

Summer 8-2020

## Critical Language Awareness Pedagogy in First-Year Composition: A Design-Based Research Study

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**CRITICAL LANGUAGE AWARENESS PEDAGOGY IN FIRST-YEAR  
COMPOSITION: A DESIGN-BASED RESEARCH STUDY**

by

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A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of  
Old Dominion University in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

ENGLISH

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY  
August 2020

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## ABSTRACT

### CRITICAL LANGUAGE AWARENESS PEDAGOGY IN FIRST-YEAR COMPOSITION: A DESIGN-BASED RESEARCH STUDY

Megan Michelle Weaver  
Old Dominion University, 2020  
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In this design-based research (DBR) study, I collaborated with two first-year composition (FYC) instructors in designing and implementing Critical Language Awareness (CLA) pedagogy to promote students' linguistic consciousness while strengthening and enhancing their postsecondary writing skills. I designed and implemented this study by drawing on a critical theory of language, informed by literature on language ideologies (Silverstein, 1979; Irvine & Gal, 2000; Kroskrity, 2010) and raciolinguistics (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Alim, 2016), and a critical theory of pedagogy, informed by literature on critical pedagogy (Freire, 1970, 1973; Giroux, 2011) and critical race pedagogy (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Lynn, 1999). After engaging in micro-cycles of analysis (Gravemeijer & Cobb, 2006), modifications were put in place during the second iteration of the study. Modifications focused on embedding activities and discussions within the curriculum to better support students' linguistic consciousness and to better scaffold writing assignments throughout the course.

Additionally, I engaged in retrospective analysis (Gravemeijer & Cobb, 2006), revisiting the entire data set and developing five assertions regarding the study's local instruction theory and the continued implementation of CLA pedagogy more broadly: (1) Instructors' articulated and embodied beliefs about language influenced students' developing linguistic consciousness. (2) Students' perceived lack of agency in education strongly affected the transformative aims of the innovation as students articulated resignation for or complicity with discriminatory beliefs.

(3) Collaborative innovations require ongoing negotiation between instructors and researchers as both parties navigate the influence of past teaching and learning experiences on the current innovation. (4) The iterative process of the collaboration promoted instructors' agency in designing, modifying, and implementing CLA pedagogy in FYC. (5) CLA pedagogy complicates the national WPA outcomes for FYC by inviting students to question and challenge notions of rhetorical effectiveness.

This study contributes to disciplinary conversations about language, race, and education by illustrating the difficulty of not only maintaining a critical stance toward language diversity, but also, at times, even articulating a critical stance given our deeply embedded beliefs about language. Additionally, it contributes to literature on professional learning (NCTE, 2019), illuminating how collaborating *with* instructors promotes agency in moving language rights theory into praxis.

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people have supported me in making this work possible. I owe my initial interest in linguistic social justice to Hal McDonald at Mars Hill College. To Rebecca Roeder, thank you for helping shape my passion at UNC-Charlotte and encouraging me to pursue my doctoral studies, when I was ready. To Kevin Depew and Staci Defibaugh, thank you for your time and support throughout this process; each of you has impacted my work through your mentorship, teaching, and scholarship. To Jori Beck, thank you for pinch hitting and seeing me to the end of this journey. To my chair, thinking partner, and friend, Michelle Fowler-Amato, I am so grateful that our paths crossed when each of us began our respective journeys at ODU. Thank you for encouraging and challenging my thinking over the past five years. I aspire to be the teacher and mentor for others as you have been for me.

To Matthew, Heather, Charlie, William, and Ben, I have missed so many birthdays, basketball games, and soccer matches, but I have greatly appreciated the virtual updates and the unending support and encouragement from afar. To Mom and Dad, your unconditional love and support made this possible. Guess what? I finally finished “my paper.” To Amanda, we did it. In navigating this process together, we came to understand how to best support one another and when we needed to celebrate our successes, both big and small. You understood my focus, completely, especially during the last couple of months. For that, I cannot thank you enough. I love you all so much.

Most importantly, to Taylor and Teresa, who volunteered to participate in an interview that turned into a multi-year collaboration. Thank you for opening up your classrooms and inviting me into your lives to learn from and support you in working to make our classrooms more equitable spaces.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The day after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., Kelly (1968) delivered a brief but gut-wrenching speech at the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC), describing the violence inflicted on Black language speakers by the field of rhetoric and composition<sup>1</sup>. Kelly asserted that taking away Black students' language was an act of violence, and called for White educators to examine their own racism, and experiences with racism, to try and undo the linguistic violence done to Black students. Moreover, Kelly urged educators to help White students recognize their own prejudicial thinking and to ultimately take action against the violence toward Black language. Fifty-one years later, Inoue (2019), in the wake of mass incarceration of people of color, rising White nationalism, and persistent racial violence, stood in front of the same organization of mostly White faces and asked whether “the vast majority of [them] do harm by using a single standard of English to assess and grade in [their] classrooms,” and whether their “dominant, White set of linguistic habits of language kill people?” (p. 23). Despite five decades of research and activism by some scholars, the field was confronted by the reality that not much, if anything, had changed regarding its complicity in upholding racist language standards.

In the spring of 2017, I was facilitating a professional learning community (PLC) (Vescio, Ross, & Adams, 2008) to support instructors in further developing critical language awareness (CLA) (Fairclough, 1989, 1992a, 1992b) with six, White composition instructors when Teresa (all names are pseudonyms) asserted, “I hate the race card being pulled when it

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<sup>1</sup> Following the National Center for Education Statistics disciplinary classification codes, I situate this study within the general classification of Rhetoric and Composition/Writing Studies. Throughout the dissertation, I refer to the field as rhetoric and composition, which “focuses on the humanistic and scientific study of rhetoric, composition, literacy, and language/linguistic theories and their practical and pedagogical applications” (Phelps & Ackerman, 2010, p. 209).

comes to language difference. It's not about race. It's about education." Her statement was made in response to reading selections from Young (2010) and Young, Barrett, Rivera, and Lovejoy's (2014) texts on code-meshing and African American literacy. Other instructors seconded the statement and argued that one's mastery and use of Standardized American English<sup>2</sup> (SAE) was a direct reflection of the speaker's formal education and that accepting and encouraging code-meshing in composition classrooms would invalidate the quality of education. I was surprised by the candor of these statements regarding language and race, yet I recognized where their exasperation was coming from. Around the time of this workshop, I was reading Jane Hill's (2008) book, *The Everyday Language of White Racism*, and I had a heightened awareness of the complex, even combative, attitudes speakers can have regarding language and race. As I gleaned from Hill's argument, we, as language users, are socialized into our beliefs about language, and unless we develop critical awareness of how language controls us and how we use language to control others, we are unaware that language is not only interconnected with race, but also that language, and beliefs about language, can be racist. For these instructors, who actively voiced the importance of respecting and valuing students no matter their race, religion, sexuality, and gender, it was extremely unnerving reading that some of their stances toward and beliefs about language were racist.

The resistance I encountered from the majority of PLC participants led me to question the purpose of our group meetings and my role as a facilitator who supports language rights and advocates for antiracist pedagogy in composition (Condon & Young, 2017). After the meeting, I reflected on how I had carefully pushed against the resistance, but wrote that "if I weren't the

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<sup>2</sup> Following other scholars (Charity Hudley & Mallinson, 2014; Godley, Reaser, & Moore, 2015), I refer to language varieties as standardized and non-standardized instead of standard and non-standard to emphasize that the way in which "the standard" comes to be valued is, in fact, a continual process motivated by political and social concerns.

researcher-facilitator, I would be pushing back—hard!” I struggled to select materials for our next PLC meeting, which was intended to focus on implementing activities to support students’ CLA development in the composition classroom. If part of the group actively resisted the theory and purpose behind the activities we were going to discuss, how useful would it be to move in that direction? Given the racial diversity of the first-year student population at the university (59% identifying as African American, Hispanic, or two or more races at the time of the PLC) and our identification as a group of all White, SAE-speaking educators at the university, I believed the PLC needed to follow Kelly’s (1968) urging and continue to examine our own racism and experiences with racism if we intended to help our students examine and use language in more critical, purposeful ways.

To deepen our inquiry into and dialogue on language, race, and education, I asked participants to read two foundational documents on language rights for the next meeting—the *Students’ Right to Their Own Language* (SRTOL) resolution and the *National Language Policy*. I also incorporated a chapter from Hill’s (2008) book as an optional reading, which most participants opted to read. To start the meeting, I asked instructors about their familiarity with SRTOL, and a number of them stated that they had never heard of or grappled with the SRTOL tenets prior to our discussion. By the end of that workshop, however, some of the instructors began to talk about the complexity of language rights, voicing their frustrations and fears with adhering to and implementing a more rights-based approach to language in the teaching of writing. In a reflection written at the conclusion of the workshop Renee wrote, “the use of ‘right to language’ is a massive issue that does not have an easy or realistic fix,” while Taylor expressed that “before this meeting (and others), [he] wouldn’t have accepted a dialect for an academic essay.” Continuing on he shared, “now I’m not so sure. It seems that if the ideas are

good, the language used to express them is not an issue.” At this point in the group meetings, it seemed as though participants were grappling with their language beliefs in conjunction with their personal experiences with language.

In the final workshop, we began discussing how the theory of CLA might be implemented in praxis. I shared some examples of activities and readings which I often incorporated while teaching first-year composition (FYC)<sup>3</sup>, and we responded to Zuidema's (2005) work on “teaching against the miseducation of myth education” (p. 673). For their final reflection, I asked participants to write about what they had taken away from their participation in the PLC, considering their initial interest and expectations for participating. Renee, who had commented in the previous workshop that SRTOL is a “massive issue” with no “easy or realistic fix,” wrote, “I think I will be more aware and thus sensitive toward language use . . . of both my students and colleagues.” Furthermore, Jeanne, who had focused previous reflections on the importance of SAE in professional settings explained that “although I don’t feel adequate to the task of teaching critical language awareness (yet), I do feel I can move in that direction.” In both of their reflections, Renee and Jeanne hinted at personal movement — “more aware and thus sensitive” and “move in that direction” — regarding their beliefs surrounding language generally, which might impact their teaching with a diverse student population. The instructors, in general, articulated the difficulty of taking on a new perspective of language given the pervasiveness of standard language ideology (Lippi-Green, 2012; Milroy & Milroy, 2012) in education as well as their own life experiences as both students and instructors.

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<sup>3</sup> Following the written communication course title (English Composition) at Old Dominion University, the educational site for this study, I refer to the general education writing classroom as first-year composition while recognizing its interchangeability with naming such as first-year writing or freshman composition.

After the PLC workshops ended, I invited the instructors to meet with me one-on-one to discuss their participation regarding both the content and the overall structure of the PLC. One of the questions I asked each instructor was if and how they might incorporate the work we did in the PLC into their classrooms. Teresa, who had voiced her opposition to discussing race and language early on in our meetings, expressed with a good deal of hesitancy that she was not sure how she was going to incorporate any of the CLA work. Taylor, on the other hand, expressed that he was excited to include language subordination as a topic of inquiry for his discrimination unit the following semester. While I was interested in following up with them about the content of the PLC and how they were planning their classes for the fall semester, I also wanted to discuss their experience interacting with their colleagues on the topic of CLA in particular. Interestingly, despite the varied responses on if and how the instructors would implement our work in their classrooms, each participant expressed gratitude and enjoyment in engaging with their colleagues on the topic of language, even when they did not agree or hold compatible stances. I was excited to learn that faculty participants had enjoyed our “spirited discussions,” as one participant had named them, yet I felt our work was not quite finished since one of the goals of the PLC was for faculty to apply pedagogical practices of CLA in their classrooms.

During the next academic year, I remained in touch with several of the instructors and chatted with them about our group and the debates we had over the readings. I kept thinking about two instructors in particular, though for different reasons. I wanted to know how Taylor had incorporated language subordination into his curriculum and how students had received it. I frequently wondered about Teresa, too, and her internal struggle with the relationship between race and language. Unlike Taylor, Teresa did not express any clear intentions of incorporating our work into her teaching. However, I found that Teresa, when compared to the other



participants, expressed the most movement in her own beliefs and stances over the course of our PLC. During our follow-up conversation, Teresa expressed that there were several times during our meetings when something someone would say made her “stop and think, well, maybe I’m wrong. Maybe I ought to get an open mind about something else here. Maybe they’ve got a good point.” Furthermore, despite her verbal comment about resenting “the race card being pulled when it comes to language,” she wrote in an early workshop reflection that she feared her stance might make her “seem prejudiced in some way or narrow minded.”

In the spring of 2018, about a year after our final PLC meeting, I contacted Taylor and Teresa to see if they would be interested in working together again, this time focusing on pedagogical implementation of our previous work. Specifically, I explained, I wanted to collaborate with each of them to implement CLA pedagogy in their FYC classrooms. Taylor enthusiastically agreed to this collaboration, and, to my surprise, so did Teresa. In this dissertation, I report on my collaboration with Taylor and Teresa.

### **Overview of Methodology**

In collaborating with Taylor and Teresa to implement CLA pedagogy in FYC, I followed a design-based research (DBR) methodological approach (Reinking & Bradley, 2008). As the Design-Based Research Collective (2003) explained, DBR examines “learning in context through the systematic design and study of instructional strategies and tools” (p. 5). A DBR approach to research includes identifying an issue of need in the ecology of a classroom; developing and implementing an intervention; identifying challenges and hindrances to the success of the implementation; and reporting on the successes and applicability of the intervention to wider contexts (Design-Based Research Collective, 2003). In contrast to other, more traditional forms of evaluation, DBR interventions are inextricably tied to educational

contexts rather than a generic set of standards and expectations. As such, the Design-Based Research Collective (2003) “views a successful *innovation* [emphasis added] as a joint product of a designed intervention and the context” (p. 7). Because the intervention in this study was closely designed and modified in accordance with specific classroom and university contexts, I use the term *innovation* (Design-Based Research Collective, 2003), rather than *intervention*, to name and describe the pedagogical changes put into practice through this study.

I chose DBR to design and implement this study as it addresses several methodological needs in language rights research. First, DBR begins to address the need, as Smitherman (1999), Scott, Straker, & Katz (2009), and Pennell (2005) have argued, to bridge theory and praxis regarding language rights in education. Bradley and Reinking (2011) described DBR as beginning in the theoretical and ending with the pragmatic. Considering these characteristics as bookends to what DBR is and does, the purpose of DBR is to meld theory and praxis by implementing theoretically-informed innovations, which aim “to increase the impact, transfer, and translation” of theory into practice (Anderson & Shattuck, 2012, p. 16). By using DBR as a research approach for this study, I sought to address what Smitherman refers to as the “unfinished business” of SRTOL—melding theory and praxis of language rights (Scott, Straker, & Katz, 2009, p. xvii)—and the “unfinished business” of our PLC. Additionally, I chose DBR for this study because it is a contextualized approach to research that supports researchers in recognizing the nuanced nature of classroom settings. In using DBR, researchers examine a learning ecology, “a complex, interacting system involving multiple elements of different types and levels” (Cobb, Schauble, Lehrer, DiSessa, & Confrey, 2003, p. 9), to understand its influence on the effectiveness of an innovation. In continuing to address the need to bridge language rights theory and practice, utilizing a context-driven methodology allowed me to focus on how

instructors and students in specific classroom ecologies took up and responded to CLA pedagogy.

Moreover, DBR brings together multiple perspectives and works to understand the instructors' as well as the students' needs when implementing a pedagogical innovation. This collaborative perspective enables researchers to work with instructors to create meaningful and promising long-term changes in education (Design-Based Research Collective, 2003). The collaborative affordances of DBR speak directly to the need for more researcher-teacher collaboration called for in language diversity literature. Hazen (2008) explained that researchers have spent the last 40 years learning about language attitudes and differing language varieties, but that, moving forward, researchers need to “work *with teachers* [emphasis added] to develop materials” for classroom implementation (p. 95). Additionally, Sweetland (2010) suggested that “engaging teachers *as partners* [emphasis added] in thinking and doing can and will bring forth desperately needed changes in teachers' thinking and doing” regarding language inclusion and more readily bring about pedagogical transformation (p. 174). Although not all DBR researchers view transformation as *the* essential priority in intervention work, I align with Engeström's (2011) view of transformation in DBR research in which “the researcher aims at provoking and sustaining an expansive transformation process led and owned by the practitioners” (p. 606). Given my transformational aim, it is fitting to follow DBR as a methodological approach to support instructors implementing CLA pedagogy as it, too, seeks transformation of the sociolinguistic world.

In addition to following DBR as a research approach, I drew upon Gravemeijer and Cobb's (2006) three-phase framework for implementing a DBR study. Throughout the study, I drew upon Reinking and Bradley (2008), influential scholars of DBR in literacy studies, who

offer a similar framework for implementing DBR; however, I chose to conduct and report my study using Gravemeijer and Cobb's (2006) framework because of its straightforward design and detailed description for data analysis. In phase one of Gravemeijer and Cobb's framework, the primary goal is "to formulate a local instruction theory that can be elaborated and refined while conducting the experiment" (p. 19). The scholars suggest that researchers consider the desired pedagogical goals, the "instructional starting points" (i.e., relevant literature and theory), and the existing classroom culture, instructor, and available materials when formulating the local instruction theory (p. 20). The theory, then, is grounded in a particular context and "consists of conjectures about a possible learning process . . . [and] possible means of supporting that learning process" (p. 21). The second phase of the framework constitutes implementing the innovation through micro-cycles of design and analysis. The local instruction theory, developed in phase one, guides the innovation and, simultaneously, the innovation refines the local instruction theory as researchers analyze how the daily instruction works toward the learning goals. Finally, in the third phase, researchers consolidate the entire data set and engage in *retrospective analysis*, working toward more generalizable conclusions and pedagogical recommendations based on the outcomes of the innovation. Although my dissertation is not organized by these three phases explicitly, I incorporate the framework across chapters as explained in the dissertation overview at the conclusion of chapter one. In the subsequent section, I introduce the pedagogical goals which informed the design of the local instruction theory for the innovation.

### **Pedagogical Goals**

As a methodological approach which aims to address real-world situations, DBR is goal oriented (Barab & Squire, 2004; Bradley & Reinking, 2011; Reinking & Bradley, 2008).

Reinking and Bradley (2008) explained that explicitly stated goals work as reference points throughout the duration of an innovation, first allowing researchers and instructors to make modifications that align with the goals of the study and then guiding researchers and instructors in analyzing the success or limitations of the innovation. Through this study, I aimed to advance the following pedagogical goals: (a) to promote students' development of critical language awareness while strengthening and enhancing their postsecondary writing skills, and (b) to develop instructors' instructional techniques in supporting students' development of critical language awareness and postsecondary writing skills.

In working to meet these goals, I worked with the participating instructors in redesigning their syllabi, assignments, and teaching materials, and I assisted with facilitating classroom dialogue and activities about the relationships between language, power, and identity. Further, as part of the course redesign, students engaged in research and writing that encouraged them to question and challenge the workings of power in various forms of language use inside and outside academia. In the first iteration of the study, I took a stronger participant-observer stance as I actively lead and facilitated classroom instruction. In the second iteration, I took a stronger observer stance and a less participatory stance, as Reinking and Bradley (2008) suggest, to better understand how the instructors adopt and adapt the pedagogy on their own, without my explicit support.

### **Research Questions**

In working toward the pedagogical goals of the innovation, I asked the following research questions in the design, implementation, and analysis of my study.

1. How might critical language awareness pedagogy in first-year composition promote students' linguistic consciousness?

2. How might a collaborative, co-designed critical language awareness pedagogy in first-year composition support instructors in promoting students' linguistic consciousness and developing students' postsecondary writing skills?
3. How might critical language awareness pedagogy in first-year composition work toward the national Writing Program Administrators' outcomes for first-year composition?

In the following section, I discuss the importance of the pedagogical goals by situating them in disciplinary conversations on language rights and critical language awareness.

### **Justification of Goals**

In 1974, CCCC first published *Students' Right to Their Own Language* (SRTOL), a resolution that supported students' right to their own dialect or language variety in educational contexts and argued for instructors to have requisite training and preparation to support linguistically diverse students. Since then, scholars have developed language awareness curricula at the postsecondary level to increase students' knowledge regarding the structure of language, instill in students an appreciation for language diversity, and validate students' home language varieties. Although curricula resources, such as the unpublished *Teachers' Manual For Teaching Standard English Writing to Speakers Showing Black English Influence in Their Writing* (Language Curriculum Research Group, 1973) and the *Do You Speak American?* online resource (PBS, 2005) accompanying the documentary of the same name, aimed to provide instructors with the skills necessary to put SRTOL theory into practice, scholars have argued that the tenets of SRTOL remain in the world of theory and have not led to "pedagogical transformation" regarding language rights and language inclusion (Wible, 2006, p. 444). Others, such as Siegel (2006), have critiqued language awareness curricula for perpetuating linguistic discrimination by invoking an appropriateness ideology that promotes one language variety, SAE, above the rest.

Alim (2005) called for educators to take up a critical language awareness (CLA) approach to language study and explore with students how language is interconnected with socio-political ideologies. By asking students to examine not only their own beliefs and expectations of language, but also the ideologies of their social and structural worlds, CLA promotes inquiry and questioning about the social world of language. For example, inquiry into language elicits conversations and further investigations into topics of gender, age, race, class, and, most importantly, power. Students must then navigate diverse and contradictory perspectives and develop an openness to engage with others who hold differing, and sometimes contradictory, viewpoints. With a meta-awareness, students become cognizant of how beliefs about language develop, including their association with certain social and political agendas (Rosa & Burdick, 2017). Students then can begin to consider how they, as language users, might position themselves in the social world of language. Ultimately, by encouraging students to grapple with the concepts of language and power at the individual and institutional levels (Alim & Smitherman, 2012), CLA promotes students' linguistic consciousness of how language works in the social act of communication so that they can make informed choices about using language in meeting various needs and purposes.

Developing this linguistic consciousness is imperative for both students and instructors to take responsible action in today's society. Alim and Smitherman (2012) explained that "action is needed to bring about social change" (p. 188). Following the 2016 Presidential election, multiple professional organizations reaffirmed their core values and commitment to diversity and inclusion and called for educators to take action in their classrooms with their pedagogies. Composition's flagship organization, CCCC (2016), released its "Statement on Language, Power, and Action" in which the organization reaffirmed its commitment "to cultivating

thoughtful speakers and writers, to ethical teaching and research, and to classrooms that engage the full range of the power and potential of writers and writing” (para. 3). Additionally, the president of the Council of Writing Program Administrators (2016) released the “CWPA Statement Supporting a Diverse and Inclusive Environment” that acknowledged the need to “explicitly [confront] the structural problems that cause our society to be racist, sexist, ableist, homophobic, monolingualist, among other problems of injustice” (para. 2). In response, the CWPA pledged “to continue its diversity effort and [to] continue to foster inclusion more generally; promote research into student diversities . . . and explicitly act against the structures that cause injustice today.” For writing instructors, one means of taking action is to encourage the development of CLA in our classrooms. As Reagan (2002) explained,

educators should be committed to encouraging the development of critical language awareness in our students because it is the right thing to do. It is a powerful way to promote social justice and the formation of a just, human, and democratic society. It is also a way of helping individual [students] better understand the society in which they live, and better negotiate that society. It is, in essence, giving students the tools that they need to make their own decisions—and decisions not just about language but about every aspect of human life. This is why we should be critical and seek to promote the same in our students. Anything less is an abrogation of our duties as educators and as human beings. (p. 151)

### **Personal Reflections on Language and Pedagogy**

As a White, middle-class female who grew up in the mountains of Western North Carolina, I learned to speak with the Appalachian dialect and the southern accent of my grandparents, parents, and extended family members. Simultaneously, I learned to take on the “proper” way to speak and write from the many secondary English teachers in my family. In school, I excelled in English courses, writing the standard five-paragraph essay. Outside of school, my friends at dance class, most of whom were from a more “city” area in comparison to my “country” area, often mimicked my long vowels, use of ain’t, and reference to over there as



*yonder*. Years later, when I started my master's program in Charlotte, North Carolina, my peers were quick to describe me, and my language, as "mountain" because of my distinct and different language choices. A few of them even expressed their surprise that the way I communicated in writing differed from the way I communicated in speech, complicating and challenging their notions of how an "educated" graduate student uses language and how a "mountain" speaker uses language.

Even though I pursued a linguistics emphasis across my program of study and supported the *linguistic facts of life* (Lippi-Green, 2012), I found that I, too, held and projected contradictory beliefs about language when it came to working with students. When teaching writing courses, I facilitated conversations on perceptual dialectology (regional language attitudes) and descriptive versus prescriptive grammar. Additionally, I encouraged students' appreciation of non-SAE language varieties in both spoken and written mediums. Yet, in my own assignment sheets, I supported a different perspective. On handouts and rubrics, I stated, "I ask you to use Standard American English grammar when constructing your essay. This enables me to prepare you for future courses in your academic career." Like a number of instructors who strive to support linguistically diverse students, I taught and encouraged one perspective but assessed another. I believed that all language varieties were valid and equal, but I perpetuated SAE's prestige through my assessment practices because I bought into the idea that not doing so would be a disservice to students. Today, though I continue to grapple with what is best for students, I believe that instructors must move beyond simply preparing students to conform to and to find "success" through using discriminatory language practices; instead, if we are to contribute to a more just and inclusive society, I believe that instructors ought to prepare students

to use, interact with, and advocate for diverse linguistic practices which challenge and dismantle discriminatory language beliefs.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Given my experiences with and stances toward language and education, I designed and implemented this study from the perspective of critical inquiry—inquiry which examines social and structural relationships of power and “initiate[s] action in the cause of social justice” (Crotty, 1998, p. 157). In this section, I establish and examine how a critical theory of language, informed by literature on language ideologies and raciolinguistics, and a critical theory of pedagogy, informed by literature on critical pedagogy and critical race pedagogy, support and extend the development of CLA in the teaching of writing.

#### **Developing a Critical Theory of Language**

In developing a critical theory of language, I first acknowledge and affirm that any belief about language is ideological (Rosa & Burdick, 2017), including critical and/or pluralistic stances toward language. As such, I begin this section by unpacking the notion of language ideologies and then exploring how standard language ideology and raciolinguistic ideologies, in particular, informed the design, implementation, and analysis of the study. In describing the concept of language ideologies, I draw upon the works of linguistic anthropologists, Silverstein (1979), Irvine and Gal (2000), and Kroskrity (2010); in exploring standard language ideology I draw primarily upon the works of linguists Milroy and Milroy (2012) and Lippi-Green (2012); and in examining raciolinguistic ideologies I draw upon the works of linguists and educators, Flores and Rosa (2015) and Alim (2016).

### *Language Ideologies*

Broadly, language ideologies are socially-constructed beliefs about language (Silverstein, 1979) which are “mapped” onto speakers of language (Irvine and Gal, 2000, p. 35). Language ideologies, then, are intertwined with social relations and social contexts and are used as a form of social control to maintain and perpetuate unequal social boundaries between and among groups of speakers. For example, Kroskrity (2010) explained that language ideologies are developed “*in the interest* [emphasis added] of a specific social or cultural group” (p. 195). By elevating certain features of a language variety, in-group speakers are also elevated while out-group speakers are subordinated both linguistically and culturally. In the U.S., language ideologies are closely associated with the social ideologies of individualism and social mobility (Wiley & Lukes, 1996); therefore, the use of privileged language varieties often provides speakers with social and economic capital including "access to education, good grades, competitive test scores, employment, [and] public office" (p. 515). The most privileged language variety in the U.S. is Standardized American English (SAE); this privilege is rationalized through standard language ideology, to be discussed shortly.

Because this study is situated within critical inquiry, drawing upon language ideology scholarship facilitated my efforts to examine language, and beliefs about language, in relation to social and structural relationships of power. In particular, I drew upon a language ideologies framework to better understand participants’ articulated and embodied beliefs about language, language users, and language use in various contexts. Such a framework provided “a specific way to name and reflect on specific language practices” (Razfar, 2012, p. 64) in pursuing actions for a more just and linguistically inclusive society.

### *Standard Language Ideology*

Before defining standard language ideology (SLI), I briefly discuss Milroy's (2001) idea of language standardization. Standardization assumes and imposes "invariance or uniformity in language structure" (p. 531). Ironically, to impose uniformity is to assume that language does, in fact, vary. Furthermore, standardization is value-laden given that language use is measured against "the standard" for purposes of determining linguistic achievement. This element of standardization leads to the standard language variety, as well as the speakers of the standard variety, being associated with overt prestige. However, it is important to note that the standard variety acquires the quality of prestige due to its association with speakers of high social capital. For example, in the U.S., White, upper-middle class speakers maintain a great deal of social capital; consequently, their language variety holds social prestige above all other varieties. This aspect of standardization serves to keep certain speakers "out" and others "in." Ultimately, the idea and process of language standardization highlights how SAE has not come to its level of prestige because of any inherent qualities, but by "conscious human intervention in language maintenance and language change" (p. 535).

