Personal Narrative paper is the first paper on any memorable students' experience. The very name of the paper says that students will be navigating through a multitude of genres telling a personal story. Hence, we should put down "choosing appropriate genres that correspond to the writers' ideas," instead of

"respect the conventions of the genre." In that way, we give the freedom to them to freely express what they think without being preoccupied too much on fixed genre conventions. The next modification may be in terms of coherence. Instead of saying "tell a coherent, interesting story across multiple genres," we should put down "tell the story using multiple genres that the speakers tend to use that speak about the ideas they feel strongly about." Of course, we should always insist on a logical coherence of ideas.

Next, we should say that we expect a full elaboration on the new perspective that students gained. In addition, we should expect their elaboration on how the others students' language resources helped them to enrich their resources. We need to teach students to draw upon their peers' resources. The next requirement that says "give yourself and each of your characters real personality within the genre" should be rephrased because full personality should be the focus anyway; we learn from others. Also, the following requirement "meet formal requirements and including the correct number of genres" may even confuse the students because they know that they have to have a good choice of the genres that match the ideas of the persons involved. We do not want to impose only the usage of the genres found in one ENGL 101 textbook. In contrast, we want to move beyond, on those found from the other students in a real life. We can direct students to their diverse American, or international peers. So, students do not need to be told that they have to observe the genre conventions because they should be aware of that requirement stated in the prompt. The requirement on proofreading can be a bit rephrased by saying that we expect them to submit a neat paper so that it does not obstruct comprehension.

I now move on to the second paper to exemplify some modifications. It is called Feature Article Paper where students need to do preliminary research by interviewing various people. While interviewing, they base off of communicative skills from the first paper I just touched upon. In the FA paper, in the feedback sheet we should tell the students that the style and conventions of the magazine are not our primary goal, but on the events. FA is not a completely research-based paper, so students should not be obstructed with the insistence on those requirements. We should focus on the depth of research instead, and what they get from it. The requirement that says "make sure you punctuate your quotes correctly" should be rephrased. We should put down "pay attention to the quotes so that your voice and your ideas are comprehensible to the other students." The requirement that says "show your personality and avoid stuffy language while still being professional" should be rephrased. Sometimes, the language has to be stuffy. So, it can be frustrating to the students. Students simply do not have time in classes to focus on their peers' progress while being focused on catching all their errors. The notion of error is relative.

We also need to refocus on the "errors" made by native English students. I will now refer to one American student "error" that I had to figure out how to respond to. Namely, the student wanted to apply his knowledge of genres in a journalist report. He wanted to express how journalists do their writing. His whole report was with irregular paragraphs of different length. I asked him about the reasons why he did an irregular style. His response was that his ideas have to match the style of the paragraphs. Such an irregular style is a journalist feature. So, I was at a loss how to assess his writing. Now I understand that he wanted to focus on his content; I could not mark his papers as "incorrect."

Is the Writing Center the place to fix "errors" only?

Writing is a socially recursive process. I start my discussion by referring to Lisa Ede's article on the social aspect of thinking and writing: "As long as thinking and writing are regarded as inherently individual, social activities, writing centers can never be viewed as anything more than pedagogical fix-it shops to help those who, for whatever reason, are unable to think and write on their own" (7). I want to stress the collaborative aspect of teaching writing. The Writing Center is a crucial link between the students and their teachers to promote more effective learning for all. Not only is effective learning the goal of the Center, however. All students should regard the Center as the learning and teaching place where they will most smoothly overcome the process of transition to a new college environment; it is a supportive place for all. All the students, particularly freshmen, struggle to get to grips with the new requirements posed by their writing classes.

But, this is a new kind of transition—the transition from the old writing practices, and standards to the new college environment. Nevertheless, the problem lies in the fact that some students, particularly ESL students, regard the Center as the place where their errors are "fixed." In that way, they regard writing as a solitary activity where they produce a piece of writing that needs to be fixed. But, writing is a collaborative effort done by the students in the classroom through peer reviews and class activities. Because the function of the Center needs to be clarified, I will now discuss the activities that can be slightly modified; in that way, students will redefine the Center in a new light—as a close link between the students and the tutors who will help them with the ideas. In particular, I will

be focusing how the activities of the Center reflect what "good" writing is, and what errors are.

While in the Center, students feel anxious to reproduce the official standards of writing. The main point is that we need to redefine the main function of the Center. Lu says that some Composition teachers send students who have "problems" with "usage" to the Writing Centre. Such "resolutions" can sometimes leave both the teachers and the students frustrated ("Professing Multiculturalism: The Politics of Style in the Contact Zone" 443). At the beginning of the course, students are encouraged to visit the Center. In practice, the Center leans more towards ESL writers who struggle in the writing process. If those students fail to produce an "error-free" piece of writing, they easily become frustrated, which impedes their progress. They may assume they are unable to come to grips with the official requirements. In addition, the very name of the Center may imply that "correct" writing may be the focus of the Center. Although the main purpose of the Writing Center is to alleviate all kinds of writing problems students may have, unfortunately, some ESL students continue to regard its purpose in a limiting way.