Given the process for language standardization, SLI can be broadly defined in the U.S. context as the belief that SAE is superior to all other varieties of English. For the design, implementation, and analysis of this study, I observed Lippi-Green's (2012) definition of SLI: "a bias toward an abstracted, idealized, homogenous spoken language which is imposed and maintained by dominant bloc institutions," modeled after the spoken and written language of the White, upper-middle class (p. 67). Education is one such bloc institution that imposes and maintains SLI. This imposition leads to SAE being glossed as the "language of the educated," maintaining socio-political subordination and marginalization of non-SAE speakers (Lippi-

Green, 2012, p. 57). This indoctrination is a constant, daily process developed over time as language users operate within dominant institutions. In the institution of education, SLI is a foundational construct that not only directs language curricula, as enacted through standardized testing, state-mandated writing tests, and daily grammar instruction, but also encompasses the philosophy of education as a whole (Lippi-Green, 1994), including access to higher education through college entrance exams (e.g., the ACT and SAT tests) and writing placement tests. Therefore, SLI is deeply, if not solely, embedded in college students' and college instructors' beliefs about language.

Although those who articulate SLI often argue that acquiring and employing SAE will lead to social and economic mobility, instead, SAE maintains and upholds the privileged social position of its White, upper-middle class speakers (Kroskrity, 2010). In my own case, meshing, blending, and switching my Appalachian dialect and southern accent with SAE has not hindered my matriculation through school, ability to find work, or interactions with others, perhaps because I am White. However, as Wiggins (1976) argued decades ago, SAE “*does not* [emphasis added] ensure economic mobility or political access,” making “manifest the fallacy of standard English as the language of equal opportunity” (as cited in Wiley & Lukes, 1996, p. 530). More recently, Flores and Rosa (2015) took up the “language of equal opportunity” fallacy and argued that “racialized people’s linguistic practices can be stigmatized regardless of whether they correspond to Standard English” (p. 152). Because of this unjust phenomenon, my language ideology framework also takes up the literature on raciolinguistics.

### ***Raciolinguistic Ideologies***

Language ideologies from a raciolinguistic lens take into account the racialized body of a speaking subject, highlighting the constructs of race and racism within language (Flores & Rosa,

2015). Flores and Rosa (2015) first used the term *raciolinguistic ideologies* in their article, “Undoing Appropriateness: Raciolinguistic Ideologies and Language Diversity in Education.” In it they argued that, “raciolinguistic ideologies produce racialized speaking subjects who are constructed as linguistically deviant even when engaging in linguistic practices positioned as normative or innovative when produced by privileged White subjects” (p. 150).

Raciolinguistic ideologies further highlight how research on and understandings of language are often not about language at all, but rather political and social understandings of human interaction (Rosa & Burdick, 2017). For example, speakers’ racial and/or ethnic positionings (e.g., White, Black, Hispanic, etc.), directly affect how others interpret their linguistic practices (Flores & Rosa, 2015). For decades, educators have adopted additive language practices in which speakers of non-SAE language varieties acquire SAE “in order to lead socially fulfilling and economically viable lives” (Baker, 2002, p. 51). However, adding or altering one’s language may have no change in one’s social or economic status given that a White listener “often continues to hear linguistic markedness and deviancy regardless of how well language-minoritized students model themselves after the White speaking subject” (Flores & Rosa, 2015, p. 152).

More recently, Alim (2016) and others have expanded Flores and Rosa’s (2015) focus on raciolinguistic ideologies to define raciolinguistics as an interdisciplinary field examining language and race. The field of raciolinguistics asks questions about the interrelatedness of “language, race, and power across diverse ethnoracial contexts and societies” (Alim, 2016, p. 3) and theorizes the constructs of race and ethnicity in language studies more broadly. As a field, raciolinguistics extends further than the *study* of language and race and takes *action* toward “eliminating all forms of language-based racism and discrimination” (p. 26). One means of

taking action and moving toward social change and equity in education is to shift the examination of raciolinguistic ideologies to the privileged (i.e., White) language speaker. Flores and Rosa (2015) suggested that this shift has the potential to revise curricula about language and re-envision educational philosophy to push against appropriateness-based approaches and move toward social transformation.

In college composition, and often in education more broadly, discussions of racism have often been “confined to determining how to handle individual, aberrant flare-ups in the classroom without exploring racism as institutionalized, normal, and pervasive” (Prendergast, 1998, p. 36). Instead of acknowledging structural racism, race has been categorized by defining students as basic or developmental writers (Prendergast, 1998). Somewhat recently, however, Sanchez and Branson (2016) noted that FYC, because of its general education classification and broad reach within universities, is an ideal space to take up discussions of race and racism and “to resist the normalization of [W]hiteness” pervasive in higher education (p. 48). Rather than continuing to ignore racism, silencing the discussion of race, or labeling racialized writers as basic or developmental in composition classrooms, I adopted a raciolinguistic lens in this study with the aim to,

expose how educational, political, and social institutions use language to further marginalize racialized and minoritized groups; to resist colonizing language practices that elevate certain languages over others; to push for bilingual and multilingual education policies that don’t just tolerate but value, support, and sustain the diverse linguistic and cultural practices of communities of Color; to resist attempts to define people with terms rooted in negative stereotypes; to refocus academic discourse on the central role of language in racism and discrimination; and, importantly, to reshape discriminatory public discourses about racially and linguistically marginalized communities. (Alim, 2016, p. 27)

Moreover, including a raciolinguistic lens in the language ideology framework of this study offered an opportunity to examine how participants’ views toward language are fundamentally

structured by race and, perhaps, how the field of rhetoric and composition is shaped by, responds to, and takes up the construct of race.

### **Developing a Critical Theory of Pedagogy**

Similar to language and language beliefs, education systems and the knowledge that is valued within them are intricately connected “to the principles of social and cultural control” (Apple, 2004, p. 2). Moreover, a *hidden curriculum*, perpetuating the values and norms of the dominant or oppressor class, exists within the system of education and perpetuates social and economic disparities between differing student groups (Apple, 2004). In this section, I continue describing this study’s theoretical framework by developing a critical theory of pedagogy and describing how critical pedagogy and critical race pedagogy informed the design, implementation, and analysis of the study. This theory is grounded in Freire (1970, 1973) and Giroux’s (2011) foundational works on critical pedagogy and is complemented with scholarship on critical race theory by Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995), Lynn (1999), and others.

### ***Critical Pedagogy***

The origin of critical pedagogy is commonly attributed to the work of Brazilian educational theorist Paulo Freire, and his influential text, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970). Although Freire’s work is situated in the socio-political context of mid-twentieth century Brazil, his work continues to influence educators across the globe to adapt the tenets of critical pedagogy to their specific contexts. For example, in the U.S., Giroux (2011) argued for the implementation of critical pedagogy for the betterment of a democratic society, stating that

education is fundamental to democracy and that no democratic society can survive without a formative culture shaped by pedagogical practices capable of creating the conditions for producing citizens who are critical, self-reflective, knowledgeable, and willing to make moral judgments and act in a socially responsible way. (p. 3)



Giroux's argument highlights the goals of critical pedagogy—to teach and encourage students to engage in critical thinking which, in turn, leads to action “for a more socially just world” (p. 7). In working toward these goals, critical pedagogy positions students as “potential democratic agents of individual and social change” (p. 5); argues for instructors to be public intellectuals “willing to connect pedagogy with the problems of public life, a commitment to civic courage, and the demands of social responsibility” (p. 6); and calls for both instructors and students to “actively transform knowledge rather than simply consume it” (p. 7). Critical pedagogy, therefore, complements the development of CLA in FYC by ideally positioning both students and instructors for the transformative work of CLA and by cultivating the practices of critical thinking and reflexivity for the social justice orientation of CLA.

### ***Critical Consciousness***

In his approach to pedagogy, Freire (1973) introduced the concept of *conscientizacao*, or critical consciousness, which “represents the development of the awakening of critical awareness” with the aim to transform the world (p. 19). The development of critical consciousness, Freire noted, occurs through various stages, with dialogue between students and instructors playing a crucial role in co-constructing knowledge of and awareness of social reality. In moving toward critical consciousness, students and instructors take action toward improving their social world. Importantly, Freire (1970) pointed out that “critical reflection is also action” (p. 128) even when other forms of action are not appropriate or feasible at that time. The notion of critical consciousness is closely aligned with the focus on linguistic meta-awareness in CLA. Fairclough (1992a), a founding scholar of CLA, contended that critical awareness, with its focus on action to transform, “ought to be the main objective of all education, including language education” (p. 7). In this study, I took up Fairclough's assertion and incorporated the further

development of students' and instructors' critical awareness, or consciousness, of language as an essential element in the DBR methodology.

### ***Critical Pedagogy and the Oppressor***

The curriculum of critical pedagogy works toward developing critical consciousness while examining the oppressive nature of differential power relations. In considering the future of critical pedagogy, Allen and Rossato (2009) examined critical consciousness from the role of the oppressor and argued that educators must engage with privileged students, as well, in order to see movement and change in our polarized society of oppressor and oppressed. Specifically, Allen and Rossato (2009) asserted that “the oppressor student must be confronted with a systematic and persistent deconstruction of their privileged identity” to work toward a critical consciousness of how they contribute to and maintain systems of oppression (p. 175). In addition to the development of awareness, oppressor students must also engage in action by “interven[ing] in hegemonic constructions on behalf of the oppressed . . . challeng[ing] members of their own group,” and “align[ing] with the oppressed in acts of social transformation that are revolutionary and democratic” (Allen & Rossato, 2009, p. 170).

Similarly, Bacon (2015) drew upon Freire's assertion that both the oppressor and the oppressed “must be liberated from the dehumanizing system of oppression” (p. 229) and described the need to engage privileged students in a “pedagogy for the oppressor” (p. 226). I argue, however, that dominant pedagogies have always been pedagogies *for* students in oppressor groups or pedagogies *for* the oppressors' agenda. Critical pedagogy, therefore, is not *for* privileged students. Within this study, I conceptualized the approach as critical pedagogy *and* the oppressor to indicate that the notion of critical pedagogy and the reality of oppressor students (and instructors) are connected and simultaneously exist in the classroom.

Considering critical pedagogy *and* the oppressor offers CLA an essential component that has often been undertheorized or absent altogether in traditional critical pedagogy and in other studies on language awareness. In Freire's conceptualization of critical pedagogy, students' development of critical consciousness informs their own oppressed realities. The students in this study, however, encompassed a variety of social identities, sometimes identifying with oppressed and sometimes identifying with oppressor groups. When engaging with critical pedagogy, students from oppressor groups may resist or reject acknowledging their role in the oppressive structure; therefore, this study drew upon Bacon's (2015) suggestion for "humanizing the oppressor" students by considering their "prior knowledge and value systems" (p. 231), and Allen and Rossatto's (2009) suggestion to dialogue with students about the possibilities of simultaneously being "the oppressor within one totality and the oppressed within another" (p. 171). For example, some students identified as users of the dominant, privileged language variety of education, SAE, and belonged to the oppressor group regarding language while also belonging to an oppressed group for their religious, ethnic, or racial identity. Alternately, some students identified as White and belonged to the oppressor group while speaking an unprivileged language variety, such as Appalachian English, and belonged to a linguistically oppressed group.

By focusing on the multiple roles of oppressed and oppressor, critical pedagogy actively and explicitly advocates for social justice in education. However, critical pedagogy has also received criticism for its "'pre-packaged' critical consciousness reflective of both the interests and understandings of the researcher" and its limited consideration of race, especially in the U.S. context (Jennings & Lynn, 2005, p. 22). Therefore, in the next section, I discuss the emergence of race as a social consideration in critical pedagogy and detail the introduction of a critical race pedagogy.

### ***Critical Race Pedagogy***

In response to the slow and often delayed racial reform in the 1970s and 1980s U.S. context, critical legal studies scholars of Color, including Harvard law professor Derrick Bell, argued for the need to examine, “unmask,” and “expose” racism in fighting for social justice (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 213). The work and advocacy of these scholars led to the outgrowth of critical race theory (CRT) from critical legal studies. In their early work, CRT scholars sought to change and challenge “the bond that exists between law and racial power” (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 214). Following the development of CRT in law studies, Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) called for a critical race perspective in education. Unlike identity categories of gender and class, they argued, race remained undertheorized in education research. A few years later, Ladson-Billings (1998) articulated that a CRT of education, similar to critical pedagogy generally, understands education systems and curricula as ideologically laden with the cultural norms and values of the oppressor group. In this context, the norms and values of the White oppressor group “designed to maintain a White supremacist master script” (p. 18).

Other scholars have contributed to the articulation of CRT in education. Solorzano (1997) described it as “a pedagogy, curriculum, and research agenda that accounts for the role of racism in U.S. education and works toward the elimination of racism as part of a larger goal of eliminating all forms of subordination in education” (p. 7). In addition, Yosso (2010) contributed that a critical race *curriculum* works to facilitate critical consciousness and challenge discrimination by “expos[ing] and challeng[ing] macro and micro forms of racism disguised as traditional school curriculum” (p. 95). In response to Ladson-Billings and Tate’s (1995) CRT in education as well as McLaren and Dantley’s (1990) critical pedagogy of race, Lynn (1999) introduced a multidimensional *critical race pedagogy* (CRP). In emphasizing race by placing it

before pedagogy, Lynn hoped to “subvert a class-based discourse” (p. 604) of critical pedagogy, and “argu[ed] that race should be utilized as the primary unit of analysis in critical discussions of schooling in the United States—a former slave society” (p. 622).

How, then, might a CRP lens in critical pedagogy contribute to the examination of and implementation of CLA in FYC? Similar to how raciolinguistics offers a lens to examine language beliefs in relation to racialized language users, CRP offers an approach to teaching which brings the construction of race to the forefront of writing pedagogy. Rather than continuing the fallacy that education provides equal opportunity for all, CRP recognizes that the system of education elevates the oppressor group’s linguistic norms and values (e.g., SAE) to the detriment of the oppressed group. Through transparent dialogue, CRP seeks to move students to action (including critical reflection as a form of action) in response to linguistic injustice.

### **Overview of Dissertation**

In this chapter, I began by telling the story of how I came to my dissertation study with Taylor and Teresa. I then gave an overview of the study’s methodological approach, DBR, justifying its affordances with the research needs specified across language diversity scholarship. I described the pedagogical goals of the study, detailed the research questions guiding the study, and provided a justification of the pedagogical goals grounded in disciplinary conversations of language rights and critical language awareness (aspects of phase one in Gravemeijer and Cobb’s [2006] framework). Then, I shared my personal reflection on how I came to CLA as an essential focus for my scholarship and teaching. Finally, I explored how the theoretical framework—a critical theory of language, informed by scholarship on language ideologies and raciolinguistics, and a critical theory of pedagogy, informed by scholarship on critical pedagogy and critical race pedagogy—influenced the design, implementation, and analysis of the study.

In chapter two, I continue to engage with phase one of the framework by exploring the relevant literature guiding the *local instruction theory* for the study (Gravemeijer & Cobb, 2006). My review of literature unpacks common approaches to language diversity in the composition classroom as well as the literature on preparing and facilitating opportunities of professional learning for instructors of writing. In chapter three, I review the methodological approach of the study, DBR, and provide context for the location and selected participants for the study. Then, I describe the study's pedagogical innovation, the various sources of data that I collected, and how I analyzed the data.

In chapters four and five, I present findings from implementing CLA pedagogy with Taylor and Teresa in four sections of FYC over two iterations. In chapter four, I discuss the innovation as it was designed, implemented, modified, and implemented a second time for Taylor's classes. In chapter five, I discuss the innovation as it was designed, implemented, modified, and implemented a second time for Teresa's classes. In both chapters, I organize findings based on iteration and, within each iteration, I organize findings based on the study's two essential elements: faculty facilitating conversations and activities with students regarding the relationships between language, power, and identity; and then students examining and questioning these relationships through inquiry and writing. Finally, in chapter six, I provide five theoretical assertions based on retrospective analysis (Gravemeijer & Cobb, 2006) of the entire data set. My discussion of assertions is organized to respond to each of the research questions for this study. I then present implications for and suggestions for future research regarding approaches to language diversity in FYC and professional learning for FYC instructors.

## CHAPTER II

### RELEVANT LITERATURE

In this chapter, I discuss the relevant literature that informed the design and implementation of the pedagogical innovation which aimed to (a) promote students' development of critical language awareness while strengthening and enhancing their postsecondary writing skills, and (b) develop instructors' instructional techniques in supporting students' development of critical language awareness and postsecondary writing skills. I first explore the literature on the various stances toward and approaches to language diversity in first-year composition (FYC), highlighting the influence of *Students' Right to Their Own Language* (SRTOL) and the disciplinary debate between appropriateness-based and more critical approaches to exploring language diversity in the classroom. Because appropriateness-based approaches distinguish between and separate home language varieties from institutional language varieties, I categorize these as monolingual approaches and contrast them to multilingual (critical) approaches which purport the use of multiple language varieties for communication. Next, I discuss the literature on college writing instructor preparation and continuing professional development (PD). As part of this discussion, I detail the field's stance toward PD and explore how some individual writing programs have made gains in sustaining such efforts. To conclude, I argue that writing instructor preparation and continual PD on linguistic diversity is minimal to non-existent, and, thus, situate my dissertation study as beginning to address this need in writing studies.

#### **First-Year Composition as a Gatekeeping Course**

To understand how FYC instructors approach language diversity in twenty-first century classrooms, it is important to examine how it was first approached in the late nineteenth century. Since its conception at Harvard University in the late 1800s, many instructors, students, and

administrators have viewed FYC as a gatekeeping course, quarantining students who do not yet have dominant (i.e., White, upper-middle class) linguistic practices from the rest of higher education (Matsuda, 2006). Prior to the mid-nineteenth century, the homogeneity of U.S. institutions of higher education “guarantee[d] a linguistic common ground” (Russell, 2002, p. 35) mirroring the White, upper-middle class, and male student and faculty populations. With the establishment of land-grant colleges and universities from the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890, a greater diversity of people, including women, saw an increase in access to higher education; however, such opportunity did not extend to individuals who spoke non-SAE language varieties, such as African American English (AAE), because of often held racialized beliefs regarding intelligence and privileged language varieties (Matsuda, 2006). Thus, higher education remained linguistically homogeneous or, at minimum, maintained linguistically homogeneous expectations, while the U.S. at large was, and continues to be, a diverse, multilingual society.

It was not until one hundred years after the passing of the Morrill Acts that the student population of higher education truly began to diversify. Government recognized education reform for bilingual students (see Bilingual Education Act of 1968), opportunity grants, and open admissions, drastically changed the landscape of higher education, bringing about greater opportunities and access in the 1960s and 70s for underrepresented groups. Smitherman (1999) explained that the new students entering higher education in the mid to late 1960s “spoke a language which not only reflected a different class, but also a different race, culture, and historical experience” (p. 354). In response, educators began reexamining their epistemological understandings of knowledge while language scholars and education-activists, in particular, fought for “the wider social legitimacy of all languages and dialects” and for greater acceptance and inclusion of marginalized peoples and cultures (Smitherman, 1999, p. 358).



### Students' Right to Their Own Language

In the field of rhetoric and composition, scholars sought to promote and uphold language diversity in higher education with the 1974 ratification of the SRTOL resolution. Smitherman (1999), a leading figure of the resolution committee and longtime language-rights activist, explained that, with SRTOL and its accompanying background document, the committee had three goals:

(1) to heighten consciousness of language attitudes; (2) to promote the value of linguistic diversity; and (3) to convey facts and information about language and language variation that would enable instructors to teach their non-traditional students—and ultimately all students—more effectively. (p. 359)

Supporters of the resolution praised it for encouraging students to embrace their multilingual repertoires and for providing instructors with *some* classroom strategies that suggested ways both to affirm students' language rights and to create more student-centered classrooms (Kinloch, 2005). Looking back, Perryman-Clark, Kirkland, and Jackson (2015) argued that SRTOL not only questioned the imposition of a dominant, standard language in education, but also “rejected it [standard language ideology], offering a more democratic framework that represented linguistic pluralism in its place” (p. 3).

Although members of CCCC adopted the resolution at their annual convention with a vote of 79 to 20, a number of professionals responded critically to the tenets of SRTOL. Berthoff (1975) claimed that the presence and acceptance of non-standardized language varieties “were signs of illiteracy” (p. 216), and Wible (2006) explained that other opponents believed it would “erod[e] academic standards” (p. 448). Outside of the field of rhetoric and composition, and education generally, politicians, parents, religious leaders, and business leaders pushed a back-to-basics education movement in response to an alleged literacy crisis put forth in Merrill Sheils' 1975 *Newsweek* article, “Why Johnny Can't Write.” In her article, Sheils implied that valuing

students' (i.e., students of Color) non-standardized language varieties as academically acceptable undermined the legitimacy of composition instruction and the value of higher education. Supporters of the back-to-basics movement, then, equated the impending literacy crisis with open admissions and the push for equal access to education propelled by the civil rights movement.

Even though public and professional responses to SRTOL varied greatly, its ideological promise of language rights, conceived amidst civil rights and women's rights movements, pushed those in the field of rhetoric and composition to rethink their long-held beliefs about linguistic diversity in their classrooms. Bruch and Marback (2005) asserted that SRTOL, in its fight for language rights, "fundamentally challenged [the] definitions of literacy, theory, practice, and professionalism anchoring our narratives of the field and our sense of purpose" (p. xii). Today, the field continues to negotiate its definition of literacy and approaches to language diversity.

### **Approaches to Language Diversity**

In this section, I discuss the various monolingual and multilingual approaches to language diversity that instructors in the field of rhetoric and composition have implemented, beginning with eradication, then detailing additive and appropriateness-based approaches, and finally examining the multilingual perspectives of code-meshing, translanguaging, and critical language awareness. Table 1 provides an overview of these approaches as well as their respective stances toward non-standardized language varieties and students as learners and language users.

**Table 1***Overview of Approaches to Language Diversity*

Type of Approach	Name of Approach	Purpose	Stance Toward Non-SAE Language Varieties	Stance Toward Students
Monolingual	Eradication	To remove students' non-SAE language varieties for perceived greater educational and economic success	Non-SAE varieties are inferior to SAE	Students using non-SAE varieties must be corrected and taught to use SAE
	Additive Bilingualism	To add SAE, but not to remove non-SAE varieties, to students' linguistic repertoires for perceived greater educational and economic success	Non-SAE varieties are inferior to SAE in educational contexts	Students using non-SAE varieties must be corrected and taught to use SAE
	Code-switching	To instruct students in contrastive analysis to switch from one code or dialect to another based on ideals of appropriateness for the setting and audience	Non-SAE varieties are encouraged to be used in home or other informal settings, but are inferior to SAE in educational contexts	Students using non-SAE varieties must be corrected and taught to use SAE in institutionalized spaces such as education
	Language Awareness	To prepare students to communicate across social contexts by developing working knowledge of multiple language varieties	Non-SAE varieties can be used in home or in other informal settings, but are not used in educational contexts	All students are provided with knowledge about language to make informed decisions when composing across various contexts
Multilingual	Code-meshing	To push against monolingual and appropriateness-based ideologies; to soften the boundaries between formal and informal, institutional and home, and public and private linguistic contexts	All language varieties are resources to draw upon for communication across contexts	All students are positioned as agentive language users and are provided the tools and knowledge to make informed, purposeful decisions when composing

Table 1 Continued

Type of Approach	Name of Approach	Purpose	Stance Toward Non-SAE Language Varieties	Stance Toward Students
Multilingual	Translanguaging	To push against monolingual ideologies; both readers and writers have responsibility for the communicative burden	All language varieties are resources to draw upon for communication across contexts	All students are positioned as agentive language users and are provided the tools and knowledge to make informed, purposeful decisions when composing
	Critical Language Awareness	To examine, question, and challenge the socio-political relationships within language use to work toward equitable language perceptions	All language varieties are resources to draw upon for communication across contexts	All students are positioned as agentive language users and are provided the tools and knowledge to make informed, purposeful decisions when composing

## Monolingual Approaches

### *Eradication*

Prior to the 1974 ratification of SRTOL, the majority of writing instructors adhered to a subtractive or eradication approach to language when working with students of non-SAE backgrounds. This approach, grounded in *deficit thinking* (Valencia, 1997), insinuates that non-standardized language varieties are less valuable than the language of school, and non-SAE speaking students (often racialized students) are taught that they must change their language to succeed in school. In contrast, students whose language varieties already mirror that of the language of school (often upper-middle class, White students), rarely experience such compulsory change. Furthermore, the eradication approach often leads to academic segregation in the form of remedial English classes in which students receive “rote, unchallenging verbal stimulation” (Valencia, 1997, p. 8) to conform to a defective educational system (Labov, 1972).

In higher education, faculty justified the eradication approach by arguing that students’ non-standardized varieties would hinder their educational and economic success. For instance, instead of encouraging the use of African American English (AAE) in their classrooms for critique and analysis, instructors drilled AAE-speaking students “in the norms of speech etiquette and linguistic politeness of the White middle class” (Smitherman, 1979, p. 203). Kelly, during her 1968 “Murder of the American Dream” speech, called out these writing instructors who, she stated, met at CCCC to discuss how to “upgrade or, if [they]’re really successful, just plain *replace*” the language used by Black students (p. 106, emphasis in original). Two decades later, Jordan (1989) acknowledged that, in the U.S., Black students “must acquire competence in White English, for the sake of self-preservation” (as cited in Lippi-Green, 2012, p. 80–81). However, in response to the continued use and detrimental consequences of the eradication

approach, Jordan argued that instructors “will never teach a [student] a new language by scorning and ridiculing and forcibly erasing [their] first language” (as cited in Lippi-Green, 2012, p. 81).

### ***Additive Bilingualism***

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, educators began to take an additive bilingual approach to language diversity, which sought to add SAE to students’ linguistic repertoires without eradicating their home language varieties. An early proponent of the additive approach was the Language Curriculum Research Group (LCRG), a collective of African American scholars, sociolinguists, and FYC instructors who developed a textbook manuscript for students at two New York colleges whose writing included features of non-standardized dialects. This manuscript included activities for students to compare and contrast AAE and SAE through contrastive analysis and provided explicit instruction on how students could edit and revise their writing to fit SAE conventions. More importantly, though, the manuscript provided students the opportunity to learn about the origins of AAE, to read creative pieces by Black authors using AAE, and to conduct ethnographic research in their own communities regarding their experiences and use of AAE. Unfortunately, because of the back-to-basics educational charge and other conservative socio-political factors emerging in the mid-1970s, publishing companies did not pick up the LCRG manuscript and it was never distributed for mainstream use (Wible, 2006).

Whereas the LCRG manuscript encouraged learning and discussion regarding the history and grammaticality of AAE, other additive pedagogies drilled the importance of SAE and its superior standing in educational contexts. In response, a number of scholars spoke out against additive bidialectalism as an approach to language education, and critiqued additive

bilingualism's implicit racism. Sledd (1969) contended that "obligatory bidialectalism for minorities [was] only another mode of exploitation, another way of making Blacks behave as Whites would like them to" (p. 1314). Moreover, O'Neil (1972) expressed that bidialectalism was "a modern, fancy, but false promise to put Black people up, while in fact putting them on and keeping them down" (p. 438). Whereas supporters of additive bilingualism argued that SAE provided non-standardized language speakers with greater educational and economic success, O'Neil (1972) asserted that "it [did] not move one bit toward facing the injustices of American political and economic life" (p. 438).

### ***Code-switching***

Despite a number of scholars and educators' vehement opposition to the additive bilingualism approach in the years surrounding the ratification of SRTOL, today, many others advocate for its contemporary equivalent: code-switching. Although various definitions of code-switching exist,<sup>4</sup> I refer to Young et al.'s (2014) definition that describes code-switching as an approach "where students are instructed to switch from one code or dialect to another . . . according to setting and audience" (p. 2). In the field of education, a notable proponent of code-switching is Delpit (1988) who contended that, to gain access to and participate in mainstream American society, students need to engage with the *codes of power* in professional spaces. In promoting code-switching, Delpit (2002) encouraged instructors to learn about their students and support the use of home language varieties in certain contexts. In doing so, Delpit argued, students come to trust, accept, identify with, and emulate instructors, including their language use of SAE. Wheeler and Swords (2004, 2006) later expounded upon Delpit's work, providing

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<sup>4</sup> In the field of linguistics, code-switching is considered to be the use of multiple languages or language varieties in a single communicative event (often within the same sentence). Considering the FYW context of this study, I draw upon definitions of code-switching from the fields of rhetoric and composition and education.

K-12 teachers with examples and resources for how to teach code-switching in their classrooms. In particular, Wheeler and Swords (2004) noted how implementing contrastive analysis in a third-grade classroom taught students when to change between informal and formal language use. With this approach, they explained, third grade students became more adept at using the codes they labeled as appropriate for in-school and out-of-school contexts. Additionally, students showed greater command and use of SAE generally. Despite this finding, both Delpit's and Wheeler and Sword's arguments allowed for a prevailing deficit stance found in other monolingual approaches of eradication and additive bilingualism.