Again, the root of the problem lies in the official standards. If writing is defined in terms of the norms of English only, then the Center is delineated likewise. In the same essay, Lu further states that the problem is that Writing Centers are the places where students need to "prove" themselves to those at the Center by meeting the standards (Lu 457). Because students are preoccupied with the correctness, they easily lose focus on the writing process itself. Usually, students think that "good" writing means writing with no editing errors. Unfortunately, some ESL students regard the Center as the place where their

writing issues disappear overnight. Those ESL students actually equalize the Center with mastering editing skills. If we try to "fix" the students' issues by sending them to the Writing Centre, such a treatment is superficial. Instead of "fixing" errors, we should treat the issues by a modified methodology. The principal point is that ESL students will become better writers by visiting the Center for new ideas. The acquisition of writing skills is a long-term process; if we only "fix" errors, it is a short-term treatment. In brief, writing issues need to be treated as a long-term process.

In my teaching practices, I stress the importance of the Writing Center as the place where tutors talk about the following: They discuss students' writing backgrounds, writing practice of ESL students, and the topics the students feel strongly about. We should also work to increase the number of native English students in the Center. Of course, we want to fully integrate their rich dialect and cultural backgrounds into the Center. In that way, we facilitate the exchange of their resources with their international peers. The crucial lesson to teach ESL students is that writing is a process. I was not taught that way back in my home country; I was taught to produce the "ideal" piece of writing with the first attempt, with no drafting at all. Teachers and the tutors at the Center should closely examine students' earlier drafts. By looking at the entire previous writing experience of the students, we can most easily diagnose their writing gaps. Fundamentally, students' fears and frustrations that they have to meet all the requirements will be lessened.

I will now offer practical tactics how to increase the number of students who visit the Center. During the one-to-one conferences, we can diagnose which students will definitely benefit from the services of the Center. If they have no ideas on what to write

about, we can tell them to go to the Center. Next, if they are unsure of their writing, or if they need more feedback on their drafts, they should definitely check out the services of the Center. When students visit the Center, we can instruct the students to focus on the sources that can help them to gain more ideas. The most beneficial sources may be visual genres, or the conversation with a tutor.

<u>Writing as a social practice to promote multiculturalism</u>

Since teachers and students work collaboratively in a dynamic campus environment, teachers should refer students to check out the events that promote diversity awareness. I highly value the attention towards social acts because students become fully involved about the live cultures among them. The point is to turn students' writing weaknesses into writing strengths to a certain degree. I will now exemplify my point using the Feature Article paper that requires students to do the campus research on a small basis. I did mention this paper earlier in the chapter, but now it is with a different focus. Namely, students are required to research and to interview students they meet on the event. Moreover, they have to plug in the quotes from the interview they conducted. For example, while working on the FA paper, teachers can encourage both native English speakers and international students to pick the topics that they know little about or some controversial ones. This means that students should refrain from always picking common events or topics that deal with sports only, or with popular places in the town for hanging out. Of course, these topics are acceptable, but the majority of the students tend to pick very similar topics with little imagination.

Rather, students should be encouraged to be curious about the other students'

cultures present in the classroom. The "real world" outside the classroom is multilingual.

Plus, we work with a plural language—English; English possesses multiplicities. I envision

a classroom as a multicultural site; teachers should profess multiculturalism because the

classroom is a live cultural site. Bartholomae reminds us that there is no need "to import

'multiple cultures' via anthologies; they are there, in the classroom, once the institutions

become willing to pay that kind of attention to student writing" (14-15). Our multilingual

students enrich our classrooms. Therefore, students should check out the diversity events

like WVU's International Tea or Diversity Week. Those events can be on different topics.

For example, International Tea can be on the Asian culture, while the Diversity Week can

be on the African-American culture. In that way, American students pay attention to the

international events that raise their cultural knowledge. They all learn together. Judging by

my teaching experience, students at WVU are very curious about differences, if properly

instructed why they can benefit from new experience. Later on, when asked to reflect on

the FA paper, students will mention the skills they picked up from the research done;

moreover, students will elaborate on the reasons why they decided to pitch the topic on the

International Tea. Students will mention diverse persons they met, the conversation they

had with them, or just the fact that they were immersed in the Asian world while still being

in the U.S. Among other things, students learn to negotiate their own cultural backgrounds;

American students negotiate their American culture while reflecting on the Asian culture.

Similarly, diverse students do the same depending on the culture they come from.

<u>Various ways to practice genres</u>

Because English is made up of so many varieties, each variety brings its own uniqueness that we should incorporate in our teaching practices. Also, writing is not uniform because of various writers who enrich writing using their unique codes. Our students' writing is multilingual because writers use multiple resources. Accordingly, multilingual writers are not conditioned to write only in one particular way; rather, they are rhetorically creative. In fact, it is their very multilingualism that may account for their creativity. Canagarajah argues that they are endowed with that mysterious "double vision" that enables them to understand the possibilities and constraints of competing traditions of writing, and can carve out a space for themselves within conflicting discourses ("Toward a Writing Pedagogy of Shuttling between Languages: Learning from Multilingual Writers" 602). What they choose to present in their writing varies across diverse writing situations; students tend to achieve their specific interests. Multilingual students are not limited to using the resources of one language only.

On the other hand, I pose the question: what can teachers do to promote monolingual students' creativity. In this case, English itself will be my example. I will be using the Multi Genre Personal Narrative paper to exemplify my point about the skills of all the students. Instead of insisting that students have to use at least five genres in the paper, we should adapt the requirements to the students. American students can freely use their own national dialect diversity to express genres in the paper. Depending on which state the student comes from, he can pick what to focus on. West Virginians have their own dialect resources, for example. English with all its national varieties is their writing resource. On

the other hand, I had a Brazilian student who was not familiar what genres are at all, and who could not relate to them in her personal life and experience. On the other hand, American students usually have no difficulty in recognizing the genres, because they use them very actively on a daily basis (e.g. cell phone texts, facebook messaging, or emails). Therefore, we need to take into account the fact that students' social backgrounds are not the same. So, after trying to explain what genres are, we can ask our diverse students to brainstorm what event impacted them immensely. Judging by their ideas, we will start making sense of them, or we will ask them to attempt to organize their bits and pieces into one coherent whole. In that way, we allow them to make a space for themselves in their writing.

In that way, we do not condition their writing with a Western style of writing with its well-known genre types mentioned above. Instead, we let the students relate to their cultures in order to master the genres. Judging by the cultural background of the student, we will see what genres students tend to relate to in the paper; Western genres do not always fit all students' personal experiences. That Brazilian student related to personal narratives that her mother taught her in childhood; she could not plug the genre of facebook messages anywhere in the paper. Students' texts are then imbued with students' cultural codes. Canagarajah calls such a text a hybrid ("The Place of World Englishes in Composition: Pluralization Continued" 612). So, teachers should be lenient and understanding in terms of the students' choice of the genre. In that way, we promote students' rhetorical capabilities. As we see, the papers we assign provide possibilities for students' different linguistic and cultural resources. Students can choose different options at their disposal. In a nutshell, we want to recognize and appreciate all students' efforts.

There are multiple genres in English writing that diverse student writers understand differently. Although the official teaching policies cannot be shifted quickly, teachers manifest whether they prefer to stick to the old, or a modified way of teaching.

<u>Role of assigning varied historical texts</u>

We should encourage all students to regard texts in multiple ways. Canagarajah argues that, contrary to popular belief, texts are not simply context-bound or context-sensitive; texts are context-transforming ("The Place of World Englishes in Composition: Pluralization Continued" 603). Students should regard their writing activity as their personal investment in their personal interests or even some issues. Their personal stakes should govern their writing practices. Again, I relate to an ENGL 101 example. The third paper we assign is called Text in Context. Namely, students are asked to pick a historical text and to analyze it from a particular historical period it dates from. Moreover, they need to focus on the message the text conveys in order to go beyond the literal meaning of the text. Students are free to choose any text: movies, songs, or even a video clip with some historical relevance. Finally, they have to conduct and plug in the extensive research findings in the text.

Instead of just analyzing the text from a historical point of view, students can engage critically to reconfigure the standards so that those standards suit their personal identities. Students can also refocus their attention on examining how the writers from past periods crafted their texts; they can examine the features of the texts. They should carefully examine the ruling standards of the time, and compare it with the current ones. Students themselves should decide for themselves. When they pick a historical text, they should use

it for their own purposes. In that way, texts are not static. In other words, teachers should strive to develop critical writers of the existing historical texts.

But, we cannot advance communication in writing unless we properly modify which types of texts we assign for classroom discussions. Teachers can assign some other less-known authors that are not so frequently discussed or covered in colleges; those can be some minority authors that may fight for their rights in their texts, or some suppressed ethnic groups rarely read about, or even some famous author presented through a different perspective. Therefore, the texts teachers assign are not to be treated as texts only. Rather, the students should focus on certain issues that the text conveys. By the same token, students should discover how their personal identities relate to the text. Of course, students' critical engagement with the text should be the imperative and our main preoccupation.

Or, teachers can discuss some controversial recent issues that would make students think beyond Western values and culture only; those are the texts that would target to promote diversity in writing. All students, regardless of their ethnic origin, should be aware that they are responsible agents and that their opinions matter. Finally, their personal opinion can influence how others think in the classroom. Teachers and students should work for a more just world by being open to thorny issues around them.

Is the future translingual?

As I emphasized at the outset of the discussion, teachers should not tolerate students' ignorance or refusal to submit a coherent piece of writing; in contrast, teachers should have an understanding that only in certain instances some students may be allowed

to view the official standards in less fixed terms. So far, I have attempted to explain why

students, especially ESL students may be inclined to do so. And yet, this doesn't mean that

students are allowed to use vernacular varieties in all their writings. In contrast, my

discussion has revealed that the idea of "good" writing style is relative. Additionally, it is

possible to negotiate the official standards. Lu's idea on a footnote is pretty appealing to me

because it is easily applicable in practice. While negotiating, both students and teachers

benefit: teachers teach the students to be creative; additionally, we teach the students that

their writings do not always have to be officially "right" in terms of grammar. Sometimes, it

seems to me that students' only preoccupation is to sound "correct" without thinking

beyond those formal requirements.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

I launched the thesis describing the current status of English. A various body of research I consulted revealed that English has been widely expanding worldwide. The introductory discussion on English triggered off so many new questions to me that I could do nothing but set off on an exciting and a bit daring research track in pursuit of deeper understanding and possible resolution. The study was daring because my focal question relied heavily on the translingual approach that is still being examined for its practicality by Composition teachers in the U.S. academy. So, in the course of my study, my field of inquiry expanded vigorously, as I dug up more and more research. After the main corpus of research was compiled, the full complexity of the subject matter I was investigating became apparent, as well as its significance for both Composition teachers and all their students in today's teaching environment. Because the principal question had many-fold interpretations that I had to consult in order to see the problem in its full complexity, I realized that giving at least one preliminary answer concerning the question of the norms of the Written English required the consulting of several disciplines. Let me illustrate. As Chapter 3 covered, I could not but consult the field of TESOL that has so many disciplinary ties to the field of Rhetoric and Composition in order to penetrate deeply into the historical complexity and significance of the question. It became obvious to me that the interdisciplinary research would have to be conducted. As a result, a number of research directions were pursued, each of which provided a wealth of insights relevant to the question under scrutiny.