In the field of rhetoric and composition, Elbow (1999) has described his approach to language diversity in ways that mirror the work of K-12 scholars and educators who promote code-switching. In his writing courses, Elbow invited students to write in their "mother tongue" through all the major drafts of their essays, then required students to submit an SAE version for the final draft (p. 359). During this final phase of writing, Elbow encouraged students to find outside help in translating or editing their work into SAE. This approach, Elbow suggested, provided a safe space for students to use their own language to develop writing and critical thinking skills *and* learn how to transform writing to meet hegemonic expectations regarding standard language varieties, "avoid[ing] stigmatization by other teachers and readers" (p. 366). However, as Canagarajah (2006) pointed out, the call for final drafts to be submitted in a standard language variety reinforces the deficit ideology regarding non-standardized varieties.

Young (2014), an active opponent to code-switching, argued that despite such claimed success as presented by Wheeler and Swords, "no study of African Americans using code-switching as a linguistic practice shows unequivocal, large-scale widespread professional or academic achievement" (p. 66–67). Additionally, Young purported three detrimental costs to



teaching and encouraging code-switching in the classroom: that code-switching (a) perpetuates racial tension, (b) increases negative attitudes toward home language varieties, as SAE is presented in a hierarchical position against other non-SAE varieties, and (c) leads to linguistic confusion as differences between language varieties are exaggerated. Despite the concerns that Young raised, code-switching continues to be a commonly preferred approach to language diversity and often guides how instructors teach students about writing and language use in postsecondary education.

### ***Language Awareness***

In addition to code-switching, some instructors seek to teach students more concrete “knowledge about language” (Fairclough, 1992a, p. 1) through language awareness (LA) curricula. Since the 1980s, LA has described a movement that seeks to embrace “knowledge about language” as a significant aspect of language curricula (p. 1). Broadly, LA works to prepare students to communicate across social contexts by developing their working knowledge of multiple language varieties (Barrett, 2014). Within LA curricula, students often study the similarities and differences of various dialects and learn how language changes over time and location. This approach, unlike eradication, additive bilingualism, and code-switching, offers educators opportunities to tackle discriminatory misconceptions about language with students while expanding their knowledge and grasp of SAE (Wolfram & Schilling-Estes, 2006).

In the U.S., popular LA programs, also referred to as dialect awareness programs, include *Voices of North Carolina*, a curriculum designed for students to learn about the language varieties of North Carolina within the eight-grade state history curriculum, and *Do You Speak American?*, a curriculum for secondary and postsecondary classrooms, housed by PBS, which examines language diversity across the U.S. Although LA has more traction in K-12 contexts,

some postsecondary instructors have incorporated LA curricula in their classes. For example, after implementing a dialect awareness unit in an FYC course at Ball State University, Murphy (2012) found that most of her students gained an appreciation for differences in language varieties, began to understand that language differences are tied to other social identities such as race, class, gender, and sexuality, and, overall, gained a basic understanding of sociolinguistics.

Although LA may provide students with a greater appreciation for non-standardized language varieties as well as access to a prestige or standardized language variety, Fairclough (1992b) critiqued LA for invoking an appropriateness ideology which not only sets one language variety above the rest, but also imposes one group's language onto others. In most LA curricula, non-SAE varieties are encouraged to be used at home or in other informal settings, whereas the standardized language variety is taught and encouraged in education and other institutional settings—similar to additive bilingual and code-switching approaches. As such, the appropriateness stance embedded within LA legitimizes SAE as a symbol of cultural capital and perpetuates the discrimination and marginalization of non-SAE speakers.

### **Multilingual Approaches**

In contrast to the aforementioned monolingual approaches to language diversity, which ultimately position SAE as superior to non-SAE language varieties in education, a number of multilingual approaches challenge the ideology of appropriateness and seek to empower linguistically marginalized students. In the sections that follow, I explore three of these approaches: code-meshing, translanguaging, and critical language awareness.

#### ***Code-meshing***

In response to Elbow's (1999) work on inviting students' *mother tongue* into FYC, Canagarajah (2006) argued for the inclusion of World Englishes in FYC by suggesting that the

field of rhetoric and composition reconsider “how we can accommodate more than one code within the bounds of the same text” (p. 598). In other words, instead of switching between codes (with only one that is deemed appropriate for school use), how might students, and instructors, blend various codes within the same text?<sup>5</sup> In 2011, Young, Martinez, and Naviaux expanded the field’s emerging discussion of code-meshing as well as the renewed interest in the theory of SRTOL to propose a resolution on code-meshing as a World English. Drawing upon decades of conversations and debates since SRTOL’s initial 1974 adoption, Young, Martinez, and Naviaux affirmed that language users not only have a right to their own language variety but also have a right to mesh, mix, and transform all of the varieties in their linguistic repertoire to best fit their communicative needs and purposes:

Let it be resolved that every native speaker of English and English language learner . . . has a right to code-mesh—to blend accents, dialects, and varieties of English with school-based, academic, professional, and public Englishes, in any and all formal and informal contexts. English speakers’ right to code-mesh includes the use of home languages, dialects, and accents beyond conversations with friends and family. It further includes freedom to explore and to be taught in school how to exploit and combine the best rhetorical strategies, syntactical possibilities, and forms of usage from the various grammars, including standardized English, that they have learned, are learning, have used, or are using in their various familial, social, technological, professional, or academic networks. (p. xxi)

With its positioning, the resolution on code-meshing pushes against English-Only policies and appropriateness-based ideologies and recognizes the worldwide spread of English as well as the softening boundaries between formal and informal, institutional and home, and public and private linguistic spaces.

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<sup>5</sup> Canagarajah (2006) noted that he and other scholars previously used the term code-switching to describe the use of multiple codes within the same text, which is similar to the definition of code-switching in the field of linguistics. In the field of rhetoric and composition, current distinctions between code-meshing and code-switching not only describe differences in language use for communicative acts (the blending of codes vs. the separation of codes, respectively), but also highlight ideological differences held by proponents of each.

In classrooms where code-meshing is invited and encouraged, language is often an integral part of daily conversations, and students have opportunities to compose in a range of language varieties, including SAE, to produce effective and creative writing. For example, in Lovejoy's (2014) classroom, students produced code-meshed texts that pushed against and expanded the boundaries of SAE as a way to think about writing, "real writing," outside of school contexts (p. 151). This encouraged students, Lovejoy contended, to pay attention to and engage with the various texts that surrounded their lives, not just academic discourse but also popular culture, billboards, and graffiti.

### ***Translanguaging***

Akin to the notion and act of code-meshing, a translanguaging approach views language difference as a resource to be drawn upon for communication (Horner et al., 2011). Horner first introduced the term translanguaging to the field of rhetoric and composition in 2011, and has since expanded upon the possibilities of translanguaging in FYC. Horner et al. (2011) first grounded the need to move toward a translingual approach by echoing Matsuda's (2006) argument that, despite the U.S. being a multilingual society, college composition in the U.S. embraces detrimental English-Only ideology. Lu and Horner (2016) later affirmed their previous argument by explaining that a translingual approach to language diversity seeks to counter monolingualism in order to reject the discrimination of language users based on the ramifications of English-Only ideology. Such a stance further classifies translanguaging as a transformative approach that seeks to dismantle hierarchical language practices (Garcia & Leiva, 2014).

In the classroom, translanguaging and code-meshing appear to hold similar expectations for writing instruction. Enacting a translanguaging and/or code-meshing approach follows that writers would draw upon multiple codes, languages, language varieties, and registers to compose

their texts. However, in the literature, translanguaging appears to focus more on the act of communication and on the notion of communicative burden. Current-traditional composition pedagogy emphasizes the need to produce SAE writing for an assumed White, monolingual reader. In this case, the communicative burden is on the writer to convey meaning for the reader's supposed language variety. In contrast, translanguaging calls for both readers and writers to take up responsibility for the communicative burden and for both to be open to language differences (Horner et al., 2011). Although translanguaging seeks to invite new communication possibilities by opening up communicative expectations, it also acknowledges that there are real life consequences regarding language and language use (Lu and Horner, 2016); therefore, translanguaging, as a pedagogical approach, advocates for writers to have the tools and knowledge base to make informed, purposeful decisions when composing.

### ***Critical Language Awareness***

Similar to code-meshing and translanguaging, critical language awareness (CLA) is a multilingual approach to language diversity that could be described as a separate approach or as a means for providing groundwork for code-meshing or translanguaging practices. Whereas the LA movement supported “knowledge about language” (i.e., structural and contrastive knowledge), CLA adds to this the need to examine the political and social relationships within language use (i.e., ideological positionings). Historically, CLA stems from Fairclough's (1989, 1992a, 1992b) work on critical language study in the United Kingdom in which he drew upon the work of social theorists such as Bourdieu, Foucault, and Habermas whose discussions of language and discourse are intricately connected to notions of ideology. Fairclough (1992a) believed that, to be effective citizens, individuals must develop critical consciousness of both their social and physical worlds. Moreover, he expressed that students should be encouraged “to

see that they contribute through their own practice to the shaping and reshaping of the sociolinguistic order—to reproducing it or transforming it” (p. 54). As such, CLA is grounded in Freirean concepts of critical consciousness and transformation.

Following Fairclough, Alim (2005) brought CLA into the U.S. context by suggesting it as a pedagogical approach to both affirm students’ language varieties and more readily interrogate “unequal power relations in a still-segregated society” (p. 24). Alim (2011), drawing upon the occupy movement, advocated for CLA as he called for language users, scholars, educators, and the general public, to occupy language and push against injustices of power. He further supported that, through occupy language, language users might “expose how educational, political, and social institutions use language to further marginalize oppressed groups . . . and begin to reshape the public discourse about [marginalized] communities, and about the central role of language in racism and discrimination” (para. 19). This move toward critical consciousness of the socio-political phenomena shaping language and language beliefs, pushed language diversity conversations beyond the acceptance of non-standardized language varieties and toward critical conversations concerning human rights and social justice advocacy in general.

In describing how CLA could be promoted and developed with students and instructors, Alim (2007) expounded upon Freirean critical pedagogy and detailed his work with Critical Hip-Hop Language Pedagogies (CHHLP). CHHLP, he contended, support linguistically marginalized students in inquiry about language to ask questions such as, “How can language be used to maintain, reinforce, and perpetuate existing power relations?” and “How can language be used to resist, redefine, and possibly reverse these relations?” (p. 166). One example of a CHHLP project that facilitated this line of inquiry was the “Real Talk” project, which supported students in

developing knowledge about sociolinguistic variation as they listened to, transcribed, and then analyzed a conversation between two local hip-hop artists. This analysis introduced students to sociolinguistic patterns as they gained an understanding of the systematic structure of language. Through the “Language in My Life” project, students conducted ethnographic research in their own communities and analyzed how differing contexts and situations affected their own language patterns. This analysis, Alim (2007) explained, supported students in developing “a much higher level of metalinguistic awareness . . . which allow[ed] them to not only better understand the abstract theory of ‘speaking,’ but also to better understand the linguistic landscape of their social worlds” (p. 169–170). A final example that Alim provided was the “Linguistic Profiling in the Classroom” project. In this project, students examined linguistic profiling excerpts and collected ethnographic data from their own communities about linguistic profiling experiences, often from friends and family members. As a result, students gained a greater understanding of the power relations surrounding and embedded in language use.

While Alim’s (2007) research focused specifically on how CLA is developed through CHHLP, Godley and Minicci (2008) drew upon tenets of CLA to establish *critical language pedagogy* (CLP) “to refer to instructional approaches that guide students to critical examinations of the ideologies surrounding language and dialects, the power relations such ideologies uphold, and ways to change these ideologies” (p. 320). Godley and Minicci (2008) further established a three-part framework to support instructors enacting CLP. The framework includes, (a) providing space for students to interact with and challenge dominant language ideologies, (b) encouraging and facilitating dialogue among students to understand language difference, and (c) ultimately building upon students’ personal experiences with and use of language.

Godley and Minicci (2008) implemented this framework in a one-week language variation unit in three 10<sup>th</sup>-grade classrooms predominantly populated by African American students. Throughout the week, students learned about sociolinguistic variation, drew upon passages from *To Kill a Mockingbird* to ground their discussion about dominant language ideologies, and used contrastive analysis to examine differences and similarities between AAE and SAE. Godley and Minicci found that grounding language variation inquiry in students' own language experiences supported them in better understanding "the complex workings of dialects, code-switching, identity, and community" (p. 339). Godley and Minicci also found that, at the end of the week, students simultaneously held contrasting views regarding the superiority of SAE as a prestigious or preferred dialect and the legitimacy and value of home language varieties. Because of this finding, Godley and Minicci concluded that, rather than engage CLP in a one-week mini unit, the unit's topics should be integrated in the classroom throughout the academic year. Finally, in considering future iterations of the research, they acknowledged the lack of action that stemmed from the project: "simply discussing injustice and inequality does not affect change; critical pedagogy must guide students to put ideas into action to create a better and just world" (p. 340).

Building upon Alim (2007) and Godley and Minicci (2008), Baker-Bell (2013) described CLP to be "an instructional approach that encourages students to interrogate dominant notions of language while providing them space to value, sustain, and learn about the historical importance of their own language" (p. 356). Similar to Godley and Minicci (2008), Baker-Bell implemented CLP in an 11<sup>th</sup>-grade English Language Arts classroom through a one-week lesson on AAE, which was embedded in a larger five-week study on language. During the week, students participated in five activities. The first two activities sought to garner students' attitudes toward



AAE and SAE by having them create cartoons in response to AAE and SAE excerpts. The third activity introduced students to the “historical, cultural, and political underpinnings” of AAE through the use of character dialogue worksheets (p. 362). For activities four and five, students read and responded to Smitherman’s (1999) article “Ebonics, King, and Oakland: Some Folk Don’t Believe Fat Meat is Greasy,” and participated in an open-ended class discussion on AAE. Baker-Bell found that once students developed a greater appreciation toward AAE, which occurred during the third activity, students more readily pushed against dominant ideologies regarding the legitimacy of standardized English as the language of wider communication.

Recently, Godley and Reaser (2018), extending the work of Godley and Minicci (2008), worked with pre- and in-service teachers in an online module course to support them in how to enact CLP in secondary English classrooms across the U.S. In this work, Godley and Reaser (2018) differentiated CLP from CLA by explaining that CLP “focuses specifically on sociolinguistic understandings of nonmainstream dialects (rather than all texts) and related ideologies” (p. 21). Additionally, CLP is informed by instructional strategies that “contribute to the academic success of students of color, whose language and literacy experiences are often marginalized in K-12 schools” (p. 21–22).

Although not all scholars or instructors have named CLA development as a goal in exploring language diversity, a number of postsecondary instructors have created spaces for critical language discussion in FYC. In Kinloch's (2005) critical reflection on teaching an FYC course, she explained that students engaged in and often led discussions about language and language rights. Kinloch clarified that, although the course was not originally designed to have a language rights focus, a classroom discussion about Smitherman’s concept of *being on the margins* led her to adapt the course to become a space where the notion of students’ right to their

own language was examined in tandem with other public rights issues. Another scholar-educator, Perryman-Clark (2009, 2012), developed an FYC course at Michigan State University which placed Ebonics as a nexus of inquiry and writing. Within this course, students researched and analyzed Ebonics in the field of rhetoric and composition. Additionally, students made informed choices about which language variet(ies) to compose in based on the rhetorical situation for each piece of writing. Likewise, Williams (2013) brought a language-centric theme, African American Verbal Tradition (AAVT), to the teaching and inquiry of writing. Williams used a comparative approach to teach features of AAVT as rhetorical tasks in academic writing, demonstrating how AAE has influenced SAE and how writers might draw upon features of AAVT in their academic writing. As evidenced in Kinloch's, Perryman-Clark's, and Williams' reflections, the FYC classroom can be a space to not only encourage writing and exploration in students' own language varieties, but also to engage students in critical conversations regarding the topics of language and language rights.

As evidenced by the various multilingual approaches to language diversity, 21st century education is perhaps moving away from teaching students to codeswitch and, instead, moving toward preparing students to be global citizens through pedagogies which seek to support students in developing critical consciousness of their social and physical surroundings (Baker-Bell, 2013). This move gets educators closer to fulfilling the promises of SRTOL first introduced in composition studies in 1974. After all, as Perryman-Clark et al. (2015) explained,

*SRTOL is not about language. It is about people [emphasis added] and about respecting their rights and identities, particularly in public spaces, such as classrooms, workplaces, and the like. It is about understanding people and embracing, affirming, valuing, and bearing witness to who they are, have been, and shall become. (p. 15)*

For this innovation, I drew upon elements of CLP, translanguaging, and code-meshing to promote students' developing CLA in FYC and to support instructors' pedagogical techniques.

Broadly, FYC supports students' learning regarding rhetorical knowledge, genre conventions, information literacy skills, and mechanics. Students develop knowledge in these areas by reading, analyzing, and producing a variety of texts. Given the FYC context and departmental as well as national learning outcomes for FYC (discussed in more detail in chapter three), I grounded the innovation in CLA theory and took up Smitherman's (2017) naming of such work to be CLA pedagogy. Smitherman (2017) defined CLA pedagogy as,

seek[ing] to develop in students a critical consciousness about language, power, and society . . . to heighten their awareness of the stakes involved in language attitude and policies of correctness and striv[ing] to impart knowledge about their own language, its social and linguistic rules, its history and cultural connection. (p. 10)

Furthermore, to address some of the challenges regarding uptake and action, as discussed in previous studies, we integrated CLA pedagogy throughout the FYC course (it was not a single unit of study) and focused students' developing awareness toward the power structures within and created by language use across texts (i.e., examining beliefs about language beyond differences in language varieties).

### **Multilingual Professional Development in Composition**

Despite the theoretically grounded arguments for implementing multilingual approaches to language in FYC, many instructors struggle to adapt their pedagogy and continue to participate in PD geared toward a monolingual perception of FYC. Over a decade ago, Matsuda (2006) argued for instructors to adapt their pedagogies to work effectively with twenty-first century, multilingual student populations; however, as Canagarajah (2016) later explained, PD for composition instruction "is not well advanced" (p. 265). When it comes to supporting students with non-SAE language varieties or English Speakers of Other Languages, in particular, "most faculty have little or no training" (Schneider, 2018, p. 346). Such underpreparedness (or

even ill-preparedness if education is envisioned toward a monolingual classroom) undercuts the longstanding value in composition studies of respecting difference (Schneider, 2018).

In responding to this dilemma, what might PD look like for a multilingual approach to language diversity? Canagarajah (2016), in reflecting on his design for a pedagogical course focused on teaching second language writers, suggested that instructors be encouraged “to construct their pedagogies with sensitivity to student, writing, and course diversity, thus continuing to develop their pedagogical knowledge and practice for changing contexts of writing” (p. 266). Albeit somewhat vague, Canagarajah (2016) opened up the conversation for advancing PD for multilingual approaches to composition pedagogy. To garner more concrete information in hopes of adding to this conversation, I use the remainder of this chapter to explore the broad strokes of PD for writing instructor education and describe several recent endeavors in individual writing programs to establish and sustain PD for their instructors.

### **The Positioning of Teacher Preparation and Professional Development in Composition**

In 1982, the CCCC Task Force on the Preparation of Teachers of Writing put forth a position statement detailing eight elements that constitute the sort of experiences instructors needed to prepare for and develop their skills as instructors of writers. These included opportunities to write, to respond to students’ writing, to study writing as a process, and to study writing in relation to other disciplines. Although CCCC is the postsecondary branch of the National Council for Teachers of English (NCTE), the statement was addressed to “teachers of writing at all levels” (p. 446) and delineated further recommendations by teaching context (e.g., college and university English departments and K-12 staff and administrators). For college and university English departments, these suggestions included providing faculty with opportunities to further develop their theoretical and practical knowledge in teaching writing; creating

undergraduate and graduate courses on the teaching of writing; and embedding writing instruction and practice in literature courses, though explicit suggestions for establishing and maintaining these opportunities were not provided.

This statement remained as the public presentation of CCCC's stance on teacher preparation and PD for over three decades despite attempts to revisit and revise the position statement in the mid-2000s. Reid (2011), a member of the CCCC Committee on Preparing Teachers of Writing, which was charged to revise the 1982 statement between 2005 and 2007, explained that conversations about writing teacher preparation at the professional organization level "remain relatively rare" in part because of the "dominant if wrongheaded idea that postsecondary faculty don't need instruction in teaching" (p. 687–688). Additionally, Reid postulated that the failed attempt to revise the statement between 2005 and 2007 was to some extent due to its broad coverage. Instead of focusing on college writing instructors specifically, the 1982 statement encompassed writing instructors of all levels, and, therefore, the revision research also sought input from an overwhelming number of stakeholders, from primary to postsecondary instructors, administrators, and staff members. Although there remains to be a standing committee on college writing teacher preparation within CCCC, the original statement was successfully revised in 2015. Interestingly, the revised statement, *Preparing Teachers of College Writing*, leaves out the notion of continuing development in the title, though one-third of the statement is devoted to new and continuing faculty members.

With the 2015 statement, CCCC took a stronger stance on the benefits of continuing education for college instructors explaining that,

CCCC conceptualizes preparation and professional development as an intensive and reflective practice that continues throughout and enriches an instructor's entire career. Effective instructors of postsecondary writing labor diligently to stay informed of disciplinary scholarship, to modify their pedagogical practices to mirror shifts in

disciplinary scholarship and accommodate student learning needs, and to foster an ethic of professional development that conceptualizes teaching as a life-long process of intellectual, professional, and personal growth. (“New and Continuing Faculty,” para. 2)

Additionally, the 2015 statement charged college and university departments with more detailed recommendations for providing opportunities for lifelong learning. These included establishing “formal mentoring programs,” “ongoing formative and summative assessment of teaching by a supervisor,” and “professional development training for working with non-native speakers of English, students with special learning needs, non-traditional students, and at-risk student populations” (“New and Continuing Faculty,” para. 8).

### **Professional Development for College Writing Instructors**

Around the same time that CCCC revised its position statement on preparing college writing instructors, several individual programs also reported on their efforts to promote PD with college and university writing faculty. In this section, I draw from individual program findings to explore two defining features for successful PD: sustained and ongoing PD and collaborative, community-based PD. In particular, I review PD efforts reported by Carolinas WPA (Rose, 2016); Lovejoy, Fox, and Weeden (2018) at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI); Obermark, Brewer, and Halasek (2015) at a large state university; and Wardle and Scott (2015) at the University of Central Florida.

#### ***Sustained and Ongoing***

As outlined in the NCTE Statement on Principles of Professional Development (2006)<sup>6</sup>, the best models of PD were “characterized by sustained activities” (para. 6). This characteristic

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<sup>6</sup> This statement guided the design and implementation of the innovation from summer of 2018 to spring of 2019. In the summer of 2019, NCTE put forth a new statement, shifting the conceptualization of professional development to professional learning. In exploring the literature that informed the design and implementation of the study, I use the language of professional development from the 2006 document. When discussing implications of this study in chapter six, I put findings of this study into conversation with the 2019 position statement and use the language of professional learning.

could prove challenging, though, due to instructor and administrator turnover and limited resources for facilitator or participant compensation (e.g., time, funding, or service credit). Despite these challenges, Carolinas WPA, a regional sub-group of the Council of Writing Program Administrators, has successfully maintained the organization of semi-annual conferences for its members. Such sustained and consistent meetings establish an environment and an expectation for PD among Carolinas WPA members, which, in turn, trickles down to many WPAs' home institutions (Rose, 2016). Similarly, Wardle and Scott (2015) reported that, during their four-year curriculum transition, they worked diligently to create a culture of and expectation for participation with PD in their writing program. Beginning in 2009, UCF began implementing a *writing about writing* curriculum in FYC. Over a four-year period, the program held numerous workshops and sponsored various reading groups each semester to “allow for—and even encourage—the opportunity to engage in . . . struggles with ideas and debates” (p. 81). After several years of maintaining this ongoing PD, the writing program instructors took ownership of the new curriculum and began to engage in more professionalization work, such as attending conferences, for their own learning. Just as Wardle and Scott (2015) reported more faculty buy-in to the changing curriculum through their PD efforts, Obermark, Brewer, and Hasalek (2015), in their long-term work with graduate teaching assistants (GTAs), found that it was only after GTAs were past their first “sink or swim” year of teaching “that they [could] shift toward developing critically informed teaching philosophies and practices” with the guidance of mentoring groups and teaching workshops (p. 39–40). Finally, at IUPUI, Lovejoy et al. (2018) have worked toward sustained interaction through multilevel work with various stakeholders (e.g., the writing center, curriculum development, and faculty orientation), indicating that

ongoing PD can and should be distributed across individual colleges within universities to build and foster a PD community.

### *Collaborative*

In addition to the need for PD to be sustained and ongoing, the NCTE best practices statement maintained that PD should be grounded in “community-based learning” (para. 6). In sustaining ongoing PD, each of these studies reported on the importance of community or collaboration for its success. The meetings that WPA Carolinas sponsors are both centered on community building. At the fall Wildacres retreat, attendees focus on developing rapport and building community by meeting with facilitators, individually and in groups, to discuss issues specific to their work contexts (Rose, 2016). Moreover, both Wardle and Scott (2015) and Obermark, Brewer, and Halasek (2015) detailed the importance of instructors learning from peers in reading groups or mentoring groups and also having a voice in the planning of the PD itself. Often, postsecondary instructors rarely have the time or the opportunity to discuss the work they do in the classroom. As Penrose (2012) noted, “we rarely know what goes on in colleagues’ classrooms at the university level” (p. 112); however, being able to interact with other instructors while engaging with new material proved essential in sustaining PD efforts for these institutions. Lovejoy et al. (2018) also reported on the value of establishing and working within communities for productivity on language diversity efforts. Not only does IUPUI’s multilevel approach bring together stakeholders from across the university, but also enables writing instructors to take charge of language diversity awareness by contributing to the development of their programmatic language policy. Lovejoy et al. elaborated that such collaboration in developing their language policy encouraged faculty to “take ownership of the



ideas and begin to think critically about needed change,” not only in their pedagogies but also at multiple levels within the university (p. 335).

### *Challenges*

Although these studies reported key factors leading to successes in their PD efforts, they also acknowledged several challenges that came up during their work with instructors. In UCF’s program, some faculty resisted the underlying disciplinary theory of the new curriculum while others resisted the process of PD, participating in conversations with peers about assigned readings (Wardle & Scott, 2015). This resistance led to some part-time instructors phasing out of teaching or finding work at other institutions. Similarly, Lovejoy et al. (2018) reported resistance from some instructors and explained that they responded with collegial, if somewhat challenging, respect:

Just as we must respect students’ attitudes toward their own languages, we must respect teachers’ pedagogical ideas and practices when they voice resistance. We can, however, ask them to examine their pedagogy in light of what our profession knows about language, writing, rhetorical situations, and choices. (p. 333)

Lovejoy et al. (2018) recognized that writing instructors come from diverse English studies backgrounds and do not have the same preparation or experience “to act fully on the language theories and policies that have been enacted by professional organizations” (p. 318). Therefore, to get faculty on board with their multilevel approach to language diversity at IUPUI, the scholars presented faculty with the argument that developing students’ knowledge about language diversity would result in greater meta-awareness about themselves as writers. Additionally, by sharing with faculty the demographic information of both IUPUI’s student population as well as the U.S census data, faculty were less resistant and saw the importance of engaging students about multilingual realities.

## Summary

In this chapter, I discussed the relevant literature that informed the design and implementation of the innovation. I first detailed the monolingual and multilingual pedagogical approaches to language diversity in the field of rhetoric and composition, situating them in the historical development of FYC and the *Students' Right to Their Own Language* resolution. I then unpacked the scholarship (and lack thereof) on post-secondary writing teacher preparation and continuing PD. Within this discussion, I argued that writing teacher preparation and continuing PD on linguistic diversity is limited, contributing to the continued use of monolingual or appropriateness-based approaches to language diversity in FYC.

## CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I discuss the methodological approach and design of the study I implemented to (a) promote students' development of critical language awareness while strengthening and enhancing their postsecondary writing skills, and (b) develop instructors' instructional techniques in supporting students' development of critical language awareness and postsecondary writing skills. In detailing my methods, I briefly review my reasoning for drawing upon design-based research (DBR). I then describe the research context and participant selection. Next, I detail the essential elements of the study and how I collected and analyzed the data. Finally, I discuss how I established and maintained methodological rigor and trustworthiness throughout the study.

### Methodological Approach

In exploring the development of DBR in education studies, Reinking and Bradley (2008) detailed that such experiments first appeared in the 1980s, but did not gain much traction until the early 1990s with the foundational works of Ann Brown, Alan Collins, and Denis Newman. In its early stages and throughout its first couple of decades, formative or design experiments were referred to by a variety of names including *formative research*, *teaching experiments*, *design studies*, *development research*, and *lesson studies*, and were often delineated by discipline or differences in characteristics. For example, literacy scholars often prefer *formative experiment* while math and technology researchers tend to use the term *design experiment* (Bradley & Reinking, 2011). Hoadley (2002) described and labeled the foundational works of formative/design experiments as employing *design-based research methods*. The Design-Based Research Collective (2003) then took up this naming to describe research that “blends empirical educational research with the theory-driven design of learning environments” (p. 5). Following

Hoadley (2002) and The Design-Based Research Collective (2003), I use the term *design-based research* (DBR) to describe the methodological approach I drew upon to implement this study.