Chapter 2 made a case for the new translingual approach on language differences; this approach is still in its inception. I thoroughly examined what kind of language differences there were reported today and how those differences occurred. A huge body of research identified that the expansion of English is a purely social phenomenon happening currently across the globe. In short, Chapter 2 gathered and systematized knowledge germane to language diversity in general, and the standards of Written English in particular. Particularly, the diversification of English into national and international varieties is a product of globalization, which hugely complicated my discussion. Similarly, those language varieties complicate classroom practices and the ways in which teachers should evaluate diverse student's performance.

I am now about to explicate in detail what the research conducted in Chapter 2 revealed. In order to fully give light to the research problem, I started from the main research finding that traditional teaching practices are at odds with the current dynamic U.S. Composition classroom. Since I view this problem through a translingual approach, I will now examine what its main proponents claim about its viability. Horner and his main collaborators claim that this approach teaches language users to assume and expect that each new instance of language use brings the need and opportunity to develop new ways of using language and to draw on a range of language resources (308). This means that teachers should embrace every new instance of the language use in their classrooms. The new language use, in the form of a vernacular, may sound "unusual." However, this does not mean that it is wrong or incorrect. After I systematized my findings on the language varieties, a solid base for my main question was done; language varieties, as products of globalization, further complicate the standards of Written English. It became evident to me

that the need for a shifting nature of the norms was immediate. The following chapters

developed my main question, offering a wide range of teaching implications. Some of the

implications are of purely teaching and professional nature, while some of them are of

purely socio-political nature that had to be integrated into my discussion.

Chapter 3 devoted to a historical track of the main research question. Also, research

findings of the other fields had to be consulted. I examined the beginnings of the academic

schism that resulted in the separation of ESL and native-English students. Similarly, this rift

implied the separation of their teachers, which is unacceptable in today's environment.

Matsuda argues that the "disciplinary division of labor serves as the dominant metaphor

for the relationship between Composition and ESL" (700). Because those two fields were

separated, the chapter targeted to heal the divides caused by the division. The chapter

aimed to show that ESL students have always been part and parcel of a Composition

classroom, and that there exist no special "ESL methodology." Instead, the study

demonstrated that it is only understanding and recognition required by teachers dealing

with those students. I used the bulk of the research accomplished by Paul Matsuda who did

a tremendous amount of research on the schism between the two interrelated fields:

Composition and TESOL. Without this chapter, chances for the full argument support would

have been slim.

Chapter 4 laid emphasis on the full practicality of the translingual approach. It was

quite a challenge to me regarding the scarcity of the practical examples available. Besides

providing the practical classroom examples based on that approach, this chapter fully

elaborated on what "error" is in students' writings. The discussion on "errors" was

pertinent to my main research question of the standards of Written English. Specifically, due to the increasing influx of diverse students, teachers can be bewildered which criteria to apply to assess their performance. By the same token, Canagarajah says that not every instance of nonstandard usage by a student is an unwitting error; sometimes it is, an active choice motivated by important cultural and ideological considerations (609). I used his argument as the basis to expand my discussion of what "error" is. Sometimes, teachers should negotiate which standards to apply, in the same way as we ask our students to negotiate.

Overall, a main discerning feature of the proposed translingual approach may be its flexibility—it aspires to equally include *all* the participants with all their resources. As regards potential effectiveness, my thesis presented only one small experiment of what *could* be done with this approach in the classroom—to alleviate all of our students' issues, particularly the issues of ESL ones. Yet, if this practice-inspired and theory-driven approach is to be accorded any credibility, then at least a few sentences addressing its effectiveness in the classroom ought to be promulgated. I started experimenting with this approach the moment my students' "incomprehensible" writings started to make a very logical sense to me. I realized why they make writing errors, and how to make sense of them. The students displayed a very positive attitude towards this approach. This experience gave rise to the insight that we should not take anything for granted. Later on, I realized that its success could be attributed to the considerably varied classroom environment we face today. As the time passed by, I managed to pinpoint a couple of areas that needed further attention.

Firstly, the approach focuses on the students' strengths focusing on what they could do with their resources. It does not only aim to fill the students' gaps but to allow an open access to their, still unexplored resources. In the assignment prompts I modified so as to fit the approach, we concluded the following: the students view the paper requirements and language norms through their own perspective, which is very often culturally driven. Those insights hopefully confirm that the approach has a full potential for alleviating all the students' writing issues, particularly ESL ones. However, in order to be accorded full validation, it has to endure further testing with different age groups and various teaching contexts. In the meanwhile, we need to give due attention to a host of new queries opened by it so far. They should be considered in this concluding chapter together with the issues that remain to be addressed in subsequent research. Accordingly, we cannot talk about the conclusions but about the work to be continued; it is the work where teachers build their and their colleagues' work and experience to continue developing teaching methods and practices within the translingual approach. By the same token, the following lines of inquiry for the future research all derive from and draw upon the translingual approach.

The need to revise and update the official documents on the Students' Rights

I did emphasize the importance of including *all* the students' language differences; in order to support that claim, I used the official document; it is the official document on recognizing the students' national varieties; those are differences in dialects. While that document is crucial for the national varieties of English, it still does need to be updated in accordance with the current polyvalent dynamics. Canagarajah pointed out the need for such a revision. Namely, the document does focus mostly on the national African-American

and Chicano varieties. There was no mention on English, however. The document was first made as the official acknowledgment of the African-American and Chicano vernaculars in the classroom. However, as I mentioned many times so far, social and cultural circumstances do shift over time. We cannot say, nonetheless, that this document has been outdated. Rather, it needs to be properly updated with the new emerging need—for the proper inclusion of the international varieties of English. Therefore, future research should be done on how to implement the document in our teaching.

How to accommodate the national varieties of English?

Since a huge amount of research is available on Englishes, the future research should definitely be expanded on the national varieties of English. The second chapter of my thesis elaborates on them, but the future research can be done how to integrate them into the classroom, together with the international varieties. In my thesis, those national varieties have been analyzed to what an extent they complicate our understanding of the norms. Similarly, in his extensive study on the richness of the Appalachian dialects, Hazen examines the issue of dialect diversity. He also mentions the difficulty teachers face with the language assessment of the students with the U.S. vernacular. Given the U.S. dialect diversity, it can be a particularly challenging task to assess the performance of those students. In particular, Hazen says that in order to make the "correct" choice for the sentence, the vernacular speaker must make a counterintuitive linguistic choice and select a socially acceptable structure instead of a linguistically well-formed vernacular structure (298). In today's classroom, unfortunately, the vernacular student has to comply with the standard "norm." In order to do well in class, he has to produce the "pure" paper whose

sentences are free from vernacular. Only in that way can his paper be accepted by the teacher. Unfortunately, such teaching practices make a clear distinction between a "standard" and vernacular English speaker. However, in my thesis, within the translingual approach, those national U.S. varieties have been defined as a unique way to acknowledge the language resources of our American students. Those national varieties are particularly important because we need to recognize the language background of our American students. In that way, we recognize the richness of English and the richness of the American culture. Moreover, those national varieties highly differ among themselves, depending on the U.S. region the student comes from. The research on the national varieties can help us in our further research of the non-English languages, and their national varieties.

Closer ties need to be made between the related fields

The third findings relates to the ways in which the fields of ESL, TESOL, and Composition intersect: in particular, the fields of Composition and the field of TESOL. There are possible avenues for future research, though. Particularly, more research should be done on how to reconnect those two fields on a larger basis. I will illustrate some possible ideas for their reconnection: Those ideas can vary starting from the common teaching practices of the teachers, their professional developments, or some joint projects on how to better meet the needs of all the students. We should better link the Intensive English programs with the Composition classes, ENGL 101 and ENGL 102. Those intensive English classes should be designed in accordance with the Composition teachers. In general, teachers should cooperate more, because their lines of inquiry converge. After all, they both deal with the issues that students have; Composition teachers can point to the issues

they have been tackling while teaching ESL students. Accordingly, the teachers in the Intensive English programs should make necessary adjustments.

One of the ways to reconnect is through the Writing Center. While being enrolled in the Intensive English Programs, they should be encouraged to visit it. By doing so, students will realize that their visit to the Center is not a requirement, but the way to better their writing skills. While I think that the American tutors are an excellent solution, non-English tutors could be engaged as well. Namely, while working with the American tutors, non-English students are exposed to the target culture, which is particularly important for them. In that way, they learn the culture in a more relaxing way. On the other hand, non-English tutors recognize the issues that ESL students go through. So, they can more easily relate to those issues. In short, we should try to reconnect similar fields in every possible way.

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APPENDIX 1

<u>Modified ENGL 101 assignment prompts</u>

I am now about to present modified assignment prompts in ENGL101 classes. My goal is to present how the requirements of the Multi-Genre Personal Narrative and the Feature Article paper can be slightly modified so that they fit the translingual approach. The modifications will mainly deal with the research, genres, and genre conventions. The main reason why I opted for the assignment prompts to exemplify translingual approach is because in the assignment prompts we actually require students to comply with our rules. So, I will use the already existing requirements of those two papers to slightly modify them. Moreover, the main reason why I opted for the Multi-Genre Personal Narrative is because every other paper that we assign in a certain way builds off the MGPN; this paper is the basic paper where students pick up necessary knowledge of what the genres are, what their conventions are, how to use them, and how to plug them in their personal narratives.