The Design-Based Research Collective (2003) explained that, as a methodological approach, DBR examines learning in context and focuses on long-term impact and implementation of instructional reform. By grounding research in real-world contexts, researchers “attempt to bring about positive change” and produce findings “more transparent and useful to practitioners” (Reinking & Bradley, 2008, pp. 6–9). This transformational aim has been a key component of DBR beginning with Brown’s (1992) foundational work in design experiments. Brown sought to transform classrooms through students’ and instructors’ reflective practices. Similarly, for critical language education, Fairclough (1992b) explained that students, and instructors, should be encouraged “to see that they contribute through their own practice to the shaping and reshaping of the sociolinguistic order—to reproducing it or *transforming* it” (emphasis added, p. 54). Alim (2005) also took up the importance of transformation in CLA pedagogy, explaining that it works to raise students’ consciousness regarding how language can be used against them and, in turn, how they may be able to transform their living situations and educational contexts. Given the embedded transformative aims within DBR and CLA pedagogy, as well as my own transformative paradigmatic beliefs, the methodological approach complemented the pedagogical goals of this study.

### **The Contexts**

Between August of 2016 and May of 2018, I held the position of assistant to the Writing Program Administrator at Old Dominion University (ODU). In that position, I organized PD opportunities for general education writing faculty and worked alongside the WPA on an ePortfolio initiative for the general education writing sequence. Apart from my assistantship, I

conducted multiple small-scale research projects that focused on instructors' knowledge of and experience with language diversity, informing my development and facilitation of a professional learning community (PLC) on critical language awareness. Through the development of the PLC, discussed in more detail in chapter one, I collaborated and established rapport with six general education writing faculty, a couple of whom expressed an interest in further developing their pedagogical skills regarding CLA, not only for their own interest but also for their students' success. This study builds on my curiosities, findings from the previous research projects, and instructors' interest that grew out of their participation in the PLC, and examines our collaborative design and implementation of a CLA pedagogical innovation put in place in four sections of an FYC course. In the sections that follow, I provide more detail regarding the university context as well as the writing course in which the study occurred.

### ***The University***

ODU is a multicultural, residential university in the mid-Atlantic region of the U.S. At the time of this study, ODU had an enrollment of just under 25,000 students, with representation from 180 countries worldwide, and offered 91 Bachelor's programs across eight colleges within the university. Its partnerships with local and federal government organizations accounted for ODU's strong military representation, roughly 25% of the student body. To provide further information on ODU's diversity, Table 2 shows the race and ethnicity demographics for the total student enrollment and first-year student enrollment compared with the race and ethnicity demographics for faculty in the College of Arts and Letters at the time of the study.

**Table 2***Race and Ethnicity Demographics at ODU (at time of study)*

Race and Ethnicity	% of Total Student Enrollment	% of First Year Students	% of Faculty in College of Arts and Letters
African American/Black	26	40	7
Asian	4	4	5
Hispanic	8	9	5
Native American	<1	<1	<1
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	<1	<1	<1
Non-Resident Alien	3	1	5
Two or More Races	6	7	<1
Unknown	3	4	15
White	49	35	62

***First-year Composition***

The FYC sequence at ODU consisted of two courses, one at the 100-level and one at the 200-level, though students often took them in their first and second semesters, respectively. All students who had not earned credit for ENGL 110C through dual enrollment, Advanced Placement, the College Level Examination Program, or transfer credits were required to take ENGL 110C. Students in the Honors College took an equivalent course to ENGL 110C. Because of its status as a general education requirement, ODU offered approximately 120 sections of 110C each year, reaching over 2,400 students. For many of these students, ENGL 110C served as a home base as it was often taken in their first semester at ODU, and classes were capped at 19 students. Because of its extensive reach and purpose as a general education course (to be

discussed shortly), ENGL 110C was chosen as the ideal course in which to implement the innovation.

As detailed in the ODU (2018) course catalog, the purpose of ENGL 110C was “to prepare students to be effective writers of the kinds of compositions they will be called on to produce during their college careers” (para. 2). To meet this primary objective, ENGL 110C at ODU was delineated by four student learning outcomes (SLOs), which were most recently revised in 2015 and modeled after the national WPA Outcomes (2014). The four SLOs emphasized students’ development of rhetorical knowledge, critical thinking and information literacy skills, writing strategies, and knowledge of conventions. In developing rhetorical knowledge, in particular, students analyzed and composed various forms of texts “to understand how genre conventions shape readers’ and writers’ practices and purposes,” and students practiced “purposeful shifts in structure, content, diction, tone, formality, design, and/or medium in accordance with the rhetorical situation” (ODU SLOs). Students were expected to produce 5,000 words over the duration of the course, which they met by completing one in-class timed writing (often a midterm reflection), three formal essays, and a final exam. In ENGL 110C, instructors would often plan for students’ assignments to be a narrative (memoir or literacy narrative), visual or textual analysis, and a review, commentary, or brief argument. Students were expected to begin incorporating outside sources in their writing in ENGL 110C, but were not expected to produce an academic, researched essay until their 200-level writing course. Finally, students were required to collect their work in an archival or showcase ePortfolio, which instructors submitted to the WPA for assessment purposes. At minimum, the ePortfolios included the three formal essays as well as a reflective component that detailed students’ perceptions of themselves as writers throughout the course.

During the year prior to implementing the innovation, the general education writing program received a grant to pilot a WordPress ePortfolio template with selected instructors of 110, 200-level, and 300-level writing courses. The template provided a structure for students while they curated their ePortfolios and included elements for reflection, major assignments, lowstakes writing, and a blog page. Faculty who piloted the template in their classes encouraged students to use the template as a starting point and to adapt the template for their needs and purposes. Often, students changed themes, added or deleted pages, and established their own persona through visual literacy components. Additionally, the work developed from the grant initiated a growing culture of professional development within the department. Many writing instructors attended two-day workshops on ePortfolio pedagogy and template implementation while those selected to pilot the template with students received training and mentored support for an entire semester.

### **Participants**

Reinking and Bradley (2008) emphasized the importance for participants to have some sort of “genuine investment in the goals, intentions, and potential outcomes” of the innovation (p. 84). As such, I selected the participating instructors because of their willingness, interest, and commitment to the CLA initiative as well as their varying stances on the topic as evidenced by their participation in the spring 2017 PLC. Most importantly, each instructor had an interest in supporting language rights and had a foundation for developing students’ CLA in their classrooms. In addition to the two instructors, there were 57 students, across four sections of FYC, who volunteered to take part in the study. Within each section, I invited select students to participate in a focus group interview at the conclusion of the course. Ultimately, 19 students participated in focus group interviews.



### *Instructors*

I first met Taylor and Teresa in August of 2016 at an orientation for writing program faculty. At the orientation, I explained that I would be conducting interviews with instructors about their experiences with language and invited interested instructors to participate. At the end of the orientation, both instructors approached me with interest in participating in the interviews and provided their contact information. Ultimately, Taylor and Teresa were two of four instructors who agreed to be interviewed about their language experiences throughout the fall 2016 semester. In the spring of 2017, they both continued to participate in my research as two of six instructors who took part in a PD experience that explored a CLA approach to teaching in the FYC classroom. In the subsections that follow, I provide more background regarding each participating instructor.

**Taylor.** During the year of the innovation, Taylor, who identifies as a White male, began his 7th year of teaching at ODU. This was also his first year as a full-time instructor; previously, he had worked at ODU as a part-time instructor. Taylor shared that he has a passion for the science of language, and his academic background includes a Bachelor's and a Master's in Language Studies with an emphasis in TESOL. Taylor's self-reported linguistic repertoire includes standardized English with a familial Southern accent; Spanish, which he speaks fluently; and African American English, which has developed in part through his interactions and relationships with a Rastafarian friend group. Additionally, his linguistic repertoire has developed in tandem with and has influenced several other social identities for Taylor. In reference to his physical appearance, Taylor commented that he does not "look like a typical White guy" as he has dreadlocks that come down to his waist, though he puts them under a hat while in the classroom. In regard to his identity as a teacher, Taylor shared that he continuously

seeks out opportunities that help him grow as well as challenge his perspectives both inside and outside the classroom. Taylor noted that from his years teaching at the postsecondary level, he has come to view college and the teaching of writing as a place for change and a place for growth: “college gets us out of the binary thinking, and that’s one thing an English class can do is to help people understand the world is more complex.”

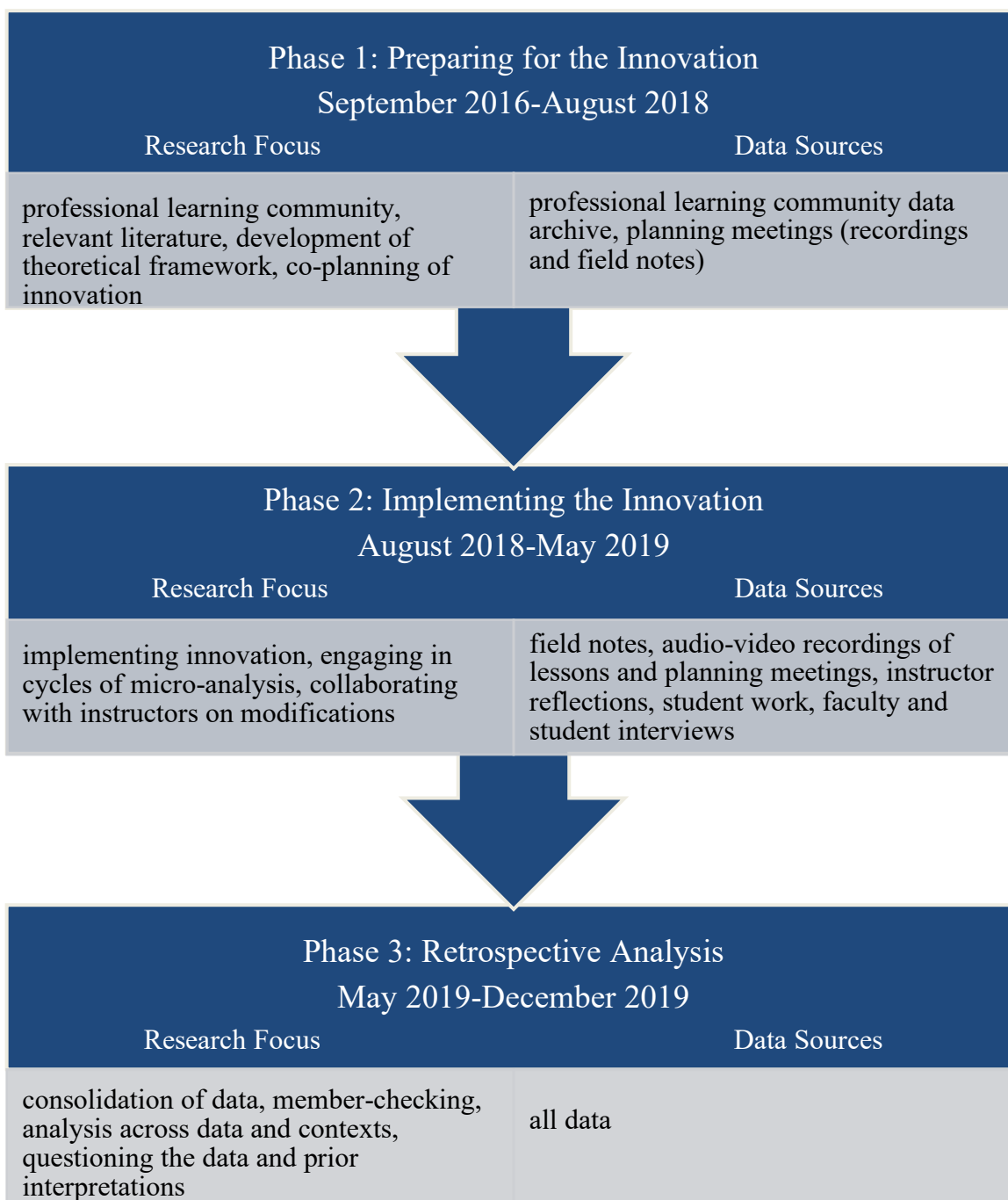
**Teresa.** During the year of the innovation, Teresa, who identifies as a White female, began her 8th year of teaching at ODU as a part-time faculty member. As part of two military families, her own family of origin as well as her partnership, Teresa grew up learning how to read from exploring comic books while traveling across the country. Much of her formal education took place on military bases with classmates of differing nationalities who spoke a variety of languages in addition to English. In regard to her own language, Teresa reported that she identifies as a speaker of SAE with aspects of a southern accent which she attributes to her time living in Mississippi and Virginia. In addition, she spent significant amounts of time going to school, living, or working in Japan, South Korea, and Australia. Although she had prior teaching experience as both an interim and substitute teacher in various K-12 contexts, it was not until she returned to college, when her children were in high school, that she received any teacher preparation or pedagogical training. Teresa noted that she took “a few” linguistics courses while working toward her B.A. and M.A. degrees in English literature and also obtained a certificate in Women’s Studies. Teresa shared that over time she has come to have two main goals for students in her classes: that her students will feel comfortable and confident writing in other courses and that they will succeed by graduating from college.

### *Students*

I invited students to participate in the study during the first two weeks of their ENGL 110C course. Each instructor introduced the course focus (or theme as it was often described to students) of language diversity on the first day of the semester. Within the first week of class, I led a 25-minute activity on language perceptions, modeled after “Mapping Attitudes” from the “Do You Speak American?” curriculum (PBS, 2005). At the conclusion of the activity, the instructor left the classroom, and I explained to students my research interests and students’ options for participating in the study. I explained that, as a student in Taylor and Teresa’s FYC classes, they would receive the same curriculum but that I would only collect work from students who opted to participate in the study. Students then completed a consent form in which they did or did not agree to participate in the study. Students who volunteered to participate selected the ways in which they would participate: through their written work, audio recordings, and/or video recordings (though I did not end up using video recording for data collection). I gathered data from each student who volunteered to participate in the study. Near the conclusion of each course, I invited a select number of student participants to take part in a focus group interview. I invited focus group participants based on their examination of language, identity, and power in class discussions and writing assignments. Focus group students conveyed diverse perspectives regarding language throughout the semester and/or were active participants in pivotal classroom moments during data collection. Because of the raciolinguistic and critical race pedagogy theoretical perspectives that informed the design and implementation of the innovation, I have chosen to disclose students’ racial identifications, at times, across chapters four, five, and six, depending upon the unfolding example and/or my analysis of the data. A full list of student pseudonyms and racial identifications is provided in Appendix A.

### **Phases of Data Collection**

Following Gravemeijer and Cobb's (2006) framework for design experiment research, I designed the study and collected data over three different phases, which I titled Preparing for the Innovation, Implementing the Innovation, and Retrospective Analysis. In this section, I describe the phases of the framework and detail how I carried out each phase. Prior to my discussion, I detail the timeline, research focus, and data sources for each phase in Figure 1.

**Figure 1***Timeline of Innovation's Phases*

### **Phase One: Planning for the Innovation**

The aim of phase one is to prepare for the pedagogical innovation by establishing “a local instruction theory that can be elaborated and refined while conducting the experiment” (Gravemeijer & Cobb, 2006, p. 19). In formulating the local instruction theory, researchers establish learning goals, or instructional endpoints by considering the instructional starting points for the context in which the innovation will take place. The starting points include a review of the relevant literature and the completion of localized assessments of the research context (e.g., interviews, quantitative assessments, observations, etc.). In establishing the learning goals, I consulted relevant literature regarding CLA, language ideologies, and teacher preparation and PD as discussed in chapter two. Additionally, the learning goals were informed by local assessments that took place between the spring of 2016 and the summer of 2018.

For the first localized assessment, conducted in spring 2016, I used a published, Likert-style survey instrument to explore how some college writing instructors at ODU perceived the impact of African American English (AAE) on students’ academic achievement as well as instructors’ perceptions regarding their pedagogical preparedness to teach students with AAE features in their writing. Findings suggested a need for teacher training and support when it comes to students’ language rights. Specifically, 50% of the participants responded that their previous coursework inadequately prepared them for negotiating the language differences of AAE speakers in their FYC classrooms. Additionally, the majority of participants (67%) responded that they would like to learn more teaching strategies for AAE speaking students given the status of SAE in higher education.

Building on the quantitative findings and following Fairclough’s (1989) assertion that “critical language awareness should be built upon . . . existing language capabilities and

experience[s]” (p. 240), I conducted a series of narrative interview *conversations* (Riessman, 2008) with four ODU writing instructors in the fall of 2016. By drawing upon narrative inquiry, I gathered more in-depth information about instructors’ experiences with language inside and outside of academia as well as the impact of their experiences on their pedagogy and teacher identities. Specifically, I sought to understand how the language experiences of these writing instructors interacted with the grand narrative of FYC and how those experiences influenced their identities as language users and instructors.

After the individual conversations, the four instructors and I came together for a collective conversation (Riessman, 2008) to give feedback and additional input toward the creation of a PD experience for writing program faculty. From my conversations with writing faculty, I found three themes pertaining to their ideal experiences for PD. Faculty expressed a desire to (a) listen to and learn from colleagues, (b) engage in learning through reflection which challenges and develops their pedagogy, and (c) collaborate with colleagues in actively giving students voice in education.

Thus, in the spring of 2017, I facilitated a PLC, organized by a framework of *Listening, Reflecting, and Collaborating*, that engaged faculty with PD in CLA. I designed the structure and curriculum of the PLC in hopes of providing space for faculty to reflect on and challenge assumptions and ideologies about language and teaching with one another. Moreover, I encouraged writing instructors to reflect on their own language experiences to re-evaluate and re-imagine their identities in the classroom as instructors of writing in a Standardized English institution (i.e., education).

For each meeting, participants prepared by reading pieces on language awareness and language diversity and by responding to discussion prompts. The group first read about and

explored the concept of standard language ideology and then focused on particular language diversity concepts in educational contexts including, *Students' Right to Their Own Language*, the *National Language Policy*, and code-meshing. The group concluded with readings on and a discussion about implementing a CLA approach to the teaching of writing, focusing on how to align this pedagogical approach with ODU's current student learning outcomes (see Appendix B for an overview of the curriculum as well as the major topics and discussion prompts from each workshop). Over the course of four meetings, instructors grappled with the diverse viewpoints of others as well as their own often conflicting beliefs toward language and education. In individual follow-up interviews during the summer of 2017, instructors articulated their appreciation for but also the difficulty in examining different language beliefs. Moreover, the majority of instructors voiced an uncertainty or hesitancy toward bringing the PD work on CLA to their classrooms and their students.

Phase one, planning for the innovation, continued a year later, in the summer of 2018, after I invited two of the PLC members, Taylor and Teresa, to implement CLA pedagogy in their classrooms. Taylor, Teresa, and I met to collaboratively develop the local instruction theory and negotiate how each instructor would work toward the learning goals in their classrooms—a key component of this approach to research. In discussing DBR, Gravemeijer and Cobb (2006) asserted that participating instructors must have proactive roles throughout the design and implementation processes, which requires researchers to “reconcile the need to plan in advance with the need to be flexible” (p. 21). Furthermore, Reinking and Bradley (2008) explained that researchers engaged in DBR work must put “aside preconceived notions about exactly how the intervention *ought* to be carried out” and, instead, develop “a core of nonnegotiable elements” that frame the innovation (emphasis in original, p. 84). Therefore, in utilizing DBR as my



methodological approach, I maintained specific essential elements during the planning and implementation of the study.

### ***Essential Elements***

The innovation put into place was grounded in the following two essential elements: faculty facilitating conversations and activities with students regarding the relationships between language, power, and identity; and students examining and questioning these relationships through inquiry and writing.

### ***Planning Meetings***

In the first planning meeting, I reviewed the goals of the study and the essential elements with Taylor and Teresa, explaining that the innovation would be designed collaboratively but that the study would be grounded in the goals and essential elements. I also gave each instructor a document that reviewed their involvement in the previous stages of data collection, including some of their responses from the PLC to remind them of their prior thinking regarding language diversity and CLA. The bulk of our first planning meeting was spent reviewing the departmental requirements for ENGL 110C and getting to know how the instructors had previously met those requirements (i.e., what sort of assignments and readings they incorporated in their courses). Because of my graduate assistantship, I was also teaching a section of ENGL 110C during the first iteration of data collection (fall 2018). Therefore, I was actively involved in the planning meetings not only for purposes of the study, but also because I would be implementing CLA pedagogy in my own ENGL 110C classroom.

In the second planning meeting, we spent time thinking together about the major assignments that students would complete, and we spent time revising previous assignment sheets of ours to meet the innovation's goals. During this meeting, we also began negotiating my

role for each instructor's respective classes. Both Taylor and Teresa asked that I bring suggested reading and artifact lists to the next meeting as I brought knowledge of potential readings students might engage with to support their inquiry into language, power, and identity (see Appendix C for a list of texts and resources that informed the local instruction theory). Although I was positioned as an "expert" in this capacity, Taylor and I negotiated that I would not necessarily be leading any of his classes. He felt comfortable and confident to lead the courses given his background in linguistics. In contrast, Teresa and I negotiated that I would be leading the bulk of language-related activities throughout the fall semester so that she could learn from my facilitation during the first iteration and perhaps take over or co-facilitate in the second iteration.

To prepare for our third meeting, we agreed to review two readings, Amy Tan's "Mother Tongue" and Carmen Fought's (2018) "Are White People Ethnic? Whiteness, Dominance, and Ethnicity," in order to continue thinking together about aspects of language discrimination. This also allowed Taylor and Teresa to familiarize themselves with potential course readings. This final collaborative meeting was devoted to discussing Tan's and Fought's work, finalizing major essay assignments, discussing some lowstakes activities and writing assignments, and planning for individual meetings during the course of the semester.

By the conclusion of the third meeting, Taylor and I developed a curriculum in which students would compose a rhetorical or literary analysis of a text; a memoir on a language-related experience; and a commentary on a language-related topic. Across units, students would read selections from *Language Diversity and Academic Writing* (Looker-Koenigs, 2018), a collection of condensed essays by various scholars who study language, to complement Taylor's genre-based approach to teaching FYC. Additionally, Taylor and I negotiated that he would

maintain his approach to revision in which students wrote first drafts during the first two-thirds of the semester and conferenced about revisions for the last third of the semester. Teresa and I developed a curriculum in which students would compose a narrative on a language-related experience; a visual rhetorical analysis on an advertisement; a critique essay of an academic article from *Language Diversity and Academic Writing*; and an argument essay in which students argued a stance on a language-related topic. Similarly, across units, students would read selections from Looker-Koenigs (2018) as well as other texts to complement her use of the departmental text, *Everyone's an Author* (Lunsford et al., 2017).

### **Phase Two: The Innovation**

The second phase of the framework constitutes implementing the innovation and engaging in micro-cycles of design and analysis. In developing the local instruction theory in phase one, instructors and researchers postulate how learning may occur through specific activities in the classroom. While implementing the innovation in phase two, instructors and researchers examine how to improve and develop the local instruction theory through “cyclic processes of thought experiments and instruction experiments” (Gravemeijer & Cobb, 2006, p. 25). Meaning, instructors and researchers revise, as necessary, the day-to-day learning activities and the overall instruction theory based on micro-cycles of analysis conducted throughout the study.

I met regularly with the instructors in brief, after-class meetings (up to ten minutes) and in longer (up to an hour) planning meetings, approximately every other week, during the innovation. To guide our cycles of micro-analysis, I shared my observations with the instructors, and I asked instructors to share their reflections (see Appendix D) prior to our scheduled meetings when possible. Together, we brainstormed what was working well and what

modifications might better inform the local instruction theory. Specifically, we examined our forms of data (e.g., field notes, teacher reflections, student work) for evidence of students' developing CLA (i.e., awareness of how language works; awareness of the interrelationships between language, power, and identity; evidence of action toward social change), and we examined data to understand how the instructors' instructional techniques were supporting, or could be modified to better support, the development of students' CLA.

In addition to the micro-cycles of analysis during phase two, macrocycles of analysis occur over time and across contexts as part of Gravemeijer and Cobb's (2006) framework. This implementation process for the innovation was iterative, beginning in the fall of 2018 and ending in the spring of 2019. Over the duration of each course, I observed class meetings, facilitated classroom conversations and activities as necessary, reflected with instructors to modify the innovation outside of class meetings, and facilitated student focus groups at the conclusion of each course. At the end of the fall 2018 semester, I met with the instructors individually to review the first iteration of the study in its entirety. Drawing upon the collected data (e.g., teacher reflections, field notes, planning notes, student work, and the student focus group interviews which I redacted for confidentiality purposes), the instructors and I made several large scale modifications (discussed in chapters four and five) for their respective classrooms to continue working toward the innovation's goals. After the second iteration, I again facilitated student focus groups at the conclusion of each course, and I conducted follow-up interviews with the instructors about their participation in the project.

Throughout the study, I collected a variety of data including teaching and learning artifacts, field notes, recorded instruction, and participant interviews. Each of these is explicated in more detail in the following sections. Rather than one specific form of data responding to an

individual research question, the data represent the perspectives of various stakeholders involved in the project and, collectively, informed the research questions that drove this study and determined the successes and hindrances within the innovation (Reinking & Bradley, 2008). For review, I asked the following research questions in the design, implementation, and analysis of this study:

1. How might critical language awareness pedagogy in first-year composition promote students' linguistic consciousness?
2. How might a collaborative, co-designed critical language awareness pedagogy in first-year composition support instructors in promoting students' linguistic consciousness and developing students' postsecondary writing skills?
3. How might critical language awareness pedagogy in first-year composition work toward the national Writing Program Administrators' outcomes for first-year composition?

### ***Teaching and Learning Artifacts***

I collected various artifacts related to teaching and learning used by participants in the study. Teaching artifacts included syllabi, assignment sheets, instructional handouts, and lesson plans. In addition, I asked instructors to compose weekly reflections regarding their participation as both learners and instructors in the project (see Appendix D). Learning artifacts from participating students included major writing assignments, lowstakes writing assignments, written reflections in response to class readings and discussions, peer review feedback, and instructor feedback. Since students' learning artifacts informed the modifications made during the micro-cycles of analysis, I collected student work throughout the semester. To manage the collection and storage of student work, instructors provided me with access to their Learning Management Systems at the beginning of each semester. I collected students' electronic

submissions from the course LMS. For the few instances of handwritten work, I took photographs of the work.

### *Field Notes*

As part of my role as a participant-observer (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), I took copious field notes while observing classroom instruction. I originally intended to use a semi-structured observation protocol (see Appendix E) grounded in the study's learning goals and essential elements. As part of this protocol I asked about the potential factors that may be supporting and/or hindering the success of the innovation in an effort to "capitalize on the enhancing factors and to circumvent or neutralize the inhibiting factors" (Reinking & Bradley, 2008, p. 76). However, early on during classroom observations, I found the protocol limiting my observations; therefore, I instead took descriptive ethnographic field notes (Emerson et al., 1995) for each class period and used the protocol to create memos from my field notes at the end of each week. This process produced two sets of field notes: 1) the day-to-day classroom descriptions and 2) the synthesizing and analyzing of individual weeks guided by the observation protocol.

To complement the taking of field notes, I made use of triangulation of methods and engaged in member-checking of my observations with relevant participants. Emerson et al. (1995) explained that writing field notes involves "active processes of interpretation and sense-making: noting and writing down some things as 'significant,' noting but ignoring others as 'not significant,' and even missing other possibly significant things altogether" (p. 8). Thus, member-checking was a frequent part of planning meetings as the instructors and I made sense of classroom happenings and student performance. Additionally, while participating in and/or facilitating learning in Teresa's classroom, I made use of "jottings," or "abbreviated words and

phrases” (Emerson et al., 1995, p. 19), and reconstructed written descriptions of classroom events as soon as possible after the fact.

In detailing the collaborative process of design research, Gravemeijer and Cobb (2006) suggested that researchers and instructors “conduct short debriefing sessions . . . immediately after each classroom session in order to develop shared interpretations of what might be going on in the classroom” (p. 28). In addition, they suggested conducting longer meetings periodically to revisit the local instruction theory and the overall learning process of the class. To document the teaching and learning process as well as the revision and refinement of the local instruction theory, I took field notes and audio-recorded the researcher/instructor debriefings to keep “a log of the ongoing interpretations, conjectures, and decisions” (p. 29).

### ***Audio-recording***

To complement the teaching and learning artifacts as well as the taking of field notes, I used two audio-recorders to record the participating students and instructors during class lectures, whole-group discussion, and small-group conversations. I also recorded the planning meetings with instructors. The audio-recordings not only informed my “jottings” (Emerson et al., 1995, p. 19) and field notes but also captured words, phrases, and conversations that illustrated students and instructors grappling with aspects of the innovation, including the development of or the facilitation of CLA. Although I audio-recorded most class sessions, I selected only lessons, conversations, and moments relevant to the study to transcribe.

### ***Interviews***

Participating instructors took part in individual interviews at the conclusion of the study and select participating students took part in a focus group interview at the conclusion of their respective classes. Instructor interviews occurred in May 2019, and student interviews occurred

in December 2018 and April 2019. From the students who volunteered to take part in the study, select students were invited to participate in the focus group based on their active participation in and/or distinguishing remarks regarding their inquiry into the relationships between language, power, and identity. The interviews served to complement my observations as a researcher and allowed for direct input and reflections from the central classroom stakeholders: the students and instructors. In particular, I asked instructors about their participation in the planning and implementation of the innovation, about the potential impact of the study on their pedagogy, and about the potential influence of the study on their identities as instructors and language users (see Appendix F). In facilitating focus group interviews with students, I asked about their experience with and perceptions of the innovation's materials (i.e., readings, discussions, and writing assignments), about their knowledge of and beliefs toward language after taking the class, and about what they may do with their knowledge about language after completing the class (see Appendix G).

### **Phase Three: Retrospective Analysis**

The third phase of the framework constitutes Gravemeijer and Cobb's (2006) notion of *retrospective analysis*. This form of analysis employs Glaser and Strauss' (1967) constant comparative method by analyzing the entire data set and working chronologically through data "episode by episode" (p. 38) in order to refine and revise the local instruction theory. Such refinement and revision constitutes a primary objective of retrospective analysis; however, retrospective analysis may also "spark design ideas that go beyond those that were tried out in the classroom," and, in turn, "create the need for a new experiment . . . constituting macrocycles of design and analysis" (pp. 42–43).



While engaging in retrospective analysis, I first examined the data chronologically to inform how the innovation developed or hindered students' CLA development. During this first cycle of coding, I employed Initial Coding (Saldana, 2009), incorporating both In Vivo and Process Coding as I drew from participants' language choices (In Vivo) and focused on identifying actions happening in the data (Process Coding—ing verbs). Additionally, I memoed about these codes by expanding upon them, making connections to other codes, and analyzing the moments that were coded. In a second cycle of coding, I employed Focused Coding (Saldana, 2009) by organizing codes based on similar concepts and themes. I worked through the Initial codes by naming them a theme or concept and applying similar themes/concepts to multiple codes. I did this by creating and continually adding to a drop-down menu of theme choices (and revising the wording as necessary based on my continued review of Initial codes). I also simultaneously read back through my Initial Coding memoing to revisit the connections that I had previously written about. By engaging in the process of retrospective analysis, I developed five theoretical assertions for the continued implementation of CLA pedagogy in the first-year writing classroom.

### **Intentions for Rigor and Trustworthiness**

DBR is, arguably, an ideal methodological approach for research in educational contexts as it supports stronger alignment between theory and praxis and documents “what it is like to try to make learning happen from the point of view of those who would foster learning” (i.e., instructors) (Hoadley, 2004, p. 205). As such, DBR provides an innate sense of validity and “ensures that the results can be effectively used to assess, inform, and improve practice” in at least one or more contexts (Anderson & Shattuck, 2012, p. 16). However, because DBR investigates pedagogical innovations in real classrooms with numerous agentive participants,

innovations are not entirely in the researcher's control; therefore, in this section, I detail my methods for establishing and maintaining rigor and trustworthiness throughout the study.

### **Rigor**

First of all, to establish rigor, I aimed for systemic validity (Hoadley, 2004) by closely aligning the theory, research, and practice of the study. By grounding the innovation in essential elements, which were established based on the theoretical framework and relevant literature for the study, I continually asked how the research informs theory which, in turn, informs practice. To examine how theory and practice inform one another, I triangulated data by collecting from multiple sources (Creswell, 2012; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Reinking & Bradley, 2008). For DBR, Reinking and Bradley (2008) explained, "multiple sources of data are necessary to acquire a deep understanding of the intervention and its effects" (p. 55). Thus, I collected data from student, faculty, and participant-observer perspectives and collected data that represents both articulated and embodied concepts (i.e., interviews and observations) of the innovation.

In addition to establishing systemic validity and triangulation of data collection, I worked toward rigor by setting aside adequate time for the innovation and DBR process. For qualitative research, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest prolonged engagement in the research process to build rapport with and knowledge of the participants and to become acquainted with the specific context in which the study is taking place. Hoadley (2004), in discussing DBR studies, explained that adequate time is required "to see how the intervention settles into a more stable state as both individuals' practices and the group practices adapt to the new tools and possibly research equilibrium" (p. 206). In supporting the need for adequate time in carrying out the innovation, I selected faculty participants with whom I already had established working relationships and who

agreed to implement the innovation for two consecutive semesters in at least one of their ENGL 110C courses.

### **Trustworthiness**

Reinking and Bradley (2008) explained that replicability, as it is traditionally conceived, is irrelevant in DBR. Instead, “relevant criteria are . . . those of generalizability and the trustworthiness of the constructs developed” (p. 47). In reporting my findings, I aimed to establish trustworthiness by providing thick and transparent description of the innovation for its potential adaptation in other contexts. As part of the thick description, I provided details on the participating instructors and students as well as the learning process as a whole in hopes that “outsiders [would] have a basis for deliberating adjustments to other situations” (p. 45). In addition, I questioned the findings during and after the implementation. Brown (1992) explained that, “there is a tendency to romanticize research of this nature and rest claims of success on a few engaging anecdotes or particularly exciting transcripts” (p. 173). Reinking and Bradley (2008) explored this notion further and stated that researchers “must have a strong commitment to discovering the flaws, weaknesses, and limitations of an intervention and the inadequacy of theories underlying its use” to maintain rigor and trustworthiness of the findings (p. 60). Therefore, I actively considered multiple interpretations of the data to critique moments of success and/or failure and used these interpretations to provide a transparent account of the innovation.

### **Researcher’s Role**

In DBR, “the most realistic and justifiable role for a researcher . . . is that of a participant-observer” (Reinking & Bradley, 2008, p. 79). Because researchers engage deliberately with the setting and participants of the innovation, “it is incumbent on the researcher to describe and

monitor ways that their own agenda is responsible for the results” (Hoadley, 2004, p. 205). In this section, I explore my role as participant-observer and detail how I reflected upon and accounted for my own biases during the research process.

### **The Affordances and Limitations of Taking on the Role of Participant-Observer**

As a participant-observer, I acted as “a purposeful agent of change” (Reinking & Bradley, 2008, p. 79), taking an active role in planning, designing, and implementing the innovation with the participating instructors. Because such an active role complicates the influence of researchers in the ecology of the classroom, Reinking and Bradley (2008) suggested that researchers have more active involvement in earlier iterations of a study and have less participatory involvement in later iterations. During the summer planning meetings, Taylor and I negotiated that I would have more of an observational role during both iterations because of his comfort with and background in language-related topics. In contrast, Teresa and I negotiated that I would take on a strong participatory role during the first iteration and more of an observational role during the second iteration. Cole and Knowles (1993) explained that “true collaboration is more likely to result when the aim is *not* for *equal* involvement in all aspects of the research; but, rather, for *negotiated and mutually agreed upon* involvement where strengths and available time commitments to process are honored” (p. 486, emphasis in original). Initially, this negotiation occurred during the summer of 2018 planning meetings and was revisited between the first and second iterations.

The participant-observer role allowed me to actively support instructors in planning, implementing, and reflecting on the innovation, and allowed me to actively support students in further developing CLA through inquiry and writing. However, this role also influenced my awareness of classroom happenings and conversations. For example, a number of my field notes

from Teresa's first iteration were composed as a response to the jottings made during my facilitation of class activities. Therefore, during analysis, I returned to audio-recordings and transcripts of class meetings to more closely experience the classes as an observer rather than as a facilitator.

### **Researcher's Aim**

Hostetler (2005) expressed that "our ultimate aim as researchers and practitioners is to serve people's well-being—the well-being of students, teachers, communities, and others" (p. 17). Through this study, it was my aim to serve the well-being of others so that they may contribute to the well-being of society. Because this study invited and encouraged instructors and students to examine the interrelationships between language, power, and identity, some participants alluded to or voiced discriminatory and harmful perspectives. Although I personally strive to facilitate learning from multiple perspectives and honor multiple funds of knowledge, I also believe that classrooms are ideal spaces to interrogate discriminatory beliefs that limit the development and human experience of those who identify with oppressed groups—after all, this is one way to actively serve the well-being of others. Therefore, I encouraged instructors to lean into these moments in their teaching and reflect on these moments outside the classroom. For myself, I kept an active log with my jottings in which I reflected upon the tensions and harmful perspectives that arose.

### **Summary**

In this chapter, I began by reviewing the use of DBR as a methodological approach in working toward this study's pedagogical goals. I then discussed my research methods, detailing the research context for both ODU and the ENGL 110C course, participant selection, and means of data collection and analysis. I concluded this chapter with my methods for establishing and

maintaining rigor and trustworthiness throughout the study and an exploration of my role and identity as a participant-observer in this project.

## CHAPTER IV

### TAYLOR'S ITERATIONS: "WILL THEY RISE UP? I HOPE, I HOPE SO."

In chapters four and five, I present findings from implementing CLA pedagogy with Taylor and Teresa in four sections of first-year composition (FYC) over two iterations. In chapter four, I discuss the innovation as it was designed, implemented, modified, and implemented a second time for Taylor's classes. Subsequently, I discuss findings from Teresa's classes in chapter five. For both chapters, I organize findings based on iteration and, within each iteration, I organize findings based on the study's two essential elements: faculty facilitating conversations and activities with students regarding the relationships between language, power, and identity; and then students examining and questioning these relationships through inquiry and writing. Because of this organization, I mostly present the instructors' and students' findings separately; however, the instructors' and students' experiences within the innovation were interdependent. At times, findings from both instructor and students inform the discussion of the innovation's essential elements.

#### **Taylor's Participation in the Pre-Innovation Planning Meetings**

As discussed in chapters one and three, Taylor, a year and a half prior to the innovation, participated in a professional learning community (PLC) focusing on developing and implementing CLA pedagogy. During the PLC, Taylor expressed support for students' language rights and critiqued SAE in ways that many of the other instructors did not. For example, as Taylor participated in the PLC, he often noted the racial and class biases embedded in SAE; however, at the conclusion of the PLC, Taylor remained uncertain about his role in dismantling language discrimination in the FYC classroom. In particular, he alluded to a felt responsibility to

enact an “English teacher” identity and uphold SAE in the teaching of writing, even if it was to the detriment of students’ other language varieties and identities.

In the pre-innovation planning meetings that occurred in the summer of 2018, Taylor’s previous feeling of uncertainty was expressed as hesitancy and foreshadowed later feelings of fear and discomfort in implementing our work with students. These emotions were highlighted in our planning of the memoir unit as well as our discussion of Fought’s (2018) work on language and race. During our first pre-innovation planning meeting, Taylor expressed that a literacy narrative option, an assignment that asks students to reflect on their reading and writing histories and their impact on students’ identities, would not be successful for many students from privileged backgrounds as they had been reading and writing in ways valued within K-16 academic spaces throughout their lives. Thus, composing an engaging memoir about their literacy would be difficult if they did not have a momentous event revolving around language and literacy on which to write. Taylor also referenced Frederick Douglass’ autobiography, in which Douglass detailed learning how to read as an enslaved individual, as a model text for literacy narratives. In response to this concern, I put forth the idea of and importance of getting students from privileged backgrounds to reflect on their privilege when it comes to language and literacy. Specifically, I brainstormed aloud how we might ask students to consider the question, “what does it mean for [them] to have access to [SAE]?” By the close of the conversation, Taylor added that we might lead students to consider the question, “how does your literacy manifest in your life?” At the conclusion of our meeting, Taylor posed a task to the group to think about how not to “scare” students or put them off with the CLA innovation. With this proposal, Taylor seemed to take action regarding his overall feeling of hesitancy by encouraging a group responsibility for developing pedagogy that would address potential student resistance.



Taylor's hesitancy in implementing CLA pedagogy was similarly evident in his response to our collaborative reading by Fought's (2018), "Are White People Ethnic? Whiteness, Dominance, and Ethnicity." In reading this piece in preparation for our third pre-innovation planning meeting, we intended to continue thinking together about the theory supporting CLA pedagogy, especially how it pertained to racial identities, and to consider the text as a potential assigned reading for students. In our planning meeting discussion, Taylor's response to the text was, "I don't think students will get it," and that it was "too advanced for freshmen and sophomores." Taylor's hesitancy in including the piece as a student reading appeared to be because of its presentation of material being "too advanced" rather than because of the content of race and language privilege; however, it is possible that his initial hesitancy actually blanketed feelings of fear and discomfort in having students work with a text that tackled the issue of White privilege and language use, as evidenced by his earlier push to not "scare" off students while implementing CLA pedagogy. The potential of underlying feelings of fear and discomfort at the planning stage foreshadowed Taylor's direct expression of such feelings during the first iteration of the innovation.

### **Iteration One**

The first iteration of the innovation got off to a rocky start as the university had to close for a week due to severe weather from Hurricane Florence. This led to some overlap and some student confusion in the analysis and narrative units in an already packed schedule that devoted two weeks to each unit. Throughout the iteration, the success of the study's pedagogical goals was influenced by multiple factors, including Taylor's continual negotiation of the innovation's essential elements with his previous genre-based approach to teaching ENGL 110C and his processing of a "crisis of identity as an antiracist teacher." These factors would contribute to

students' overall CLA development and focal students' articulation of an appropriateness-based stance toward language use at the conclusion of the iteration.

### **Faculty Facilitating Conversations and Activities with Students Regarding the Relationships Between Language, Power, and Identity**

Whereas Taylor initially understood how students might examine the relationships between language and power in the third unit, during which students composed a commentary piece about a language-related idea, he struggled with how he might support students' CLA development during the first two units. In the first unit, students conducted rhetorical or literary analyses of popular texts, such as music videos, song lyrics, or images. In the second unit, students were invited to reflect on a language experience through a narrative or memoir genre, though most students reflected on general life experiences, such as involvement in extracurriculars or interactions with friends and family, rather than on a personal language experience. Because of the perceived lack of cohesion with the innovation in the first two units of the course, as well as Taylor's feeling that we were "taking on too much at once," he suggested altering the second iteration of the innovation to a single unit of study, in the commentary unit, rather than incorporating it throughout the course as an overall pedagogical approach. Because the commentary unit was scheduled last in the first iteration, students did not tackle difficult conversations regarding language and power until halfway through the first iteration. As a result, only once Taylor began to facilitate class discussions during the commentary unit, did he appear to fully process his hesitations and fears surrounding the innovation.

The processing was initiated during the October 5th class discussion regarding the concept of code-switching and its application in academic contexts. Students prepared for class

by reading two selections by Vershawn Young: “Code-Meshing: The New Way to Do English” (2014) and “The Problem with Linguistic Double Consciousness” (2018). As part of the discussion, Taylor asked students if a “typical English teacher” would accept the word “punked” in an academic paper, as it was an example explored in one of the day’s readings.

**Lily:** Depends on the paper.

**Taylor:** Well, depends on the genre because you’re working with me now, right?

**Cayla:** Depends on the teacher.

**Taylor:** But what about a high school—

**Lily:** You let us do that for our memoir but not our other piece.

**Taylor:** Right, so is that a contradiction?

**Lily:** Yes.

**Taylor:** [laughter] Very good. That’s the right answer [laughter]. But I find myself kind of struggling with these questions as well. That’s one thing that we’re, uh, looking at by posing some of these questions to you. Code-meshing definitely happens. Alright, so we’ve got social media and tech-based writing platforms . . .

In this brief exchange, Taylor first responded to Lily by reiterating the terminology of genre, rather than “paper,” and the importance of genre in Taylor’s pedagogical approach to ENGL 110C: “because you’re working with me now.” Lily then called out Taylor for this act of gatekeeping because he had allowed students to use words like “punked” in their memoirs but had not allowed it in their analysis essays. This exchange elicited nervous laughter from Taylor and a quick, but honest, response that he “struggles with these questions as well” before he moved on in the discussion. This moment stands out as perhaps the first moment in this iteration in which students articulated an awareness of the complexity of language choices. Lily named the discrepancy in what they were reading about in “The Problem of Linguistic Double

Consciousness” (Young, 2018) through problematizing what was expected of them in their writing class.

In an October 10th planning meeting with me five days after acknowledging to students that he, too, “struggles with these questions,” Taylor expressed that he was having a “crisis of identity as an antiracist teacher.” This crisis developed partially in response to students’ lack of uptake regarding the language content and their limited participation in class discussion. Additionally, it developed in response to his growing self-doubt and lack of confidence in implementing an antiracist teaching agenda across his courses which he had prided himself on during the pre-innovation planning meetings.

During the October 10th meeting, Taylor reflected that, although he does identify as an antiracist teacher and employs an antiracist stance in all of his courses (e.g., FYC and introduction to literature), “bringing up these topics is painful for a lot of students, and [he doesn’t] want to experience pain either. So, it’s like this kind of . . . split view on [his] own part”—simultaneously wanting and not wanting to employ an antiracist stance. I asked him to clarify the “pain,” and he continued to work through his own understanding of the idea of pain. In alluding to prior semesters when teaching ENGL 211C (the second course in the FYC sequence), Taylor shared that,

the painful moment is when students think that they already have it figured out [and] that [he’s] just indoctrinating them. They don’t have to listen, they have to get through this for an attendance grade, and they freaking hate having to take my class. . . . That’s what’s painful.

Furthermore, he explained that “having a difficult conversation,” such as how language ideologies oppress and discriminate based on race and/or gender, is not only painful but also can lead to limited student participation or rejection of course material. Taylor shared his stance that alienating students because of course content or delivery was “not good teaching.” He continued

by reflecting on current and past classroom interactions with students: “it just seems like I’m not going to know what a good process to deliver [an antiracist stance] is for another couple years . . . and it just bothers me that I’m not there.” The discomfort with inflicting pain, coupled with a growing sense of self-doubt in successfully implementing an antiracist agenda, “thinking I have it figured out . . . but then trying to deliver it and not feeling necessarily successful,” led Taylor to question his confidence in a curriculum that aimed to work toward social justice, such as our CLA pedagogical innovation, ultimately hindering his ability to facilitate discussions with students on language and power that might support their CLA development.

After this meeting, Taylor continued to process his identity crisis in weekly teaching reflections as well as impromptu meetings with me. In a week seven teaching reflection, Taylor discussed the difficulty of facilitating, let alone participating in, social justice conversations with “a group of strangers” as he identified the students. Although he had purposefully planned for the commentary unit, the unit most clearly designed for students to grapple with ideologies regarding language and power, to come later in the semester when he and the students would know each other better, it seemed that the power differential within the teacher-student dynamic maintained a perceived distance with which Taylor continued to grapple. In his reflection, Taylor questioned whether this “kind of work” is “even possible with the kind of power distance between teacher and student,” sharing that, “there really needs to be a personal relationship and trust for breakthroughs to happen of any sort.” In his processing, Taylor went on to acknowledge the need to relinquish control to students for social justice work to succeed, but he also expressed a fear in relinquishing control to students regarding language-related social justice:

I get disappointed sometimes if students aren’t up-taking the knowledge, and I seem to get more disappointed in terms of this particular subject matter than I would with something like service learning or major specific research. . . . If students are completely

resistant to this kind of information [realities of linguistic discrimination], then it almost seems as though there's a level of failure that goes a little bit deeper.

Taylor expressed a strong investment in a pedagogical goal of the innovation, to develop students' CLA; however, the emotional investment, coupled with the possibility of student resistance, stagnated the innovation as conversations with students about language and power were ultimately few and far between during the first iteration, potentially to avoid disappointment and a sense of failure for Taylor. Such conflicting emotions led Taylor to question, "should [he] be doing this kind of work?" In an effort to reconcile his fear of failure with his antiracist agenda and desire for social change and action, Taylor presented a possible solution which would avoid the potential pain he ruminated on earlier. That is, instead of "questioning the problem," Taylor wondered whether "there's less risk in modeling solutions than there is in questioning institutional racism with young people." What that would actually look like in practice, he asked himself, was "a very good question."

Soon after his oral reflection in week seven, Taylor revisited his thinking in two different written reflections. The first expanded on the notion of pain that he initially mentioned in a face-to-face planning meeting. He reflected,

The teaching of justice is to openly declare battle on white supremacy. Unless White students have already been loosened from their biases—in which case the teaching of justice becomes a rich opportunity to deepen the students' understanding of institutional racism—there will be pain, be born of white rage (and denial) or born of white guilt (and realization).

In associating the pain as being "born of white rage (and denial) or born of white guilt (and realization)," Taylor came to articulate the experience of pain in a social justice oriented class, not only as an emotion felt by oppressed students (linguistically and racially minoritized in this context), but as an emotion felt by oppressor students (linguistically and racially majoritized in

this context). As an educator who values centering love in his teaching, causing pain for students was unfathomable, yet he began to question whether it was “worth it to induce this pain.”

Do I create an environment that will likely induce this pain on students, be it of denial or realization? Is it worth it to induce this pain on these students because at the core of my being I know what I’m saying is the necessary truth of this era? Is it worth it to induce this pain on these [White] students, knowing that others will be excited, relieved, and validated by an immersion in topics of justice? Is it worth it, as the instructor of such a course, to worry (more like cognitive wrestling match) outside of the classroom (I do this too much, I think) about my pedagogy and how it might induce students to pain? . . . . Which is more important, lily-white, heteronormative, patriarchal, sexist, misogynistic, racist, homophobic fake-reality and the comforts it provides, or the truth?

By the end of Taylor’s written reflection, or “cognitive wrestling match” as he named it, he pushed himself further, critiquing his stance in the oral reflection a few days prior as attempting to “white-wash course content”:

. . . If I model an antiracist selection of readings, is it even possible to avoid calling out injustice? Afterall, the lived-experiences of the writers of such an antiracist selection of readings would likely have something to say about injustice. Perhaps modeling the solution is just another excuse to white-wash course content.

In questioning his previous stance to model a solution rather to question the problem, Taylor illustrated how one’s Whiteness, and the emotions entangled with it, can unconsciously override the lived experiences of marginalized students despite working to implement social justice-oriented curricula.

Taylor concluded this written reflection by calling himself out regarding his previous approaches to the teaching of writing: “Oh yeah, on a fundamental, the [genre-based] approach to writing is a code-switching approach to writing. How can I reconcile assigning a writer like Young and demand students code-switch?” Within the data, this reflection appears to be a turning point for Taylor regarding the innovation. For the first seven weeks of the iteration, Taylor expressed a clear passion for developing students’ CLA, but he was grappling with hesitancy, fear, and self-doubt, which strangled his efforts in implementing CLA pedagogy and

fully embodying CLA in his interactions with students. Taylor experienced cognitive dissonance in recognizing that a strict genre-based approach to FYC is, in actuality, enacting a “code-switching approach to writing,” contradicting his antiracist teaching agenda.

After coming to terms with the dissonance of what he believed in and what he was enacting in the classroom, Taylor sought to facilitate students’ examination of code-switching and privilege in academic writing during the last class period, October 17th, before he would begin four weeks of individual conferencing. The class covered a lot of material on this day, including discussion of and preparation for the midterm exam (an in-class timed writing required by the department) and review of the revision requirements for the upcoming conferences. Reviewing the revision requirements led Taylor to discuss the concept of peer-reviewed research and IMRaD (Introduction, Method, Results, and Discussion) essays. As part of this discussion, Taylor found an opening to refer back to the October 5th class period during which students examined and questioned ideas about code-switching and code-meshing in education, and called out Taylor for his gatekeeping tendencies. However, unlike the October 5th discussion, students minimally engaged with the discussion on October 17th. Taylor asked,

So, what do you all think about this academic writing genre in terms of what we've been talking about with language expectations? . . . We kind of talked about how code-switching or code-meshing is not fully understood by the academic community, right? If I'm asking you to write in this specific structure, and if academics are writing in this specific structure, as well, what might that say about code-switching? What is code-switching? Do you all remember? What is code-switching?

A few students responded back to the question “what is code-switching?” by providing various definitions and attempting to provide an example of it. Afterwards, Taylor guided the conversation to peer-reviewed research and the IMRaD genre by asking students if they had ever written an IMRaD style paper and whether or not it was a “new code” for them. Students nodded in affirmation that it was a new code to which Taylor stated that,



. . . adopting the style of IMRaD writing is one example of code-switching or trying to acquire the language features of a particular genre. Is that fair? Is it fair that you have to code-switch in order to understand the writing of academics? . . .

At this point in the discussion, there were a few visible “no” headshakes from students, but no one volunteered to respond aloud. Taylor asked the class, “Why not?” since they had visibly said no, and then followed up with a series of questions pointing students to consider language and privilege: “Where does this history come from? What histories does it privilege? Whose dialect is already more closely aligned with scholarly writing? Who has to code-switch to follow academic writing styles?” Although these questions aimed to support students in referring back to the previous week’s discussion on linguistic double-consciousness and in naming SAE privilege in academic contexts, the quick succession of the questions, without pause, did not provide room for students to really engage with the topics of linguistic privilege and linguistic discrimination. Taylor concluded his questioning by stating, “[I’m] not sure that you understand what I’m saying right now, though,” which elicited laughter from both the class and the instructor. Taylor then redirected the class to complete a closing free write regarding their revision plans and upcoming student-teacher conferences.

After class, Taylor composed a teaching reflection in which he stated that “students . . . kind of fell flat on their face” regarding “how a particular kind of academic convention could have institutionally racist roots.” Students’ lack of response during the discussion was discouraging for Taylor who felt that they had “such a successful week with the commentary genre and talking about language.” For Taylor, his fear of failure and disappointment came to fruition due to students’ lack of uptake with language discrimination material. However, it appeared that students’ limited participation in the discussion on academic conventions and

linguistic discrimination may have been because of a lack of opportunity to do so rather than lack of engagement or uptake of material.

For the final third of the semester, Taylor met with students during one-to-one conferences to discuss their individual writing. Although opportunities to facilitate students' CLA development as a class had passed, Taylor worked to find moments to support their CLA development and enhance their postsecondary writing skills during individual conferences. In two particular moments, Taylor sought to complicate students' thinking about language. During Tamara's second one-to-one conference for her commentary essay, a project that asked students to argue a stance on an idea about language, Taylor pointed out how her view on language was contradictory in the essay. Tamara's piece grew out of her interest in an assigned class reading, "Young Women Shouldn't Have to Talk Like Men to be Taken Seriously." In the assigned reading, Seitz-Brown (2018) argued that women are critiqued more often than men for the use of uptalk, "a rising intonation at the end of a phrase or sentence" (p. 92), and that listeners should celebrate rather than denigrate the differences in voices. Tamara's essay simultaneously advocated for people to use language in their own way yet critiqued the use of uptalk. Taylor facilitated this conference by asking Tamara to verbalize her understanding of language difference as presented in her essay and by explaining that her view did not have to be "all or nothing" (i.e., solely advocating for individual language use or solely critiquing the use of uptalk). That, in fact, she could and should have a complex view of language but that she needed to work to let that complexity come across in her commentary essay so that it did not come across contradictory.

Similarly, during Davis' second conference, Taylor encouraged him to complicate his binary, good/bad position on texting language. Like Tamara, Davis chose to revise his

commentary essay, thus the student-teacher conference focused on Davis' plan for incorporating academic research into his first draft which argued that texting language is ultimately bad for language users. Early on in the conference, Taylor shared with Davis that "thinking about this binary of good/bad [was] probably not going to pan out so much in scholarly research" and that he might consider approaching his argument along an effective to ineffective spectrum instead. Initially, Davis did not appear to take up this direction as he did not respond, question, or inquire into Taylor's suggestion. Taylor then expressed to Davis that he was not saying the good/bad binary stance was "invalid," and reiterated the need to complicate the stance to consider how scholars would take up this conversation in their work.

Despite working to use the conferences as additional spaces to implement the essential elements of the innovation, Taylor shared that the conferences "weren't necessarily as fruitful as they always are," and did not provide as much opportunity to explore language ideologies with students as he originally thought they would. Both Taylor and I recognized that many students in this iteration were unsure about how to prepare for their individual conferences and were confused by revision essay deadlines. Because of this confusion, Taylor spent much of the conference guiding students through the conference process and clarifying questions about assignment expectations and deadlines. This led to an instructional modification which will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter.

### **Students Examining and Questioning the Relationships Between Language, Power, and Identity through Inquiry and Writing**

During the first week of class on August 31st, students engaged in a freewrite exercise that asked them about the concept of "proper English," what it was, where it was used, and by whom. Students' responses focused on "proper English" being the language used by teachers and

business professionals. However, several students, such as Riley who identifies as White, wrote about how “real ‘proper English’ does not exist. Some English is considered more proper because it is more widely accepted, but it is no more right than any other form of English.”

Based on responses such as this, it was evident that some students entered ENGL 110C with an awareness about the effects and consequences of labeling certain varieties as “proper” and others as “improper.” After this class period, however, it would be several weeks before students would be asked to critically examine the relationships between language, power, and identity during the commentary unit.