For the Feature Article, students learn to do some preliminary research that will help them pick up primary research skills, which will be necessary throughout their college life and beyond. Furthermore, these two papers will demonstrate fully how all the classroom participants can be successfully integrated into the classroom practices so that effective learning is promoted. Classroom participants include both national and international students and their teachers of different language and cultural backgrounds; their backgrounds are rich resources to for more successful collaboration in the classroom. My final goal is to show that students will benefit from the teaching practices that aim to include all the language and cultural varieties of the students. To illustrate, within the

translingual approach, our teaching practices should target to include both national and international varieties of English; national varieties of English can be particularly interesting as teaching resources, especially when we start paying attention to dialect diversity around the country. On the other hand, international varieties can pose a challenge to the teachers because they complicate their understanding of the following: of the standards of Written English, students' assessment practices, and in general, our conceptions of good writing. Actually, both national and international varieties do complicate our understanding of what writing is. Obviously, those varieties challenge our teaching practices likewise. Because translingual approach is still new and unexplored in real teaching practices, it can be a difficult task to actually apply translingual approach in the classrooms. Even if we cannot apply this approach in its entirety, we can still try to facilitate learning and writing process to our diverse students in a polyvalent Composition classroom. It can be simple enough to have an open attitude towards all students' different backgrounds. Therefore, in short, I am using the two papers I mentioned to demonstrate my argument in a practically viable way.

Multi-Genre Personal Narrative Assignment Sheet

Purpose

For this assignment, you will select an important moment or memorable experience from you life, and tell your story using a wide variety of different genres. Since the knowledge of the genres is the focus of this paper, I expect you to explore the richness and diversity of the genre resources found in direct communication with the others. In order to explore the richness of the genres, good rapport with the others is important; this is also one of the main foci of the paper. The goals of this paper are three-fold: to write the narrative that reveals some important or memorable experience in your life to your audience, to show how that personal experience has helped you to better communicate with others, and lastly, how the communication with the others has enriched your language resources. You are free to select which persons have helped you most to establish such good communication skills. I also expect you to elaborate on what good communication is, why it is important today, and how to achieve good communication skills. You will notice that I particularly value the importance of good communication because good communication with others is absolutely necessary in order to accomplish your goals as a future scholar and professional. Also, direct communication with the others will expose you to language varieties spoken around you in terms of both national and international ones. Maybe the memorable experience you want to share with us includes the persons who speak some dialect of English, or even some international variety. Try paying attention to those while thinking how those language resources have increased your knowledge of the genres. Think about the genres that you might be using to express your ideas, and plug

them in the paper. There will be multiple genres at your disposal; they will be part of your language repertoire to tell your story in a more persuasive way to your readers.

Research

The main research resource for this assignment is not only yourself, but the resources that other persons might have. You should think about the ways in which the other persons may have enriched your resources in terms of language varieties. Try focusing on the other persons and provide extensive descriptions why they will be included in your paper, what impact they may have had on your experience. Those persons can be anyone from your environment that have had some important impact on your important experience. Try establishing and describing close connections between those persons and you. In particular, try telling to what an extent they have enriched your writing capacities. These are some of the activities that can spark your ideas:

- A short paper about a time in your life that you communicated well. Be very specific, and provide one particular example of this. Tell us when and where it occurred. However, I would like you to elaborate on how others helped you to gain such good communication skills. You can think about the ways in which you have changed while communicating with the others.

- Any free writes where you brainstorm about your family and friends who may be from your state or some other U.S. states, or maybe international friends. Since you are studying on the campus, think about the new friends you may have met whose life experience can spark your ideas for the paper.

Organization

When you have chosen a story idea, you will then choose the genres to tell your story. But, there is something even more than that. The genres will help you to convey your ideas in a better way. Do not assume that the mere practice of genres is the goal of this paper. Rather, the goal is to use those genres so that your ideas, which are of central importance, flow more smoothly. By using such a variety of genres, you will show that you have an awareness of the language resources used by the others. You need to use at least 5 different genres. However, while picking which genres to use, think about how the ideas so that they fit your choice of the genre, how the people you met with their resources helped you pick the genre, and how you yourself want to present the genres in this paper. There is no requirement which genres should be long, and which should be short for your paper. Try matching the genres meaningfully while fully elaborating on your personal reflection on the paper. You can see a full list of the genres in the book. And yet, you are not limited to use only those genres. You can be creative and find the other ones that you or your friends helped you further explore.

Reflection

This is the crucial part of your paper. When you choose your genres, make sure you find a way to include the new perspective that you have gained in that experience. But, there is also something even more that. Please elaborate on the ways in which you have gained a new horizon. Focus on the people who helped you to gain it, which parts of the communication has particularly helped you, and finally, how you are planning to draw on such new resources that you got. The main purpose is not only to communicate to your

audience, but to yourself as well. Try focusing on how a close collaboration between you and the other persons has improved your language and cultural resources.

Assessment

You will receive comments rather than a grade because you are expected to revise. You should know that writing is a recursive process.

- Choosing appropriate genres that fit your ideas in the narrative

- Using a variety of the genres from the book, or from other sources

- Reflecting on the new perspective and on the ways in which you got a new perspective

- Elaborating fully on your resources and the resources of others

- Neat and professional work

A note to the instructors

I grounded translingual approach in the paper prompts; they detail what the requirements and my expectations are. As you see, I did stick to the old requirements that served me only as the base to adapt the old approach. Let me elaborate my point. The first change I introduced is on the very purpose of the paper. Namely, the first requirement is that the writer focuses not only on his own communication skills, but also on how communication with others has helped him increase his language resources. Thus, I decentered the importance of a single writer and his single life experience. I wanted to focus their attention on the language varieties that the others may have. So, we should

decenter and deemphasize the singleness of our experience because we are working and living in the multi-voiced environment. Their peer may be from his home state, or from some other states, or from abroad. In each instance, while communicating with others, students should think about the actual communication established, on the resources that others have, on their language or dialect variety, on the cultural diversity that each U.S. state has, let alone the persons form abroad. Actually, I wanted to teach the students to become receptive to the others. It is important to exchange communication with the others in the community. In that way, teachers actually have more resources at their disposal when they ask students to brainstorm their ideas. We all know that the students may be embarrassed to talk only about themselves. If we shift that focus, some of them can be more eager to talk about their experience. We teach them that every communication with the others can broaden their horizons, only if they listen to what the others are talking about. We also emphasize that they benefit from the experience that others have been through.