This unit began on October 1st with students preparing for class by reading, “Are Digital Media Changing Language?” by Naomi Baron (2018). During class, students viewed John McWhorter’s (2013) TedTalk, “Txtng is Killing Language. JK!!!” In small groups, students were assigned different discussion questions to explore and then share out with the class. These questions focused on Baron’s argument regarding “whatever” and “controlled” attitudes toward language change. Although students did not explore Baron’s notion of control regarding access to and use of communication tools, students who participated in the large group discussion did advocate for individuals to have a “whatever” attitude toward language change and argued that language users could not control language change based on the evidence from Baron and McWhorter. However, when students were asked to freewrite on the topic at the end of class, some expressed varying degrees of the “whatever” attitude on the topic of technology and language change. Travis wrote that,

My current attitude on the tech-based language shift is complex. I do accept the fact that language is changing, and I am okay with that. However, there is time where formal and informal language is useful. For example, when you with your friends it is acceptable to use this new “tech-based” language. But, when your at a interview this language is not acceptable.

In this freewrite, Travis voiced that he “accept[s] the fact that language is changing,” but then articulated that some language changes are “not acceptable” in all situations. Similarly, Kennedie wrote that,

Due to all sorts of media, our language isn’t the same from when it has originated. I feel as if our population and generation today has a “whatever” approach towards our language considering the media influence. Text message, social media, and other sorts has taken a huge toll. We were raised upon many different ways we speak. We should try our best to try to be in a controlled manner so we can speak more proper.

The bulk of her freewrite focused on the reality of language change and digital media’s influence on such change. However, her final sentence appears to resist the reality of language change by articulating a need to “speak more proper.” For both Travis and Kennedie, their stance toward technology’s influence on language change was simultaneously one of acceptance, an acknowledgement that change is happening, and one of resistance, that change is not always acceptable—alluding to an appropriateness stance that would be introduced to them later in the week through code-switching.

By the end of the week, the class began to interrogate issues of race and language through the concepts of code-switching and code-meshing. As discussed earlier in the chapter, Lily and Cayla, in responding to Taylor’s discussion question, pointed out the contradiction in Taylor’s own instruction for different genre units. As the October 5<sup>th</sup> class meeting progressed, Taylor shifted to ask students about Young’s (2018) argument in “The Problem of Linguistic Double Consciousness.” In particular, Taylor asked the class to consider the following questions which were projected on a screen for the class: “What is code-switching? How is it that ‘arguments used to support code-switching are startlingly and undeniably similar to those that were used to support racial separation’ (326). How does code-switching encourage a linguistic double consciousness?” Jesslyn, who identifies as Black, started off the conversation by sharing her

personal experience. A brief discussion on institutional code-switching expectations then unfolded. As noted in chapter three, because of the nature of the conversation that unfolded, I have chosen to provide speakers' racial identities in parentheses.

**Jesslyn (Black):** As, I can really, as a Black person in America, we have to sort of [pause] adapt kind of because in a professional stance, how we talk or interact is seen as unprofessional, so we have to switch it a little bit at the same time. It's kind of hard to explain.

**Taylor (White):** Who expects you to switch it?

**Jesslyn (Black):** Um, people of other races pretty much.

**Taylor (White):** Do you feel like African Americans ever expect you to switch in certain contexts as well?

**Jesslyn (Black):** Yea.

**Taylor (White):** It's interesting, right? Yes, sir [pointing to Darrion who raised his hand].

**Darrion (Black):** I feel like it's more so based off of the system rather than the individual that person is in contact with.

**Taylor (White):** That's a good point actually. These sorts of institutions are not really representative of one-on-one interactions. You could probably get away with code-meshing if you have the trust of the person with whom you're speaking as opposed to writing a cover letter to an institution for a job where you don't get to see the person. That's a good point. Cayla did you bring up something?

**Cayla (Black):** Yea, you said that um, you asked Jesslyn if Black people also expect [code-switching] as well, but I think sometimes we're harder on ourselves. (Cayla continued on to give an example from a TV show).

In this discussion, Jesslyn voiced that "professional" spaces discriminate against Black speakers: "we have to . . . adapt . . . how we talk or interact." A few exchanges later, Darrion focused on how the expectation to code-switch is "more so based off the system rather than the individual." And, Cayla responded that individuals uphold those institutional expectations, sharing that "sometimes [Black people] are harder on ourselves." The class discussion then further examined Young's (2018) definitions of and the differences between code-switching and code-meshing. In

the excerpt above, Taylor responded to Darrion that one could “*get away with* [emphasis added] code-meshing” in a certain space—insinuating that there are repercussions to code-meshing in institutional spaces as Jesslyn first shared, and, perhaps inadvertently, labeling code-meshing as a communicative event that one must “get away with” rather than positioning this as a practice that is accepted or embraced. To further illustrate Young’s (2018) argument to embrace code-meshing, Taylor shared with students Jamila Lyiscott’s (2014) TedTalk, “3 Ways to Speak English,” a spoken word essay in which Lyiscott voices the challenges of choosing to code-switch or code-mesh with her three Englishes while celebrating each of them. At the conclusion of the video, students were not invited to share their reactions; however, Taylor impressed to students that he wanted “[THEM] to grapple with the question of code-meshing” in their academic work, and invited students to process their thinking about the day’s discussion in a final freewrite.

In comparison to students’ responses from Monday, students’ responses on Friday expressed more complex views about language. For example, on Monday, Travis, who identifies as White, reflected that we needed to be more formal in interviews; however, on Friday he wrote that “language should change overtime” and that code-meshing “is one way your able to mix the standard english into the new and upcoming english.” Furthermore, Riley, who identifies as White, critiqued those who judge others based on how they talk rather than based on what they have to say:

We often criticize those who don’t speak our typical stereotype of “proper” English. When someone with a Southern accent begins speaking to an audience, they are often disregarded as unintelligent. What many of the listeners don’t realize is that the speaker is not the one who is ignorant; rather it is the listener who doesn’t appreciate or attempt to understand the English of a person [who] is from a different culture or geographical region. The listener is ignorant for letting the way someone speaks discount the gravity of the speaker’s message. They are ignorant for not realizing that the way they expect everyone to speak, the “proper” English, is a modernized form of Old English.

Kennedie, who identifies as Black, also expressed a major shift in her understanding of language discrimination between Monday and Friday of this week. When discussing digital media and language she wrote that “we should try our best to speak more proper.” However, after reading selections on linguistic double consciousness and participating in the class discussion, Kennedie came to critically reflect on her own experience with linguistic discrimination: “I believe that people expect certain things from certain races, what we call ‘stereotypes.’ Just because my skin is a little darker from the next, my language is probably seen to be ‘broken’ or ‘incorrect.’”

Taylor explained that he put language and technology first in the week as it was a “safer,” less controversial way to begin to discuss language discrimination with students; however, students actually perpetuated an appropriateness stance with the “safer” topic that they first encountered. As the unit progressed, students were presented with a less safe, more “painful” or uncomfortable topic with race and language. Students’ negotiation of these topics complicated their understandings toward language change and language expectations.

At the end of the semester, during the focus group interview, I asked students to revisit their understandings of code-switching, code-meshing, and notions such as “proper English.” All focus group students, Riley, Kennedie, Tamara, Travis, and Jerrod, reiterated their previous stances on “proper English” from the August 31st freewrites: “there’s still no proper English.” However, in describing their stance about language use, all focus group students articulated the need for code-switching for effective communication, such as knowing how to send emails in certain circumstances, how to talk to a professor, and how to not talk to a professor. Even though the focus group explained that the “code-meshing day” (October 5th) was the most memorable class period for them because of the high level of student interaction that day, students accepted



and perpetuated a need for code-switching rather than problematizing the consequences of code-switching.

This stance was also apparent in students' final exams. In the final exam essay, Taylor asked students to convey how they met the course SLOs using examples from their course portfolio. Across the data set, students articulated a code-switching stance in their final exams as they argued how they had learned the value and need to adjust writing styles according to genre conventions. It is evident that students took on Taylor's embodied stance toward language that advocated for code-switching through adherence to genre conventions. Although Taylor came to question and see a contradiction regarding a genre-based approach to writing through his "cognitive wrestling match," explored in his October 13<sup>th</sup> teaching reflection—"on a fundamental, the [genre-based] approach to writing is a code-switching approach to writing"—students emphasized and exhibited an appropriateness stance toward language at the conclusion of the course.

### **Modifications**

Taylor and I met twice between the conclusion of the fall semester and the start of the spring semester to discuss the first iteration of the study and to reflect on what aspects promoted and/or hindered students' CLA development. From these meetings, we made several large-scale modifications that were put in place during the second iteration. These modifications as well as their rationales are presented in Table 3. Overall, students did not have enough time to grapple with language-related content in order to engage in deeper inquiry through their writing assignments. Thus, modifications focused on embedding activities and discussions in the day-to-day classroom work to better support students' CLA development and to better scaffold their larger writing assignments.

**Table 3***Modifications Implemented in Taylor's Classroom for the Second Iteration*

Modification	Rationale
Extended the length of each unit from two weeks to three weeks (replaced peer review with mandatory workshop days and shortened the number of class periods devoted to one-to-one conferencing)	To provide additional time for students to engage with course material for deeper inquiry through writing; to include additional readings from the text bank created during the pre-innovation planning meetings
Revised daily writing prompts and class discussion questions	To better scaffold students' understanding of assigned readings and language-related content
Created a rhetorical invention sheet for each unit in which students detailed their plans for the major writing assignments	To anticipate potential student avoidance or deflection of language-related topics and to provide formative feedback ahead of major assignment completion
Revised the commentary assignment and unit delivery to encourage multimodal, action-oriented projects	To address some students' perceived lack of connection between the course content and their real-life contexts; to focus on the transformative aims of the innovation
Created a pre-work handout for student completion ahead of one-to-one conferences	To generate productive and efficient conferences given the shortened conference schedule; to better scaffold the inclusion of academic research in essay revisions
Incorporated Claudia Rankine's <i>Citizen: An American Lyric</i> as a course text	To participate in the NEA: Big Read opportunity on campus

As noted in Table 3, one modification included the incorporation of the NEA: Big Read text, *Citizen: An American Lyric* by Claudia Rankine (2014). For the spring 2019 semester, ODU received a grant which allowed for the purchase of over 2,000 copies of the text to be distributed

to students across the campus, from 100-level classes to graduate-level classes. The English department chair invited interested faculty to incorporate the text into their courses and to facilitate conversations with students on race relations in the U.S. To support volunteer faculty members, the Center for Faculty Development and the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity hosted a half-day training workshop in October 2018, and the English department chair provided follow-up support in the form of two, optional, brown bag discussions. When Taylor initially expressed interest in incorporating the text, he was unsure of how much of the text he wanted to or would be able to include given the work of the innovation. However, by the conclusion of our modification planning meetings, Taylor decided that he wanted to incorporate the entirety of *Citizen* in all of his classes, including ENGL 110C. Instead of viewing it as “an extra thing” to add to the class, which was how he initially perceived it in the fall, he described the inclusion of *Citizen* as a potential space to “reinforce course content” and “ground issues of race” for class discussion.

Whereas race was mostly absent from course content and class discussions in the first iteration, in the second iteration, it was foregrounded through multiple outlets to become a normalized topic in the classroom. To complement the modification to foreground race, Taylor decided to include Fought’s (2018), “Are White People Ethnic? Whiteness, Dominance, and Ethnicity,” as an assigned reading for iteration two. As previously mentioned, Taylor was resistant to the inclusion of this text during our pre-innovation planning meetings because he perceived the piece as “too advanced.” However, he scheduled the reading for the final day of the commentary unit as a culmination of the inquiry students engaged in throughout the class. In asking Taylor about what changed his mind, he shared how previous teaching experiences influenced his fall decision to leave it out of the curriculum. Specifically, he explained how he

had once begun a unit in ENGL 211C with a reading about White privilege and how the reading, and ensuing discussion, negatively affected student participation in the class for the rest of the semester. In learning from that experience, he chose to “culminate” the innovation with Fought’s (2018) piece in hopes of having built the groundwork for students to be open to the reading and, in case it did not go well, it would not ruin the class seeing as it would occur near the conclusion of the course. Interestingly, focal students would come to name Fought’s (2018) piece as one of the most memorable and/or influential readings from the course.

When first discussing the modifications to the innovation and while implementing them during the second innovation, Taylor commented that we were creating a more structured, “sage on the stage” course because we were bringing more content (e.g., language-focused readings and mini-lectures) to the FYC classroom to focus students’ writing to language-related topics. His previous course designs enabled student-driven content with open-ended topics meeting genre expectations. Although he continued to refer to the structure resulting from the modifications as a more instructor-centered approach, I observed a stronger student-centered classroom in the second iteration as students were more actively participating in small and large group discussion, asking questions of the instructor and their classmates, and drawing upon their own experiences with language in their writing.

### **Iteration Two**

Beginning with week one of the second iteration, it was apparent that the course was more cohesive than the first iteration. Taylor made adjustments to the day-to-day activities to incorporate inquiry about language for each class period, not just in the major writing assignments. Because we modified the semester by extending each unit from two weeks to three weeks, the course was much less rushed and there was time and space for Taylor to reiterate key

terms, concepts, and questions across class periods. During our iterative planning meetings, Taylor mentioned how, in the first iteration, he basically “rolled out” the same ENGL 110C curriculum that he had used in prior semesters, just with assignment sheets devoted to language inquiry. Realizing that approach did not work toward the innovation’s goals, he stated that he was more mindful in planning the second iteration to reflect on how each day’s lessons supported the larger goals of the innovation.

### **Faculty Facilitating Conversations and Activities with Students Regarding the Relationships Between Language, Power, and Identity**

Taylor embodied a stronger CLA stance during the second iteration, which, I argue, was in part a direct result of his “crisis of identity” processing that took place during the first iteration. During the second iteration Taylor appeared to deemphasize the importance of genre conventions, though that remained a guiding structure of the course, and emphasize the need for effective communication. In emphasizing effective communication, Taylor posed inquiry-driven questions for students to work through. For example, during the first unit of study, rhetorical analysis, students read Matsuda’s (2018) “Writing Involves the Negotiation of Language Differences” and, in class, learned about the concept of the communicative burden, the responsibility to work toward shared understanding in a communicative act (Lippi-Green, 2012). As part of the class discussion on January 30th, Taylor asked students to examine the risk involved in not adopting dominant language practices.

**Taylor:** Matsuda asks us to make principled decisions about whether or not to adopt dominant language practices. What do we think here? Principled decisions? What is he talking about? Can you think of a situation where you might have to make a principled decision about whether or not to adopt the dominant language? What does that mean?

**Malia:** I feel like it's whether you choose to or not to accept, like the changes of language. So, if Spanglish or whatever else comes along, being able to adapt to that thing to communicate effectively.

**Taylor:** Yea, absolutely. I love what you're saying there. I think adapt, the choice of adaptation, is an example of a principled decision, right. But is that risky? Is that risky? Matsuda says, "the risks involved with negotiating language differences." What are the risks? What would be risky do you think?

[Brief class exchange on the risks of miscommunication, during which Taylor reiterates the importance of a shared communicative burden.]

**Taylor:** What might be another tangible risk of not adapting to or adopting the dominant language? How is that risky if you refuse to do that? Is it?

**Malia:** It's not, but I feel like some people would say, oh, you changing to only speaking *your* English . . . is un-American.

**Taylor:** That's very interesting. Un-American. What's the official language of the United States?

[Brief aside by Taylor that brings up the English-Only movement in the U.S.]

**Taylor:** It can be risky, especially if you're looking at a cover letter. When you're going through job applications, people are just looking for reasons to put your stuff in the trash. They're just looking for those reasons to do it.

In comparison to the October 5th discussion on code-switching in academic discourse during the first iteration, Taylor facilitated a more nuanced conversation here that provided students more space to process and respond to questions regarding risk, consequence, and choice in making language decisions. Rather than closing the conversation with whether students should or should not adapt to dominant language practices, Taylor left it open for students to consider the risks in the communicative event and created space for students to make their own language decisions.

Similarly, a week later on February 8th, Taylor sought to guide students to the conclusion that language standards are modeled after White language speakers through the use of questions. The class discussion drew upon the main concepts from the assigned reading, "Writing is Linked to Identity" by Kevin Roozen (2018). Taylor asked students to contend with the questions, "what kind of identity is rewarded in the English classroom, and why is that identity privileged?"

Several students responded that individuals who were able to decipher what English instructors

“wanted” were rewarded with good grades. Taylor then pushed students to think about where instructors’ ideas about “proper or correct English come from.” This question proved challenging for the class as they offered a variety of responses that included “past experiences,” “society,” and “their own teachers,” before they came to concur that “people who have power” make the decisions about language use. Eventually, Taylor asked students, “what do [these people in power] look like?” Although this was an opening for students to name the privileged language identity—White—students did not fully articulate this identity. Instead, Rachael, a White female, responded, “European,” and no other student offered a different response. Taylor’s own identity as a White male and his positionality as the instructor in the classroom, may have contributed to students’ responses, and lack thereof, to these questions.

Whereas the construct of race was not discussed in detail during the first iteration until October 5th during the commentary unit, race as a construct was examined in multiple contexts across the course during the second iteration. As discussed in the modifications section, Taylor opted to incorporate the NEA Big Read text, Rankine’s (2014) *Citizen: An American Lyric*, into ENGL 110C. For the first eight to ten minutes of each class period, Taylor read from or had students read from *Citizen*. With each reading, Taylor would present a key term, question, or scenario for the class to process during the reading. One of the first terms presented through the text was microaggression. The same day, January 25th, students worked in small groups to rhetorically analyze Martin Luther King Jr.’s (1963) speech, “I Have a Dream.” The following class period, Taylor introduced the class to the Oakland Ebonics Controversy of 1997 and gave a brief mini-lecture regarding several stigmatized dialect features of African American English (AAE). Based on this contextual information, students then worked in small groups to rhetorically analyze the ad, “I Has a Dream” (2005), which critiqued the Oakland Ebonics

Debate and the use of home language varieties to support students' SAE development. With the inclusion of *Citizen*, which forefronted discussion of racial discrimination throughout the course, and the early analysis and discussion of AAE, race became a normalized construct for discussion that would support students' CLA development.

As discussed, Taylor was hesitant in the pre-innovation planning meetings to ask students to compose a literacy narrative. He expressed that students from privileged backgrounds often struggle in composing an engaging memoir regarding their literacy because their literacy so closely mirrors the language and learning privileged in K-16 contexts. During the second iteration, it seemed that Taylor still recognized this as a potential challenge; however, rather than dismiss the opportunity for students to examine their literacy, he created freewrite prompts that allowed all students to fully participate. For example, during the memoir unit on February 20th, students prepared for class by reading Sherman Alexie's (1998) "Superman and Me." After analyzing the text's story arc, Taylor asked students to respond to one of the following freewrite prompts:

**Option 1:** When in life were you ever called out for being "not \_\_\_\_ enough" or not being a "real \_\_\_\_?" What were you doing when someone said this? What exactly did they say? How did their words make you feel (remember imagery here)? How did (or didn't) you change your behavior based on this person's judgement?

**Option 2:** Were you ever taught creative writing? How were you taught academic writing? How did/do you interact with institutionalized education? How does your experience influence your attitude about English education? About the English major?

With these differing options, Taylor provided students choice in reflecting on some of Alexie's (1998) themes with their own life experiences. In offering student choice, Taylor worked to enact CLA pedagogy for students across oppressed and oppressor groups (Freire, 1973) and appeared to invite students to examine how literacy manifests itself in their lives, referring back to our pre-innovation planning meetings and discussion of how to invite students holding privileged



identities to examine their literacies as well as their role in upholding institutional standards of literacy.

Taylor was surprised that the topic of privilege came up earlier in the semester than he had planned, but that the conversations that occurred in the classroom organically led to those discussions. For example, during the second week of class, when discussing *Citizen*, Peyton, who identifies as a White female, shared that American citizenship is a form of privilege. During class, Taylor did not appear to take up or shut down the discussion of privilege, so I followed up with him soon after class because “privilege” had become such a taboo word during the pre-innovation planning meetings and first iteration. In meeting with Taylor, he noted that he had not even realized Peyton used this term in describing citizenship. He reflected that because it was not used in an overt racial context, perhaps it did not register with him in the moment that “privilege” was introduced to the class discussion.

In the first iteration, Taylor associated discussions of privilege, especially White privilege, with feelings of pain. In the second iteration, however, he shared that by exploring language ideologies with students, conversations about privileged forms of English were less painful and “a little less threatening.” Moreover, by scaffolding conversations about privilege with more discussions on beliefs about language, Taylor and his students dove into discussions about privilege with more confidence, and students “question[ed] privilege within the English language.” In an oral reflection from March 22nd, Taylor reflected on his sentiments regarding pain in social justice topics from the first iteration. In particular, he noted how it’s “easier to just avoid White guilt” in the classroom, but that he “feels called” and is “committed to working through that pain” with students. This was evident throughout the second iteration as Taylor did

not avoid discussions of linguistic privilege; rather, he presented information in ways that would actually elicit such discussion from students.

### **Students Examining and Questioning the Relationships Between Language, Power, and Identity through Inquiry and Writing**

In the first iteration, students began their inquiry into language, identity, and power by freewriting to a series of questions on the topic of “proper English.” In the second iteration, however, students were asked to respond to a writing prompt to get them thinking about their own language use. Taylor created this prompt, provided below, based on one of my interview questions from fall 2016 in which I asked him to anthropomorphize his language by naming and describing it.

Writing Prompt: “What’s Your Language Genre?”

Write at least three words that describe the language you speak. These words might reference your geographic origin/upbringing, age, ethnicity, education, gender, cultural exposure, or another other lived experience. Based on these words, can you name your personal language genre (e.g. nerdXsouthern)? Below each word, write at least one concrete example which illustrates the language you speak. Finally, write a paragraph introducing yourself, using the voice of your self-defined language genre, or explain why you chose those particular words.

Some students drew upon linguistic stereotypes to describe their language genres. Peyton, who identifies as White, named her language genre northloundmillennial, and Kimberly, who identifies as Black, described hers as Proper2Southern. These stereotypes exemplify the language beliefs many students brought with them to the course.

Brea, who identifies as Black, labeled her language genre, UnapologeticallyB. In explaining her label, Brea described her speech and language use as bold, unfiltered, and Black, stating, “I am proud of my BLACKNESS” (emphasis in original). However, when analyzing the advertisement, “I Has a Dream” (2005), two weeks after this freewrite, Brea recognized and

acknowledged her own contradiction regarding Black language. In responding to the advertisement in her January 28th writing journal (WJ), a 100-word response students completed prior to coming to class and prior to receiving linguistic knowledge on the grammaticality of AAE, Brea noted,

I'm a little perplexed about this ad . . . To me Ebonics is like idiolect, it's more of a cultural thing as opposed to standard English. In terms of thinking this, I don't believe its something that should be taught to our children. Don't get me wrong, if its sole purpose is to inform one about what it is and where it came from that's one thing, but not to rely on using it. Think of all the children who struggle to speak properly, who write as they speak, and read incorrectly.

Brea's response in the WJ indicates a bit of confusion regarding the advertisement's purpose and argument; however, her understanding somewhat mirrors the understanding of the advertisers toward the Oakland Ebonics Controversy. Later in the semester, when composing her memoir, Brea provided a bit more insight into why she brought particular beliefs to her coursework. In relating her experience starting at a new middle school, she explained how she passed by a black and white sign that said, "WHAT YOU DO, WEAR, AND SAY SPEAKS BEFORE YOU'RE HEARD." An appropriateness-based stance was being yelled at her (literally in all caps) and ingrained in her during middle school. In her memoir, she detailed how when she felt isolated by a peer because of her clothing choices, she made the decision to change to fit in. These kinds of experiences likely shaped Brea's beliefs about language prior to entering ENGL 110C.

About a month after Brea's WJ on "I Has a Dream" (2005) and about two weeks after she completed her memoir project, Brea read and responded to the "Story of Aks" (Curzan & Adams, 2012), a reading in the commentary unit that explored the linguistic history of the pronunciation of "ask" and how "ax/aks" is a stigmatized pronunciation for AAE speakers. In Brea's WJ she shared that, "being in this class . . . has forced me to go back and rethink about some things that I once knew I had so much conviction about," and which, possibly, led her to

major in Speech-Language Pathology. Brea exuded a strong self-awareness of her thinking with this WJ, and she allowed her thinking to evolve in the class based on the information she was presented with and the inquiry in which she engaged. In her midterm essay Brea shared that, previously, she was “isolated” from her “own dialect and idiolect” because of the need to write to a standardized variety. Whereas she closely identified with and voiced standard language ideology throughout her life, she was coming to recognize how it was affecting her identity as a Black woman and language user in general. In her midterm essay, she shared that, since being in the course and learning about language variation and language discrimination, she now believed “different doesn’t mean wrong” when it comes to communication. Furthermore, whereas she previously believed in the “myth” that slang is “bad,” Brea stated that limiting writing to standard varieties “is actually a detriment.” She would go on to focus her multimodal commentary project on the relationship between slang and autocorrect. In her project Brea asked, “If language is always changing, evolving, and adapting to the needs of its users, why is slang not linguistically accepted?” She also noted that, “the great William Shakespeare [was] known to spew some slang, how bout dat!” Brea’s final argument in her commentary project vastly differed from her earlier writing in which she pleaded with readers to “think of all the children who struggle to speak properly.” Additionally, her commentary project showcased the trajectory of Brea’s CLA development to not only advocate for multilingual communication, but to also purposefully employ code-meshing to more effectively make her argument.

Naya and Kimberly, both of whom identify as Black, took the multimodal commentary project as an opportunity to advocate against code-switching, and, more specifically, against the double consciousness with which they lived. Earlier in the semester, during an in-class freewrite, Naya reflected on being told she was not a “real Black woman” because she was multiracial. In

the focus group, she explained that she constantly qualifies her racial identity and lives in a state of double consciousness. Naya shared that during the semester, in fact, she experienced a microaggression from her speech professor who had assumed she was Hispanic because of her appearance and the way she spoke and used hand gestures:

I'm in public speaking, and so when I was presenting my speech to like the whole class my, because I'm nervous, so I start speeding up and just saying whatever comes up to my head and all that. And so then I finished, my professor's like "hey, are you Hispanic?" and just judging because like I guess whenever I get nervous I'll say certain words with an "r" or like, I don't know what I do, but he's just like "are you Hispanic?" And I was like, no, I'm not, like I'm Black, and then it's, I felt judged based on the dialect of how I say things and then I thought about this class. When we were like doing everything. So that made me feel a type of way . . . Oh and I also use hand language because my grandma's Italian so I'm half Italian. So, like, I do all this [making hand gestures] and he's like, put your hands down, you need to stay still.

In working together on the multimodal commentary project, along with two other students, Naya and Kimberly illustrated the dual nature of being pulled to operate in two different worlds while not being allowed to fully exist in either (see Figure 2). As part of the written component of the project, the group explained that, "In one environment, a Black girl has to be seen as proper and not ghetto, and on the other side, the same Black girl can't sound 'too White.'" Through their group project, Naya and Kimberly advocate against the double consciousness of code-switching.

**Figure 2**

*Naya and Kimberly's Multimodal Commentary Project Advocating Against Code-switching*



In contrast to Naya and Kimberly, Malia, who identifies as Black, clearly struggled with the power relations in code-switching while expressing support for a shared communicative burden. After reading “The Problem of Linguistic Double Consciousness,” Malia wrote in her WJ that she disagreed with Young’s (2018) argument that code-switching is “bad.” This aligned with her earlier language genre description: SuburbanWannaBeCreative. In detailing how she came to this label, Malia explained that, as a Black female, she always feels like she is adapting

to her environment and named this action as a “WannaBe.” During the focus group interview, Malia further explored her frustrations with code-switching:

“The Cost of Code Switching” [a 2017 TedTalk by Chandra Arthur that students viewed in class] kind of annoyed me in a way because [the speaker’s] just like, oh why even you know, why even try to do it? Why even do it? Like you're selling yourself out. You're selling, you know, your ethnicity out. You're selling who you are out. And, like, just because I'm trying to adapt, doesn't mean that I'm selling out.

Malia explained to the group that she changed schools in high school and found herself needing to “switch things up a little bit . . . in order to have people take [her] seriously” at her new, predominantly White, school. For Malia, code-switching and adapting to fit in to her surroundings was a necessary part of her identity. Malia lived the discrimination of raciolinguistic ideologies and, perhaps because of these experiences, came to connect with the reading, “My Pen Writes in Blue and White” by Vincent Cremona (2010). Although Taylor viewed this reading as perpetuating White privilege by code-switching between white-collar and blue-collar language varieties, Malia saw the duality of Cremona’s languages mirroring her duality of home and school languages.

Later in the focus group, as part of a conversation on privilege, Malia reiterated her experience in adapting to her surroundings through code-switching. Rachael, who identifies as White, then expressed her similar understanding of code-switching and how she struggled to understand how and when code-switching would be “bad.”

**Malia** (Black): Yes. I'm just like everything you do is adapting to where you are or what's going on, and I feel like it's so, it happens so easily that you don't even realize it at first, and then when people call you out on it, you're like, “is that a bad thing am I not supposed to?”

**Rachael** (White): That was one of the problems I did have in this class. I just had a hard time, I stayed after class one time to talk to him about it, but I didn't really leave completely satisfied with the answer, was that he had discussed code-switching . . . as if it was almost a negative thing or something certain groups of people have to do in order to survive or in order to be successful or do well. I just had a hard time with that because I had a hard time separating, in my mind, there are certain ways I even, I, there are some

things I will say with my best friend that I will never say here in this classroom with you guys and that's okay. That's something I had a hard time. Like it kind of made it out to be like it's a bad thing, and we shouldn't have to do it. But I'm okay with certain things, that I don't want to say certain things in front of certain groups of people that I would in front of my best friend. It's just, I don't think it's necessarily a bad thing always.

**Malia (Black):** I mean when they called code-switching a bad thing. Like it made me reevaluate like when I do it, and why I did it. I was like, okay, well, I know I did it like for myself. For like to better my future, but it's like, why do I have to do it?

**Rachael (White):** Yeah.

**Malia (Black):** Like why do I have to keep changing the way that I speak or the way that I approach people and like the way that I wave? People critique every little thing. It's like, oh, do you go like this [throws hand up] or do you go like crazy [really fast movement] when you wave? [laughter from focus group] And it happened to me yesterday. I went to [nearby Historically Black University]. And they're like, a girl's like, “why do you wave like that?” . . . They're like, “no, like you wave like you're really excited, like, you know, like some preppy White girl,” and I'm like, um, “I just waved.” It's not that difficult.

**Rachael (White):** I guess that's, that is something when I stayed after that was mentioned. Was that when it gets in the, how do I word this? You made a point that you were questioning why you feel the need to do certain things. I guess that's where the problem can arise if you feel like, if you can't be successful, if something will directly hurt you if you don't conform or code-switch, I suppose that's where the problem, yea.

**Malia (Black):** Yea, it's that whole, I'm missing opportunities because of the way that person judges me through their eyes, so I try to conform myself so that everything goes perfectly, and I get exactly what I want, and they think exactly what they want of me and that's all that matters.

In this exchange, Rachael first reiterates Malia's stance, pondering how code-switching is a “bad thing” when people use language differently depending on their audience and their surroundings. Malia followed up by sharing how, during the class discussion on code-switching, she then questioned when and why she does it—to “better [her] future”—but, more importantly, why she *has* to do it. With the focus group students, Malia shared a personal experience in which she was told she waves like a “preppy White girl.” After Malia's hand waving example, Rachael pinpointed a “problem” with code-switching that she had previously not considered: “if you feel like, if you can't be successful, if something will directly hurt you, if you don't conform or code-switch, I suppose that's where the problem. Yea.” Within this conversation, it appears that



Rachael's perspective shifted in recognizing that her own purpose in code-switching as a White female is not to "better [her] future" like Malia's, but rather to communicate with different audiences in different registers. As Rachael's stakes are not the same as Malia's, Rachael began to see the "problem" with code-switching, and Malia, through her own reflection, also saw a "problem" which she was not cognizant of previously, based on her frustration with code-switching viewed negatively and as a felt attack on her identity.

Although Naya and Kimberly worked to problematize code-switching for their multimodal commentary project and Malia and Rachael began to understand the problematization during their focus group conversation, Peyton, across the iteration, questioned society's acceptance of code-meshing and non-standardized language varieties. During the February 8th class discussion when students were responding to questions about where language beliefs come from, Peyton, who identifies as White, shared, "I might be totally wrong, but I think that it kind of has to do with us too. I think that we give [those in power] that power to determine what they--." Taylor tacked on to this statement and responded, "Ooh! We got to rise up! That's absolutely right," which elicited laughter and chatter from the class. During the focus group, in response to the group's valuing of code-meshing, Peyton reiterated her earlier sentiment: "I just don't think that society accepts it." However, she further reflected that everyone, including herself, is complicit in the lack of acceptance:

We're the ones that choose to talk to teachers, like, professionally, and like our bosses professionally, and like we can talk with our friends how we want, but like that's not going to change if, I don't mean to sound like so, but like that's how we choose to do it and that's how everyone has chosen to do it.

This reflection exemplifies Peyton's awareness of how language works and who is involved in making it work as such, though she does not define what "professionally" means or the privileged history of "professional" speech. The reflection also exemplifies her resignation,

perhaps, to the reality of such a system. That none of the other students contested her statement but instead proceeded to discuss some of their challenges of communicating openly with various professors, potentially reflects their agreeance with or similar resignation to the linguistic power structures in their lives. Even though they did not ultimately articulate an action-oriented stance, these focal students, unlike the focal student participants in iteration one, came to recognize and problematize inequalities regarding language and various social identities, opening up space for potential action if their CLA development continues to be supported.

### **Summary**

In this chapter, I presented findings from implementing an iterative CLA pedagogical innovation in two sections of Taylor's ENGL 110C classes. First, I discussed Taylor's feelings of hesitancy and discomfort in implementing CLA pedagogy, which were evident during our pre-innovation planning meetings. I then examined how Taylor's continual negotiation of the innovation's essential elements with his previous genre-based approach to teaching ENGL 110C, and his processing of a "crisis of identity as an antiracist teacher" influenced the success of the study's pedagogical goals during the first iteration and would ultimately support the delivery of the innovation during the second iteration. Next, I presented the modifications Taylor and I made between iterations to better support the pedagogical goal of promoting students' development of CLA while strengthening and enhancing their postsecondary writing skills. After presenting the modifications, I discussed findings from the second iteration, detailing how Taylor came to embody a stronger CLA stance and how focal students examined and questioned the relationships between language, power, and identity.

## CHAPTER V

### **TERESA'S ITERATIONS: "IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR ME, BEING A WHITE PERSON, TO TALK ABOUT RACIAL ISSUES."**

In this chapter I present findings from implementing CLA pedagogy with Teresa in two sections of first-year composition (FYC) over two iterations. Like chapter four, I organize findings in chapter five based on iteration and, within each iteration, I organize findings based on the study's two essential elements: faculty facilitating conversations and activities with students regarding the relationships between language, power, and identity; and then students examining and questioning these relationships through inquiry and writing. Because of this organization, I mostly present the instructors' and students' findings separately; however, the instructors' and students' experiences within the innovation were interdependent. At times, I draw upon data from both instructor and students to inform the discussion of the innovation's essential elements.

#### **Teresa's Participation in the Pre-Innovation Planning Meetings**

Along with Taylor, Teresa participated in a professional learning community (PLC) focusing on developing and implementing CLA pedagogy a year and a half prior to the innovation. As mentioned in chapter one, during the PLC, Teresa asserted, "I hate the race card being pulled when it comes to language difference. It's not about race. It's about education," in response to reading selections from Young (2010) and Young, Barrett, Rivera, and Lovejoy (2014) on code-meshing and African American literacy. In preparation for this PLC meeting, I adapted a question from Young et al. (2014) and asked instructors to "write down [their] five best likes and five worst fears about code-meshing." In her response, Teresa wrote as her 5th dislike about code-meshing, "[her] fear that it makes [her] seem prejudiced in some way or narrow minded." From her expressed sentiments about code-meshing, Teresa struggled to

reconcile her established beliefs about language with the perspectives of the PLC material. She articulated language difference to be due to one's level of education, whereas the PLC material challenged the prestige of SAE and complicated the notion that SAE provides equal opportunity for all speakers.

Although Teresa agreed to implement CLA pedagogy in her ENGL 110C courses in participating in the study, Teresa continued to express discomfort in discussing the relationship between race and language during the pre-innovation planning meetings. Across these meetings, raciolinguistic discrimination was a central conversation as many of my suggested readings and resources centered on this reality. Initially, Teresa's discomfort manifested in her expressed desire for objectivity in FYC, particularly in students' writing: "I want them to stay away from their own opinion in the rhetorical analysis." However, once Taylor asked for my help in gathering example texts that were implicitly racist to be added to the source repository, Teresa overtly shared that, "I don't want the whole class to be about racists or racism." This pushback occurred in the second pre-innovation planning meeting as Teresa pointed out that we had gathered a lot of resources for language and race but not as many for language and gender or language and technology, other inquiry topics which we planned on incorporating into the course to support students' CLA development. Her assertion led to a fifteen-minute discussion between Taylor and Teresa about personal experiences with racism as well as the topic of institutional racism. To bring us back to the innovation planning I asked them, "how can we get students to do that?!"—acknowledging that Taylor and Teresa held different viewpoints but were able to engage in conversation with one another about their stances. Though, Teresa's assertion foreshadowed the continual discomfort she expressed surrounding the inclusion of critical race conversations during the first iteration.

### **Iteration One**

Since Teresa had less experience with the content of the innovation and expressed a lack of confidence in implementing the curriculum, initially, I took on an active participant-observer stance in the first iteration for her classroom and facilitated most of the activities and discussions in which students examined and questioned the relationships between language, power, and identity. In her classroom, I was positioned as both a researcher and instructor, with students calling me Ms. Weaver. During times when Teresa was facilitating class, I sat with students at a table, and when I was facilitating class, we would exchange places so that Teresa would sit with students at a table. Although we did much of the course planning together and shared the in-class facilitation, Teresa solely assessed and responded to student writing.

Throughout this iteration, the success of the study's pedagogical goals was influenced by multiple factors, including a discrepancy between and need for continual negotiation of Teresa's and my pedagogical values as well as continual discussion on the inclusion of raciolinguistic content. These factors contributed to focal students articulating a self-awareness of being more open and accepting of others' language use but also feeling limited agency in enacting change for language acceptance.

#### **Faculty Facilitating Conversations and Activities with Students Regarding the Relationships Between Language, Power, and Identity**

What became evident during the first iteration was a disconnect between some of Teresa's and my pedagogical values, which resulted in needing to negotiate our expectations for students. For example, in planning meetings, Teresa and I frequently discussed students' use of language in their written assignments. Teresa expected students to abide by prescriptive rules and requirements, such as avoiding the use of first person "I" in most of their formal writing

assignments, whereas I advocated for allowing students the choice to decide on language use that was most effective for their pieces of communication based on their developing CLA. This disconnect in our values led to a discrepancy between my enactment of the first essential element and Teresa's enactment of it in her responses to student writing. Teresa's feedback mostly focused on surface-level corrections, emphasizing a prescriptive approach to language use, rather than using the feedback space for additional opportunities to facilitate students' CLA development. Students were reading, discussing, and learning about language variation and linguistic discrimination, but were required to abide by prescriptive rules in their own writing instead of having opportunities to challenge or subvert institutional expectations of writing and language use if they chose to do so.

To gather information about how students were perceiving this disconnect, if at all, as well as their general perceptions of the course delivery with two instructors, I suggested to Teresa that we have students complete an anonymous, mid-semester course evaluation. In the evaluation, we asked students to respond to the following questions:

1. What are you interested in learning more about regarding the course theme of "Language"?
2. On what areas of writing would you like more direct instruction?
3. What aspects of the course structure/delivery have supported your learning thus far? How/why? (So that we know to keep doing them).
4. What changes to the course structure/delivery would help support your learning moving forward? How/why?

In their responses, multiple students asked for more direct writing instruction on topics that Teresa would note in her written feedback to their assignments, such as "sentence structure,"

“paragraph organization,” and “proper grammar.” In reviewing these comments, Teresa responded that she used this exact wording in her feedback comments and that perhaps she needed to go into more detail about what she meant by such terms and incorporate more in-class instruction regarding these writing topics.

Intriguingly, one student, in response to the question “what are you interested in learning more about regarding the course theme of language?” requested a “conservative” view of language to be discussed in class. In labeling a view as “conservative,” the student appeared to politicize language beliefs into a liberal-conservative binary. Perhaps because we were examining language and its relationship with social identities (e.g., race, gender, and class), the student perceived readings and discussions as promoting a “liberal” stance toward language. Given that the student provided this comment in an anonymous survey, perhaps the student did not feel welcomed or comfortable expressing ideas that may have disagreed with or challenged course texts, peers, or instructors. Personally, I struggled with knowing what to do with this statement and wondered what would be considered a “conservative” view of language: a stance that argued for the use of a single, standardized language variety? Teresa and I ultimately chose to respond to this particular comment, not by changing any of the course content, but by revisiting our commitment to the study’s first essential element and focusing on helping students complicate their thinking about language use beyond a good/bad (or liberal/conservative) binary stance toward language variation.

Although Teresa was open to revising class assignments, activities, and texts to support students’ CLA development and enhance their postsecondary writing skills, Teresa’s discomfort in facilitating conversations about race was evident early in the semester. During the first few weeks of class, we continued adding to a resource list of advertisements that students would

choose from for their second project, a rhetorical analysis that asked them to analyze a visual or multimodal text. The resource list included television commercials, such as Coca-Cola's "It's Beautiful" and No More's "Pizza Delivery/911," as well as print ads from companies like Starbucks and Telcel, that had either an explicit or implicit focus on language or communication. I also included three recently released images from Nike, which featured athletes who had faced or overcome adversity, as possible in-class examples for practicing visual and rhetorical analysis skills with students. The advertisements, although not explicitly language-related, would invite students to explore various social identities, such as race, gender, and disability, as part of their analysis. After looking through the examples that I added to our resource list, Teresa sent me an email in which she expressed worry about one of the Nike advertisements that featured former NFL player Colin Kaepernick:

I do like the ads, however, even though I like controversy for discussion, I worry about the ad from Nike about "Believe in something. Even if it means sacrificing everything" because once before I had a student write on a picture of police chasing one African American man and they went off on a tangent about black versus white and their beliefs, what was wrong with society, etc. If they can keep it objective and not put personal feelings into it and just address the ad within the guidelines, it will be good. We will have to stress that for sure.

The next day, I followed up with her during a planning meeting, and she reiterated the past teaching experience that she shared in the email. In response to her concern about inviting students to explore visual images intertwined with race, I drew upon my own teaching of ENGL 110C and shared with her the success of the "Mother Tongue" activity that I had facilitated with my students two days prior. I then shared how one of my aims with the "Mother Tongue" discussion was to initiate conversations with students about language, race, and discrimination to set a precedent for future classroom conversations. I noted how crucial it would be for students in my class to explore race when we analyzed the "I Has a Dream" (2005) advertisement in a



couple of weeks and that scaffolding conversations would be a way to support students in discussing topics that are mostly silenced in the FYC classroom. Teresa acknowledged this importance but then moved on to discussing the plan for the next class period. Two weeks later, Teresa again shared her reasoning for not wanting to include any of the Nike ads when we were finalizing the advertisement list for students.

Given that the Nike ads were not explicitly language-focused, I did not push for their inclusion as either in-class examples or text options. Instead, I encouraged the inclusion of “I Has a Dream” as an in-class example for the September 28<sup>th</sup> class period. The image, originally sponsored by an Atlanta-based organization, came out in response to the Oakland Ebonics controversy and shows a Black man facing away from the audience with the words “I Has a Dream” in all white, capital letters overlaid on top of his image. In using this image as an in-class example to practice students’ analysis skills, I also provided students with examples of grammatical features of AAE and asked students to analyze the rhetor’s choice in using the word “has” instead of “have” for the image.

Later in the semester, during an October 22<sup>nd</sup> planning meeting, Teresa’s worry over race-related conversations evolved to clear discomfort. In reviewing the list of articles students could choose from for their critical engagement essay (a project that asked students to summarize and engage with a language-focused academic article), Teresa inquired about whether Fought’s (2018) “Are White People Ethnic? Whiteness, Dominance, and Ethnicity” was still included on the list of options. I explained that I had taken it off the list because of the pre-innovation planning meeting conversation in which both Taylor and Teresa had deemed the reading too advanced for first year students. Teresa responded, “good, it made me uncomfortable anyway.” Although I had previously facilitated class activities during which raciolinguistic ideologies were

part of the conversation, one example being the in-class analysis of “I Has a Dream” (2005), I had not inquired with Teresa about her comfort with the material during or after my facilitation of those activities. Rather, my conversations with Teresa focused on students’ understanding of class content and their engagement with class discussion, which she usually expressed as “that was a good class” or “students seemed to like the activity.” I struggled in knowing how to respond to Teresa’s expressed discomfort both in the moment and as the semester progressed. The study was grounded in faculty facilitating conversations and activities with students regarding the relationships between language, power, and identity. And, for Teresa, the first iteration was designed so that she could observe and learn from my facilitation in order to lead the conversations and activities during the second iteration. As I navigated my roles as a graduate student, researcher, and colleague, I recognized a need to support Teresa in her own continued CLA development while simultaneously enacting the essential elements of the innovation.

Interestingly, Teresa’s discomfort shifted somewhat after seeing how students approached their critical engagement essays. Although we had removed Fought’s piece as an option, the remaining texts included academic conversations on language use and gender, language change and technology, linguistic discrimination and race, and evolving pronoun usage (see Table 4 for complete list of article options).

**Table 4***Article Choices for Students' Critical Engagement Essay*

Author	Article
Naomi S. Baron	"Are Digital Media Changing Language?"
John McWhorter	"Missing the Nose on Our Face: Pronouns and the Feminist Revolution"
John McWhorter	"Straight Talk: What Harry Reid Gets about Black English"
Mary-Beth Seitz-Brown	"Young Women Shouldn't Have to Talk Like Men to be Taken Seriously"
Allen N. Smith	"No one has a Right to His Own Language"
Vershawn A. Young	"The Problem of Linguistic Double Consciousness"

During our November 5th planning meeting, Teresa shared that students surpassed her expectations for the assignment, noting that she thought the readings would be "too much" for them but that students "got it" and responded to the articles in critical ways. Teresa's earlier hesitancy and discomfort in facilitating critical conversations with students appeared to be grounded in previous teaching experiences and, perhaps, low student expectations. However, seeing students successfully engage with critical conversations about language, and knowing that we had provided instructional scaffolding, seemed to encourage Teresa to want to incorporate even more critical discussions moving into the final unit of the semester: argument. During our meeting, Teresa also asked me if we could somehow incorporate either a showing of the Fair Housing PSA commercial based on John Baugh's research on dialect features and housing discrimination or a discussion of the word ask pronounced as ax, both of which we had discussed during the fourth and final PLC meeting.

In my excitement for her request, I created an activity, implemented in the next class period, that would support students in studying the structure of arguments by analyzing the argument being made in an MTV Decoded (2018) video, “Why Do People Say ‘Ax’ Instead of ‘Ask?’” For the activity, students first took individual notes while watching the video and then worked in groups to analyze how the argument was made and to evaluate its effectiveness. During my facilitation of the whole-class discussion, I asked students about the speaker/rhetor and how her identity may have influenced the argument or perhaps how audiences responded to the argument. This question served to get students thinking beyond language use, itself, and more toward how speakers are often perceived, linguistically, based solely on their appearance. Because of the nature of the conversation that unfolded, my analysis of the conversation, and focal students’ reflection on participating in the discussion, I have chosen to provide speakers’ racial identities in parentheses.

**Megan** (White): What does her ethos say to viewers?

**Trevor** (Black): I mean, most people probably don't know her. They just see her on the screen, so it's just her talking. She came across confident, but if they used somebody that was like, important, not important, I'm not going to say important.

**Cody** (White): Entitled background.

**Trevor** (Black): Yea, some sort of stature, it probably would have reached more people, and it would have gotten more likes. ‘Cause she was speaking facts, it wasn't like she was speaking nonsense. . . .

**Caleb** (Black): Maybe she was too straight (forward).

**Ellie** (White): I feel like it could have been different if like a White person was speaking. I don't know.

**Class:** [mmmm]

**Ellie** (White): Just think about it. What if a lot of those dislikes are just like certain groups.

**Trevor** (Black): Racists.

**Cody** (White): I think it was a lot of touchy subjects as far as they're referencing ax and what not. I mean I guess some people believe that her pointing out ax in the bible is degrading it I mean.

**Kaia** (Black): I disagree with her [pointing to Ellie].

**Megan** (White): Okay, say more.

**Kaia** (Black): Um I feel like if a White person is talking, people would have liked it more. People like White people to talk about racism.

**Megan** (White): [Okay, so]

**Trevor** (Black): [Surprisingly]

**Ellie** (White): No, that's kind of what I meant, like I was saying the dislikes, like in this video are like more of them might be White people because—

**Kaia** (Black): Oh, I just feel like people would have liked it more if a White person was talking.

**Trevor** (Black): I just think they don't like her. Period.

**Class**: [laughter]

**Megan** (White): I think there was a hand, either Jason or Caleb?

In response to my initial question, Trevor alluded to the speaker's possible lack of popularity with audience members. Cody supported Trevor's assertion and used the terms "entitled" and "background" while describing a potentially "more effective" rhetor for the topic and argument. It is unclear if he was alluding to the speaker's race or gender here, as she was a Black female, or if he was just referring to potential audience members' familiarity with the speaker. Ellie then argued that the audience would have perceived the argument differently if the speaker were White. She began to assert that the dislikes from the video could be "certain groups" of people, hedging her classification. Similar to Cody, who is also White, she used vague language to discuss race and Whiteness. Almost immediately after her response, though,

Trevor, who identifies as Black, said what Ellie did not and labeled the “certain groups” as “racists.” Cody joined back in by calling the discussion of language and race that occurs in the video, “touchy subjects,” which is why some people may have responded negatively. The language “touchy subjects” implies the necessity of being handled with a kid-glove and appears to be a White discourse strategy for Cody in discussing race. Kaia, who identifies as Black, then raised her hand to assert that she disagreed with Ellie’s statement. I asked Kaia to “say more,” and she shared that she believes people would have liked the video more if the speaker were White. As this was similar to the argument Ellie was making, Ellie responded to Kaia saying that is “what [she] meant.” Both students were making the argument that the speaker’s race could have negatively influenced the perceived effectiveness of the argument on some audiences. These assertions indicate students’ developing awareness of how speakers are often judged on a basis other than their use of language. Kaia responded again to Ellie, appearing to still believe the two were in disagreement: “I just feel like people would have liked it more if a White person was talking.” Trevor chimed in to ease the growing classroom tension with a line of humor, which got the class laughing, and I, as the facilitator, proceeded to move the class discussion in a different direction.

In the moment, and in my jottings after class, I recalled this exchange as productive and “really good.” I was glad that students were analyzing the argument in these ways and that students were seemingly able to speak to one another over disagreements. In retrospect, however, I recognized that the conversation was not allowed to really develop or lead to new understandings. Kaia and Ellie did not have the opportunity to realize that they were arguing similar stances, and the lasting effects of this conversation stood out in the focus group interview

during which several of the students involved in the exchange brought it up as one of the “challenging” moments of the semester.

During the focus group, Ellie shared that she appreciated the activity regarding “Why Do People Say ‘Ax’ Instead of ‘Ask’?” because it “made [her] think deeper” and it was “good for [her] to see,” while Cody shared that he appreciated it as well because his high school teachers “stray[ed] away from [discussions of race],” perhaps so that they would not “be called racist.” Although Ellie and Cody shared that they appreciated the activity, Caleb, who identifies as Black, stated that he was uncomfortable with the activity and “just wish[ed] it would end” because so often people misinterpret others. He then referred to the moment in which Kaia appeared to misinterpret Ellie’s statement about the speaker’s race. After Caleb mentioned this moment during the focus group, Ellie expressed that she was “so frustrated in that moment,” and that “[Kaia] thinks I’m racist or something.” Both Caleb’s and Kaia’s responses solidified for me that, although the activity encouraged a conversation in which students were examining the relationships between language and identity, my facilitation cut the conversation short, leaving at least two students feeling unsettled.

### **Students Examining and Questioning the Relationships Between Language, Power, and Identity through Inquiry and Writing**

Early on in the first iteration, students were picking up and applying knowledge about language, language difference, and language discrimination through class activities and discussions. After being introduced to the study, students reflected on their own language use and created a list of words or phrases that were unique to their culture, broadly defined. This activity also served as an icebreaker as students shared their lists with one another, comparing and contrasting them to see how location, background, and friend groups play a part in individual

language use. Several class periods later, students read and examined Amy Tan's (2018) "Mother Tongue" and Sherman Alexie's (1998) "Superman and Me" as model texts in preparation for composing their own narrative essays.

For the culmination of unit one, students showcased their learning and reflection about their own language experiences in a narrative essay. Across their narratives, focal students illustrated their developing knowledge of several key language concepts, such as recognizing that beliefs about language are taught, that language is tied to social norms, and that individuals' language beliefs differ. For Ellie, her familial influence on her language perceptions was made very clear when she detailed her language mentorship of a younger neighbor, Jamie. Ellie shared that when Jamie would ask, "Can you come play wit me if you don't got no chores?" Ellie would "correct that sentence before even answering the question." Eventually, after Jamie was prohibited from spending time with Ellie because Jamie "was getting on her own parents for their use of poor grammar," Ellie came to realize the "insane[ness]" of her family's language expectations that had been instilled in her. At the conclusion of her narrative Ellie shared that she now sees that *what* is being communicated is more important than *how* it is communicated, but she stated a self-awareness that "there have been many instances where [she's] caught [her]self judging a person right after hearing them speak, but then remember[s] to focus on the message instead."

In contrast, Cody and Trevor wrote about experiences with language difference that resulted in miscommunication. Cody, who identifies as a speaker of Guinea (a dialect of English found in Gloucester, VA) detailed in his narrative how he finds himself changing the way he communicates in order to be understood by others, in particular, non-native speakers of English.



In his narrative, Cody shared his miscommunication experience with a computer science professor at the university:

My Professor for CS150 was a woman whose first language was Arabic, and she had a heavy accent, but I understood her most of the time. After the first couple of classes, I had to start asking her after class what exactly she was referring to when trying to make common references to help us understand. When I first approached her, I didn't put my guard up and started talking in my normal accent and slang which when I referred to certain material she didn't fully understand. This turned out really bad for me because, it worsened my understanding of the subject.

Cody then shared how, after continuing to struggle in the class, he visited the professor during her office hours to ask for help again. This time, though, he proceeded to use standardized English without his "southern drawl" in order to communicate his lack of understanding to the professor.

Cody's example detailed an experience during which he adapted his linguistic repertoire and took on his part of the communicative burden with his professor. Trevor, on the other hand, did not discuss a need to change his language, but described a situation in which language difference was almost deadly. Trevor's narrative reflected on a time in the 7th grade when the school principal asked him, "Did you tell this young lady you would kill her the other night?" Trevor narrated that he "immediately burst out laughing" and that his potential suspension "all stemmed from a text that was misinterpreted and blown out of proportion." In response to breaking up with his girlfriend, Trevor had texted her, "Kill you right, have a nice life," with "kill" meaning "I agree." From this communication barrier, Trevor expressed that he learned words can be "dangerous," and that "middle school girls jhi like [pretty much] dramatic."

After examining their own experiences with language, students were asked to examine an academic article's stance on language use in a critical engagement essay (see Table 4, presented earlier, for article list). This assignment served to introduce students to academic research and to

springboard students' thinking for their culminating project, an argument essay for which students developed a researchable question on any aspect of language. As part of their critical engagement essay, students summarized the article, analyzed its rhetorical moves, and then responded back to the article regarding the content of the argument. Interestingly, students' responses in their critical engagement projects highlighted their perceived lack of agency toward language change and language acceptance, which students reiterated in the focus group interview.

In her response to Baron's (2018) "Are Digital Media Changing Language?" Ellie voiced a similar belief that she originally shared in her narrative essay, that she values "older traditions" about language instead of embracing the influence of digital media on language change. Ellie stated in her response essay that, "[she] still value[s] those who put more thought into the language they use . . . no matter where they're from or what language they speak." Ellie's assertion appeared to label some speech or language use as lazy or unthoughtful, though it is unclear whether she is commenting on non-standardized language varieties or all languages and all language varieties. Interestingly, Ellie stated that she "still" holds these values, asserting that despite the argument that has been made in the article (that digital media has had a greater impact on language attitudes rather than actual language use), she has retained certain language beliefs—highlighting the strength of SLI formed from familial, community, and K-12 interactions.

Another focal student, Cody, also reinforced his language values that he brought with him into the class at the conclusion of his response to Young's (2018) "Linguistic Double Consciousness," though he did appear to grapple with more complex understandings of language concerning raciolinguistic discrimination throughout his essay. After providing a summary of the

article, Cody responded to the content of Young's piece by finding a personal connection to linguistic discrimination: "I have a southern accent, and I sometimes use southern slang when speaking, which causes people to diminish the quality of what I am saying." However, he also conceded that, "[he has] not experienced racism in the academic world," recognizing that his linguistic discrimination does not parallel the experiences of speakers of color that Young describes in his article. At the conclusion of his response, Cody asserted that much of raciolinguistic discrimination is embedded in the educational system rather than enacted by individual teachers; yet, he follows up this statement by appearing to support the system that he just critiqued: "I still believe that Standard English still should be taught to allow communication with people whose first language is not English." With this assertion, Cody placed more value on the standardized English language variety; though, given his fuller response essay, he does not place the standardized language variety as superior to others.

Whereas Cody and Ellie continued to voice SLI in their critical engagement essay responses, Trevor expressed resignation to SLI tenets in his response to McWhorter's (2018) "Straight Talk: What Harry Reid Gets about Black English." After analyzing a quote made by Harry Reid about the perceived literacy gap in young children, Trevor shared, "I must face the hard truth that [B]lack English will never be adorned as proper, nor would it hold any weight in a political background, therefore code-switching, and meshing, is important." Trevor shared similar sentiments during the focus group interview after I asked students to share their "current thoughts about the notions of standard language, proper language, code-switching, or code-meshing." Trevor was the first student to respond, saying,

I feel like, at this point in my life, it's a face that I got to put on because I don't interact this way unless I'm in a professional setting or in class. So, yeah, I wouldn't say it's fake, a fake way to live, but it's not *my* Standard English. It's just *a* standard English.