Speaking of genres, we tell the students to go beyond the official requirements to comply with; students should explore their richness. But, the genres are to fit the ideas in their narrative, not the official requirements only. Sometimes, students are too much preoccupied to include a longer or a shorter genre forgetting that their ideas are at the forefront of the paper. We need to stress that genres are very important categories to be mastered in writing. Genres are not just official categories that share a common form, purpose, or content. They are much more than that. Genres are present everywhere around them in their daily life because people use them. Of course, each type of the genre has its recognizable features. And yet, we should tell them that those genre conventions are

changeable in time and space. We can ask the students to change those conventions especially while doing the peer review where they need to find the reasons why someone has used a "peculiar" style of the genre. In short, we should refocus on how the students can benefit from the paper while exploring all the varieties and options for their ideas.

APPENDIX 2

<u>Feature Article Assignment Sheet</u>

<u>Purpose</u>

For this project, you are going to choose an event or organization and write about it as if you were writing a feature article for a magazine. Your choice for the event is wide open. In your choice of the event, it would be convenient for you to make full use of the campus-wise possibilities. Therefore, since the campus at WVU is very big and offers diverse offers for you to choose from, your event should be something intriguing you would like to pursue more in your writing. This assignment will teach you how to do some preliminary research about the event by being actively involved in it through your communication skills. Next, you will learn to plug in the quotes from the interview into the paper. Therefore, you will definitely benefit from the good communication skills you developed in the MGPN.

<u>Research</u>

- Once again, I urge you to focus on the campus activities. There are tons to choose from. Try checking out all the events that promote new things, new encounters with the new knowledge. You can first check out the college newspaper, the Office of International Students and Scholars that always organize new encounters, WVU conversation partners, or WVU Up All Night. All those events are to expose you to the new experience. Of course, you can do any events on the campus that you see as your chance to be immersed into the new world.

- You should write a "Letter to the editor" to propose your project to me. Actually, you will advertise to me the event. Please give me the reasons why you benefited from the event.

- While attending, I would like you to observe others (why are they different, to what an extent are they different from your world, in which aspects are others different, how they behave—how their complete environment looks like).

- Most importantly, learn to communicate with the people involved in the event. If you conduct an interview with an officer from the OISS, ask him about the students that come from oversees, ask him about your possibilities to go abroad to school, and how you can benefit from it).

For example, you can go to the International Festival organized every fall. It is the fair where every country presents its culture. You could do some preliminary research about the event, go there to interview the students from the countries that you would like to visit, or that you are interested in. That experience can help you explore new interests in many ways. Some of the students there may be your peers. Most importantly, focus on their language backgrounds. In that way, you will expand your knowledge.

<u>Genre conventions</u>

Think about the magazine where you would publish your article. Or, you can advertise your event to the other students on the campus. Speaking of the genres, think about which genres are used by particular speakers from your interview and why. Also,

think about how the genre fits the voice of the speakers. How do the speakers express their voice?

Organization

First, choose your topic. Again, use the students on the campus as resources. You do not need to know them personally, but only to have the skills to interview them. If you are going to publish it in the college magazine, think about how your choice of the context can change other students' perceptions of the event. Once you conduct the interview, pick up sensual details, try organizing the paper in terms of the person's voice expressed, or how the person conveys his ideas, how he uses his genres, or which genres are important for the argument.

Assessment

You will be graded on:

- Writing style that fits the personal voice of the speakers.

- How the voice of the speakers is presented. Try using a persuasive style that fully says who the people from the interview are. Try elaborating on their resources.

- Depth of research—how you present the event, to what extent you were truly interested to know more about it. Since some of the things may be new to you, try doing preliminary research.

- Describe as much as you can, focus on the new features that you just learnt.

- Neat piece of writing.

Note to the instructors

Since FA is on the students' encounters with the others, this paper perfectly summarizes my main teaching modifications. I ask the students to actually explore how the new people have enriched their own resources. I am asking the students to check out what language resources his peer has. His African-American peer possesses rich dialect diversity, depending on the state he comes from. Why not presenting their resources to promote dialect diversity awareness? Students' active social involvement manifests that writing is a powerful medium to convey important social messages. We should teach the students to think beyond the official requirements; in terms of developing proofreading skills only, or formal stylistic features. Writing is on the real persons we meet every day. Those are the students who craft their unique personal narratives. FA is the perfect venue to publicize the new knowledge on resources to the others.

APPENDIX 3

Modified ENGL101 Text in Context Paper

       Text in Context is the third assignment taught in ENGL101 class. Also, it is one of the most challenging papers in the course. It is the paper that requires extensive research to be plugged in the paper. Speaking of the research skills, it builds off the Feature Article paper. Since the main focus of the paper is the textual analysis from a historical point of view, I will demonstrate how the existing requirements on the textual analysis can be adapted so that they are commensurate with the translingual approach. Once again, students' first encounter with the teachers' requirements is seen in the prompt.

<div align="center">Purpose</div>

    In this paper, you need to pick a text to analyze it within its larger context: socio-historical, political, cultural, economical, or environmental. Of course, you need to have a clear thesis statement at the outset of your introduction. The thesis statement clearly and succinctly delineates your main research problem. You need to make sure you situate your text from a larger context just mentioned above. While analyzing the text, please remember to go beyond the literal meaning of the text. Rather, try analyzing the text as part of the given context because every text belongs to some context. The main purpose is not only to investigate the text from a specific perspective, however. You will need to go even further to investigate class, gender, place, history, race, ethnicity issues from a given text. Also, try detecting what values the author of the text wanted to represent, and in what way. Try paying special attention to the textual features from the text. Since you will be working with a variety of authors, some of the textual features may seem unusual to you, and I

would like you to analyze those features in the text section. For example, if you pick the

African-American author, try analyzing the textual features that seem unusual or just new

to you. You can pitch any text (movie, video clip, book, song lyrics, ad, etc). While picking

the texts, try picking controversial topics you know little, or almost nothing about. In this

way, you will have wonderful learning experience while researching your topic.

Organization

The paper is comprised of the introduction, the author, audience, and the text.

However, you are not limited to respect this hierarchical order. Although you have to cover

all those parts of the paper, feel free to write the paper in any other order. Please make

sure you have a smooth transition of your ideas. For example, if you want specifically to

focus on the ideas of the author, you can place it first. Speaking of the authors, try focusing

on what prompted him to produce that work, and what values they represented at that

time and even try comparing it to the current context. Think about the language resources

that the author possesses. Think about all kinds of varieties to focus on in the text: language

or cultural. Speaking of the audience, think about the target audience the author addressed.

Even more importantly, think about the audience of today, and pay attention to what has

changed since then. The most important part of the paper is the text where you will apply

the knowledge of your critical skills to analyze the perspectives and the values of the text.

And even much more than that, you can infuse your personal and socio-political

background and knowledge into the analysis of the text. Of course, your argument has to be

supported by the research.

Reflection

This is the critical piece of writing where you will tell me about your personal experience with the writing task, particularly the text section. Specifically, you will elaborate on your text analysis, whether you took some risks in your topic selection, or whether you learnt the new facts about the topic you feel strongly about. If so, focus on those risks. If you picked the topic you know little about, I would like you to elaborate on those new features you encountered in your research.

Note to the instructors

Since the main focus of this paper is textual analysis, I will focus on its importance to the students. Firstly, students can pitch the topic they know little about or almost nothing, or the topic they feel passionate about. However, we can direct the students to pick the topics on socially controversial issues that were not discussed. The students can pitch the topics on gender, class, race, or ethnicity position in the American society. They can focus on the issues of inequality in the society. This choice means that students take some risks in their topics selection. Students learn to explore the issues later throughout the process. Also, students become socially aware of the complex issues around them by tackling complex topics in their papers. In that way, by doing extensive research, they learn to take the information in a critical way rather than just blindly accepting the facts from the press. We are all aware of the importance of critically analyzing various pieces of information. Students learn to treat the information from more perspectives, which is crucial for future academics. Even more importantly, students question their own identities.

While doing their textual analysis, students should perform a close textual analysis of the author's intentions and values presented. A close analysis is particularly important because students learn to investigate not only whether certain features in the text meet standard templates in terms of the language norms. Rather, their focus should be on those features that do not meet standards they are used to encountering—on language varieties. Specifically, students should try exploring which features are new to them, and why the author used them given the context. Students can even go beyond the context examining how the values are represented in the text. Even more, they can explore to what an extent those values in the text have changed throughout time. By doing this kind of research, students should then examine their own values and interests and position themselves within different perspectives. Ideally, students will challenge dominant conventions in terms of the language norms in their society.

Curriculum Vitae

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EDUCATION

- 2011:   M.A., English, West Virginia University - Morgantown, WV

- 2003:   B.A., English, University of Belgrade- Belgrade, Serbia

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- "Cultural and Linguistic Pluralism in the Writing Classroom." Thomas R. Watson Conference, Univ. of Louisville, KY, Oct. 2010.

- "Language and cultural translation as a "new American space." Chesapeake American Studies Association Annual Conference, Intercultural Center, Georgetown University, Washington, DC, March. 2010.

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

- January-May 2011 – Internship at the Centre for Literary Computing, English Department, West Virginia University (pending)

TEACHING EXPRIENCE

- 2009-2011 West Virginia University
  English 101: Rhetoric and Composition; Course focuses on teaching writing to freshmen

- 2004-2009 Language Center, Belgrade, Serbia; English language teacher
- 2003-2004 High school English Teacher

RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Relationship between globalization and composition studies; English as a second language; cross-cultural relations

AFFILIATIONS

- August 2009-present Appalachian Prison Book Project
- August 2009- present English Graduate Organization

LANGUAGES

- Serbian (native language)

- French (Advanced speaking and writing)

- Hungarian (basic level)

AWARDS AND HONORS

- 2002- Academic scholarship for talented students