Caleb followed up Trevor's explanation by alluding that SAE is something he only uses in school: "I would kind of compare like, 'cause he, what [Trevor] said made a lot of sense. I kind of compare it to like math. Like I use it in school, but . . . ." Whereas Trevor and Caleb's classmate, Cody, appeared to value code-switching because he placed a value on the standardized language variety for wider communication, Trevor and Caleb were resigned to the reality of code-switching as a necessity for their communication with others. Moreover, Caleb insinuated that SAE is only useful for communicating in school and, perhaps, is not a language variety that he finds valuable for other contexts.

In addition to Trevor and Caleb's resignation toward the use of code-switching, all focus group students expressed resignation that they could not influence others' language beliefs despite articulating a new appreciation for learning to be open-minded and accepting of others' language use. In particular, students expressed their perceived lack of agency and ownership in their classrooms to be a major contributor to their actions, and lack thereof. When asked about enacting their developing awareness of language variation in future writing classes, students shared that abiding by their teachers' beliefs about language was more important than enacting their own beliefs because of what was at stake with their grades. Based upon these statements, focal students seemed to expect their future instructors to affirm SLI, and students seemed to accept that their developing CLA would be confined to a single, sixteen-week class.

### **Modifications**

Teresa and I met twice between the conclusion of the fall semester and the start of the spring semester to discuss the first iteration of the study and to reflect on what aspects promoted and/or hindered students' CLA development. Unlike the several large-scale modifications that Taylor and I made for the second iteration of the study in his classroom, Teresa and I focused on

a few specific content and organizational modifications, which are presented in Table 5. Whereas Taylor opted to include the entire text of Rankine’s (2014) *Citizen: An American Lyric* in his class, Teresa opted to work with only one part of the text, section II, and have students complete a reader response essay after reading and discussing the section in class.

**Table 5**

*Modifications Implemented in Teresa’s Classroom for the Second Iteration*

Modification	Rationale
Extended the argument unit to include an additional proposal workshop day	To provide additional time for one-to-one feedback on student inquiry topics and research processes
Created a topics list for students to work from for their argument essay	To generate additional inquiry ideas for second iteration students based on feedback from the first iteration students
Incorporated selections from Claudia Rankine’s <i>Citizen: An American Lyric</i> as a course text	To participate in the NEA: Big Read opportunity on campus

Early on in the first iteration, I realized that Teresa and I held different expectations regarding what should be asked of students in preparation for each class period. For instance, in the pre-innovation planning meetings and during the micro-cycles of analysis, I suggested low-stakes assignments and activities that required students to complete readings ahead of class time. Teresa was hesitant to assign students, what she considered, “too much reading” for one class given their potential course loads. As such, the modification meetings also served as a space for

me to better understand Teresa's pedagogical values and for us to negotiate some of our differing expectations and beliefs which became apparent during the first iteration.

Our modification planning meetings were similar to our regular planning meetings in that I encouraged her to think about her participation in the study by asking reflective questions. For instance, during our modification meetings, Teresa was conflicted about having students complete a reader response essay in the second iteration of the study or having students complete an ethnography-type assignment based on the finding that focal students expressed some resistance to applying their developing CLA to their non-academic lives. In addition to sharing the opportunities each assignment offered, I supported Teresa's reflection by asking her about the type of skills she wanted students to develop from the class to help her determine which assignment would best support students' skill development. Teresa shared that some of her reasoning for keeping the reader response assignment was because other teachers, whom she viewed as mentors, also used the assignment, and that she had never assigned an ethnography and would be unfamiliar in knowing how to help students in completing it. By the end of our discussion, Teresa solidified her desire to keep the reader response essay so that students would be prepared to complete similar response style assignments in their future courses. However, in later meetings during the second iteration, we would negotiate to have students complete their essay in response to *Citizen* rather than Teresa's original text of the *Twilight Zone* television episode "Eye of the Beholder."

Teresa expressed a similar pedagogical conflict regarding the inclusion of daily journal writing, questioning whether it had been productive during the fall semester. Throughout the first iteration, Teresa began each class by having students respond to a journal entry focused on a language-related question or idea. Two sample journal entry prompts are provided below:

September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018 Prompt:

We just discussed code-meshing and code-switching in class on Wednesday. Discuss a time in your life when you used one or both of these in your everyday activities.

October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018 Prompt:

Think about the power that certain words can carry. For example, a jury returning a verdict of *guilty* or *not guilty* directly impacts a defendant's life. Saying *I do* in front of a minister or justice of the peace usually binds two people in marriage. And, referencing someone with a derogatory slur can elicit an emotional response, operate as a form of camaraderie, and/or have physical consequences. Write about a time when you or someone you know used language as a form of power or control. What were the consequences (positive or negative) of the language event?

For the most part, the journal writing was compartmentalized to the first ten minutes of class and was not consistently incorporated into the day's class discussion or activity. I suggested that since many of the journal prompts supported students' individual CLA development, we somehow incorporate students' responses into class discussions and activities so that they were learning and growing from each other's experiences. Teresa appeared hesitant to make this change despite recognizing that the structure of journal writing needed to be adjusted; therefore, I took the modification meeting as an opportunity to learn more about the purpose of the journal entries from Teresa's perspective. Teresa shared that she viewed journal writing as very "personal" and as an assignment that students might start at the beginning of class but finish later, outside of class time. Furthermore, Teresa explained that she was taught by mentor teachers that journal writing was a good way to get students focused at the beginning of each class and to promote "good critical thinking." We ultimately agreed that the journal entry prompts were productive in supporting students' CLA development; however, we did not come to a conclusion about how the journals would be incorporated in the class by the end of our modification meetings.

Once the second iteration began, Teresa planned for students to write on their journal prompts for the first ten minutes of each class. The prompts were crafted to scaffold students'

thinking about class readings and discussions or to have students work toward larger writing assignments. Initially, she invited students to share their responses aloud. As the second iteration progressed, though, the time for responding to the prompts was shortened to only three to five minutes to account for the time needed to implement the day's discussion or activity. Many students moved to writing down the prompt in class and composing their responses outside of class. Thus, the structure of the journal assignment appeared to stay the same across iterations as students would turn them in for grading three times a semester, and Teresa would write brief comments in response to individual entries before returning them to students. Whether or not students engaged with the prompts for their intended scaffolding purposes or students responded to prompts just before the due date, remained unclear.

Another pedagogical aspect that I inquired about during our modification meetings was Teresa's approach to giving feedback to students' written work. As noted in my previous exploration of iteration one, I recognized a discrepancy between the feedback students received on their writing assignments and the readings and discussions we were having in class. Teresa expressed during our December 10th meeting that she held an "old-school" response style which focused on mechanics. This approach stemmed from her belief that a "poorly formatted paper . . . colors the view of the content" of the paper. Rather than disregard or ask Teresa to completely change her approach to feedback, which I do believe undermined the theory underlying the pedagogical goals of the innovation, I shared that students would also benefit from marginal comments in their writing that helped them push their thinking regarding language, power, and identity. Teresa noted that she would try to remember to do this, once students started submitting their essays; though, as detailed in the sections that follow, Teresa did not include feedback beyond mechanical corrections.



Lastly, Teresa's concern about my transition to a stronger observer stance for the second iteration was evident in the modification meetings. During the fall semester (iteration one), Teresa taught only one section of ENGL 110C, but taught two sections of ENGL 110C in the spring semester (iteration two). Though I only participated in and collected data from one ENGL 110C section in the spring, Teresa implemented the innovation's curriculum in both sections of her classes. During one of our modification meetings, Teresa expressly positioned me as the "expert on language." Despite participating in the PLC of spring 2017, taking part in the pre-innovation planning meetings of summer 2018, and observing my facilitation of the innovation during the fall 2018 semester, Teresa did not view herself as knowledgeable in the linguistic content of the innovation and was less confident in her ability to facilitate the curriculum on her own in the class I was not observing. Because of her concern, I expected, going into the second iteration, to continue to have a strong participant-observer role in her classroom.

### **Iteration Two**

Although I initially expected to enact a strong participant-observer stance in Teresa's second iteration course, I quickly transitioned into a stronger observer role as she wanted to gain experience leading class discussions and activities during the section I was observing, in case any questions came up, so that she felt prepared to lead class, on her own, in her second section. In taking on the facilitation work, Teresa expressed that she better understood the curricula material we had developed in the fall semester, and, moreover, better understood the goals of the innovation in general. Throughout this iteration, the success of the study's pedagogical goals was influenced by multiple factors, including Teresa's developing agency in and comfort with the innovation coupled with an embodied deficit approach to student writing in a teacher-centered

classroom. These factors contributed to focal students mirroring Teresa's stance and articulating strong appropriateness-based beliefs about language variation across their writing.

### **Faculty Facilitating Conversations and Activities with Students Regarding the Relationships Between Language, Power, and Identity**

In facilitating the conversations and activities regarding the relationships between language, power, and identity, Teresa worked from our first iteration lesson plans. She also demonstrated agency within the innovation by finding and bringing in additional materials related to language, power, and identity. For example, we found that students in the first iteration sometimes interchangeably used the terms slang, dialect, and accent to talk about language variation; thus, Teresa and I created a two-day activity in which students would learn about the definitions of each then practice categorizing words and phrases into their respective groups. For the second day of the activity, we asked students to bring in examples of slang, accent, and dialect from their own linguistic repertoires to share with the class. To complement this activity, Teresa found and incorporated the TedTalk, "The Cost of Code-Switching" by Chandra Arthur (the same video that Taylor found and incorporated into his class during the first iteration, though Teresa came to this piece through her own research). The inclusion of this TedTalk supported Teresa and her students in transitioning from the definitions of key terms to issues of power and identity when it comes to variation among and between slang, accents, and dialects. Although we did not facilitate this activity in the first iteration, Teresa expressed comfort in being able to facilitate it with students for the second iteration. In her final interview, Teresa shared that she "felt very comfortable . . . more [so] than last semester" with the curriculum and that she "enjoyed teaching [about] code-meshing and code-switching."

Despite her growing agency in and comfort with the innovation, Teresa continued to embody strong prescriptivist beliefs when it came to viewing students as writers, demonstrating a deficit stance (Valencia, 1997) when talking about students' writing in the classroom, during their one-on-one conferences, and in written feedback. During one class period, as students were working toward their critical engagement essays, Teresa directed students to "avoid contractions" and "avoid slang." This comment stood out to me given our work in the narrative unit teaching students about slang and its rhetorical potential. Similar to the first iteration, students in the second iteration were not invited to enact their developing CLA when it came to their own writing. As the semester progressed, it became clear to me that Teresa felt compelled to perform a stereotypical English teacher identity, one who marked up papers for errors. She often rationalized her pedagogical choices by saying, "I don't know who [students are] going to have as a teacher next year." To prepare students for future classes and their ultimate success in higher education, Teresa worked to "fix" students' writing.

Although I had encouraged Teresa during the modification meetings to use her feedback to students' writing as additional space to enact the essential elements of the innovation, it took a student pointing out her feedback style to get Teresa thinking about how she might adapt for future semesters. At the end of the semester, in response to a journal entry that asked students to reflect on their development as writers over the course of the semester, Sophie wrote, "I feel as if I have not improved when writing. I haven't had any positive comments to my essays really. They only included places I need to work on." Teresa responded in the margins of Sophie's notebook by saying,

I guess that is my fault. I wanted to show you what you need to do to get better. To me, you have improved greatly, and I am very proud of you! I will try to remember this when grading—sometimes teachers tend to forget to praise more :)

In her response to Sophie, Teresa willingly positioned herself as a learner, noting that she would “try to remember [to include positive comments] when grading.” This stance contrasted with her earlier struggle to position herself as a learner in discussions of race with her students, so I asked Teresa about the exchange with Sophie during our final interview. Teresa explained that she recognized the need to give more positive praise to students in their writing and shared that, this semester, she did not “stick to [her] own mantra” for responding to student work. Whereas some students, such as Sophie, may have appreciated the addition of positive comments in their feedback, I believe approaching feedback to student writing from a dialogic stance (Huot, 2002) would have better supported students’ CLA development and postsecondary writing skills.

Furthermore, despite facilitating student-centered activities through her participation in this innovation, Teresa maintained a teacher-centered classroom for many of the conversations, including class conversations on *Citizen: An American Lyric*. Although students were asked to read section II in advance of coming to class, Teresa used class time to reread the section aloud to students and then analyze pieces of it for students. In her final interview, Teresa shared that she felt “uneasy” teaching the *Citizen* material. The discomfort she felt appeared to result in her offering her own interpretations of the text rather than making space for student discussion. Interestingly, in discussing memorable class moments during their focus group, students shared that their reading and response to *Citizen* was the most challenging for them, but that they would have appreciated more opportunity to discuss their views of the reading with one another over multiple class periods. Focal students also expressed this desire in regard to the class as a whole—that they were curious to know more about others’ experiences with and views of language and did not feel they learned much from each other over the course of the semester.

During our final interview I also asked Teresa about challenging moments. In particular, I asked if there were “any lessons or discussions that were challenging because of their linguistics focus?” In response, Teresa shared,

I felt like it was difficult for me being a White person to talk about racial issues when I have not experienced it myself. And I don't want them to feel, well, does she know what, she's, you know, and I didn't want to be like lecturing. I wanted just to present it, and let them handle it the way they wanted to so that, I just wanted to do a good job with it. And I don't know if we did or not, but I think, I hope so.

Although I asked her explicitly about challenges regarding the linguistics focus of the curriculum, Teresa shared her personal challenge in discussing race-related issues with students, most of whom were students of color. She further expressed in our final interview that “[*Citizen*] needed to be taught,” and she was “glad we did it” because, much like the language curricula, Teresa saw the inclusion of *Citizen* as “instill[ing] the ideals of compassion, understanding, and equality” with students.

As Teresa took on the facilitation of the first essential element in the second iteration, she also worked to step out of her pedagogical comfort zone by leading conversations about language variation, seeking out additional curricula materials, and inviting students to reflect on race relations in the U.S. through a response essay. Throughout this facilitation, though, Teresa both *embodied* an appropriateness stance toward language variation—evidenced in her deficit approach to student writing—and *articulated* an appropriateness stance during our final interview when she shared that code-switching is “acceptable to make [students] successful.” Students in the second iteration, likewise, articulated an appropriateness stance throughout the semester.

## **Students Examining and Questioning the Relationships Between Language, Power, and Identity through Inquiry and Writing**

Students in the second iteration completed the same major assignments as students in the first iteration. Across her major assignments, Ava articulated the SLI tenet that English, in particular, standardized English, is associated with education. In her narrative, Ava discussed her multilingual background and her identity as an Indian-American. She explained that she was born in India and was taught English by her grandparents and Hindi by her family's maids. Ava elaborated that it was important for her to be bilingual at a young age "because everyone in India only speaks Hindi and only educated people spoke English." After Ava's family immigrated to the United States, her communication with her grandparents changed. Instead of speaking English, they spoke to her in Hindi, "so [she] would not lose [her] mother tongue." As Ava got older, she would consciously code-switch "to fit in with the other kids. . . .When [she] was with [her] grandparents, [she] would have an Indian accent when [she] spoke to them in either English or Hindi," but spoke with an American accent when communicating with friends.

Later in the semester, despite having engaged with texts that presented a nuanced perspective of technology's influence on language change, Ava asserted that, "technology has corrupted English for the newer generations" when responding to Baron (2018) in her critical engagement essay. Similarly, Ava's classmate, Chloe, who identifies as White, responded to Baron's argument by writing, "I want to make sure that I can always switch out of my digital language. The digital age has had a huge impact on our language." Although Ava argues that technology has "corrupted English" and Chloe advances that "the digital age has had a huge impact on our language," both articulated appropriateness stances in response to Baron's article by promoting code-switching.

Alison, who identifies as Black, also grappled with the idea of code-switching and the idea of code-meshing in her critical engagement essay. In response to McWhorter's piece, "Straight Talk: What Harry Reid Gets about Black English," Alison asked, "Why must we prioritize one standard language, why can we not utilize multiple but in different scenarios depending on the situation and environment?" With this question, Alison first appeared to support the use of multiple languages and multiple language varieties for effective communication but then qualified her question by reiterating that different scenarios might call for different ways of communication. She further responded, "On the other hand, if you are only fortunate enough to speak one standard language, you are only able to properly communicate with people within your dialect." In this statement, Alison highlighted the possible ineffectiveness of only having a single language variety in one's repertoire, though she does not appear to push toward the possibility of code-meshing. In her argument essay, however, Alison advocated a specific stance in support of code-switching:

It is also used to properly adapt to certain surroundings and situations in which people reside. Code-switching should be implemented at a young age to gain enough experience to know when and where to voice certain language. In a familiar setting with family or friends, one may use code-mesh[ing] or comfortable language which is appropriate for the environment which may include slang, dialect, or accent. Although, if an individual is situated in an environment which is presented as mostly classy and formal, one typically uses standard and slightly proper English, if necessary.

The focus group's discussion of code-switching mirrored the students' writing and comments throughout the semester. Like with the first iteration focal students in the final interview, I asked the second iteration focal students about their current thoughts on "standard language, proper language, code-switching, and/or code-meshing."

**Alison:** I feel code-switching is necessary.

**Megan:** You feel it is necessary?

**Alison:** Yea, cause you need to know how to talk to different people.

**Eli:** Yea, you can't talk the same way with your friends that you do at a job interview.

**Chloe:** I agree.

**Ava:** Also, it, like, helps connect, like, different types, like, different, like, walks of people together

**Megan:** Mmhm.

**Ava:** code-switching, but I don't think there's such a thing as a standard language or proper language because different people come from different walks of life. So, there's just some culture to the word making it unique compared to like different even like we live in the U.S. Like all throughout the country. There's different language styles and we have one national language while in India there's 26 national languages. So, like each part of a region comes from like some different historical event that usually forms like language.

**Chloe:** I agree. I think there's no really such thing as a standard language or a proper language.

The focal students' discussion of code-switching mirrored Teresa's own stance toward code-switching. For these students, it is a necessary way to communicate in different contexts.

Interestingly, although the first iteration focal students in Teresa's class expressed a resignation for the need to code-switch, they also appeared to have a more complex view of code-switching, explaining why and when they might do it while recognizing the power implications in being complicit with code-switching. Second iteration focal students, however, did not appear to question or interrogate what it means to engage in code-switching other than being able to communicate in different contexts. It seemed that students in both iterations absorbed much of their respective facilitator's perspectives on language as they formed their own understanding of language variation. Recognizing the influence of instructors' perspectives on students' language beliefs, I also asked focal students about their perceived agency in the classroom.

**Megan:** Do you as a student feel like you have much agency . . . in your classes? Meaning you can drive your own education or make decisions about how you write or



how you respond and expect the professor or the instructor to kind of respect that? Or do you feel like

**Students:** No.

**Chloe:** I feel like it's always proper. Like what if we could write a paper, and we did like code-switching or code-meshing? I feel like that would just never happen.

Similar to the first iteration focal students, these students perceived that they had no agency in being able to make informed decisions about their writing. “That would just never happen,” as Chloe said.

### Summary

In this chapter, I presented findings from implementing an iterative CLA pedagogical innovation in two sections of Teresa’s ENGL 110C classes. First, I discussed Teresa’s and my negotiation of our pedagogical values in order to ground the innovation in the essential elements of the study. I then explored how implementing CLA pedagogy contributed to focal students articulating a self-awareness of being more open and accepting of others’ language use but feeling resigned in having limited agency to enact linguistic change. Next, I presented the modifications Teresa and I made between iterations to better support the pedagogical goal of promoting students’ development of CLA while strengthening and enhancing their postsecondary writing skills. After presenting the modifications, I discussed findings from the second iteration, detailing how Teresa’s embodied deficit stance and teacher-centered classroom contributed to focal students’ articulating a strong appropriateness-based stance toward language across their inquiry and writing.

## CHAPTER VI

### DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In the previous two chapters I presented findings from implementing CLA pedagogy with Taylor and Teresa in four sections of first-year composition (FYC) over two iterations. Specifically, I shared how the innovation was designed, implemented, modified, and implemented a second time with each instructor. In this chapter, I first discuss the findings of the innovation in relation to the study's research questions. Within my discussion of each research question, I provide theoretical assertions—claims justified based on systematic retrospective analysis (Gravemeijer & Cobb, 2006) of the data—regarding the study's local instruction theory and for the continued implementation of CLA pedagogy in FYC courses more broadly. A summary of the assertions and the data that led to these assertions are found in Table 6. Following the discussion of theoretical assertions in relation to the research questions, I present implications for and suggestions for future research regarding approaches to language diversity in FYC and opportunities for professional learning for FYC instructors. I conclude with final thoughts about my collaboration with Taylor, Teresa, and their students.

**Table 6***Theoretical Assertions from CLA Pedagogical Innovation*

Assertion	Example Focused Codes
Instructors' articulated and embodied beliefs about language influenced students' developing linguistic consciousness	Mirroring Instructor's Stance Articulating an Appropriateness Stance Questioning Authority of Standardized English
Students' perceived lack of agency in education strongly affected the transformative aims of the innovation as students articulated resignation for or complicity with discriminatory beliefs	Resigned to Code-switching Lack of Agency in Education Influence of K-12 Education Awareness of Contradictory Beliefs
Collaborative innovations require ongoing negotiation between instructors and researchers as both parties navigate the influence of past teaching and learning experiences on the current innovation	Reconciling Past Pedagogical Approaches with Current Innovation Influence of Colleagues Enacting English Teacher Identity Researcher Expressing Vulnerability
The iterative process of the collaboration promoted instructors' agency in designing, modifying, and implementing CLA Pedagogy in FYC	Increasing Confidence Developing Instructor Agency Facilitating Questioning Researcher Stepping Back
CLA pedagogy complicates the national WPA outcomes for FYC by inviting students to question and challenge notions of rhetorical effectiveness	Code-meshing as Rhetorically Effective Pushing Against Standard Language Ideology Encouraging Action Antiracist Teaching

**Research Question #1: How Might CLA Pedagogy in FYC Promote Students' Linguistic Consciousness?**

In implementing the CLA innovation, I first asked how our pedagogical design might promote students' linguistic consciousness of how language works in the social act of communication so that students might make informed choices about language use in meeting various needs and purposes. Given that Taylor, Teresa, and I implemented the CLA pedagogical innovation across an entire course, not just in a single unit of study, students were continuously engaging with texts, activities, and assignments that asked them to inquire into the relationships between language, power, and identity. Additionally, the content of the innovation provided students with vocabulary, such as code-switching, code-meshing, slang, dialect, and linguistic double consciousness, to name and discuss some of the language practices in which they already engaged. Because of their sustained inquiry and developing vocabulary, students noted that they became hyperaware of their own as well as others' language use, both inside and outside of their classes. Students also expressed an understanding of how their own beliefs about language were influenced by family members, friends, teachers, and general public perceptions. Just as students' past experiences influenced their beliefs about language coming into the innovation, students' interactions with Taylor, Teresa, and me influenced how their beliefs evolved during the innovation. Whereas the linguistic content of the innovation was essential for students in developing an understanding of how language works and for developing vocabulary to discuss language and writing choices, the instructors' beliefs about language impacted how students' linguistic consciousness was promoted and acted upon.

## **Instructors' Beliefs Influence Students' Consciousness**

*Assertion: Instructors' articulated and embodied beliefs about language influenced students' developing linguistic consciousness.*

Beginning in our pre-innovation planning meetings, both Taylor and Teresa expressed varying degrees of hesitancy regarding aspects of the pedagogical innovation. In chapter four, I explored how Taylor's initial hesitancy blanketed underlying feelings of fear and discomfort that he expressed during his "crisis of identity as an antiracist teacher." Throughout the first iteration, Taylor grappled in a "cognitive wrestling match" because he identified as an antiracist teacher committed to equitable teaching practices, but also felt compelled to enact an "English teacher identity" that promoted the value of SAE for educational and professional communication. Additionally, he wanted to avoid broaching conversations that might elicit pain or discomfort for himself and for students. Taylor emphasized to students the need to meet genre expectations despite assigning students to read authors, such as Young (2018), who challenged what it means to ask students to comply with institutionalized racist standards. The genre-based approach, which Taylor later conceded in a teaching reflection was "a code-switching approach to writing," was both articulated and embodied for students throughout the first iteration.

In assignment rubrics for students' first drafts, what Taylor called "Discovering Genres" drafts, Taylor asked students to use language and writing choices that aligned with genre expectations. For instance, in the analysis rubric, Taylor stated that "standardized conventions must be followed in this genre"; students did not have choice or agency in language use for this assignment. Grammar usage in the rubric for the memoir assignment was evaluated based on its impact on readability. The rubric noted that "if there are [grammatical] errors, they're made on purpose." This assessment criteria communicated that grammatical choices that did not follow

prescriptive SAE rules were “errors,” even when they were made on purpose given the context or aims of the piece of communication. Lastly, the commentary rubric noted that “the writing’s tone/word choice should match the content of the review,” communicating that language choices do vary based on the piece of communication and that those choices should be followed rather than examined or critiqued. In contrast, students’ revised projects followed what Taylor referred to as a “Mastering Genres” rubric, which pulled language directly from the department’s SLOs. This change appeared to open up opportunities for students to demonstrate their developing rhetorical knowledge; critical thinking, reading, and writing skills; and knowledge of conventions without dictating specific do’s and don’ts for student writing.

These rubrics, both “Discovering Genres” and “Mastering Genres,” were implemented across iterations; however, after working through the challenges of the innovation during the first iteration, Taylor came to a stronger embodiment of CLA in the second iteration and deemphasized the importance of genre conventions, though that remained a guiding structure of the course. While students in both iterations read about how language use varies and about how language standards come to be, students in the first iteration were guided to follow genre-based expectations and standards more closely. Thus, at the end of the semester, first iteration students promoted the value of genre-based writing skills and articulated the need for code-switching for effective communication. Moreover, Taylor encouraged second iteration students to actively challenge or play with these standards in their major writing assignments and compose against constraints through their commentary project—a number of students took up this invitation. Perhaps as a result of Taylor’s stronger CLA embodiment in his interactions with students, focal students came to recognize and problematize inequalities regarding language and various social

identities, whereas first iteration students validated, rather than complicated, an appropriateness-based stance.

Similar to students in Taylor's second iteration, students in Teresa's first iteration course showed evidence of complicating an appropriateness-based stance, though most focal students did come to acknowledge a need for code-switching. During Teresa's first iteration, I served as the facilitator for the majority of discussions and activities that asked students to inquire into the relationships between language, identity, and power. As the facilitator, I worked to maintain a consistent stance, encouraging students to make informed choices about the content knowledge with which they engaged. However, Teresa's assessment of students' language use in their writing communicated a competing stance that most likely influenced students' final articulation of the value of code-switching. Students in Teresa's second iteration articulated a strong appropriateness-based stance, throughout the semester, that mirrored Teresa's own embodiment of appropriateness beliefs. Despite working from the same curriculum across iterations, students in Teresa's classes came to very different understandings and articulations about language. A number of factors may have contributed to this, including differences in focal students' initial beliefs toward and experiences with language coming into the course as well as differences in their facilitator's embodied and articulated stances about language use. Given that teachers enact or are placed into a position of power, I argue that students adapt their stances to what they see being valued by classroom authority figures.

### **Perceptions of Agency Affect Transformative Action**

*Assertion: Students' perceived lack of agency in education strongly affected the transformative aims of the innovation as students articulated resignation for or complicity with discriminatory beliefs.*

In addition to instructors' beliefs influencing students' linguistic consciousness, students' perceptions regarding their agency, or lack thereof, in education affected how students took action with their developing linguistic consciousness. As noted in chapter three, Fairclough (1992b) explained that students, and teachers, should be encouraged "to see that they contribute through their own practice to the shaping and reshaping of the sociolinguistic order—to reproducing it or *transforming* it" (emphasis added, p. 54). Our CLA innovation was grounded in transformative aims, and students were invited by instructors, to varying degrees, to act upon their knowledge through various assignments. However, students' moves toward action were strongly defined by their past, present, and future understandings of their place in the classroom.

For example, during Taylor's first iteration, Cayla noted in a class discussion that her written language choices "depend on the teacher." Similarly, Peyton, a student in Taylor's class during the second iteration of the study, wrote in her midterm essay about how students learn to write in order to please the instructor:

The typical English class focuses on topics that the teacher or professor believes are important and relevant. So often, students fail their first essay in a new teacher's class, because they have no idea what the teacher expects of them. Nonetheless, they eventually learn the writing style that he or she prefers.

In these specific examples, Cayla and Peyton expressed how students are often socialized to mold their writing to individual teacher's preferences rather than writing toward and exploring their own ways with language.

Given this socialization, I inquired about students' perceived agency and ownership over their education to gauge the possibilities of students acting upon their developing CLA in future courses. In particular, I asked focus group students about the possibility of code-meshing in writing assignments for different classes and about navigating their interactions with future instructors and peers who might advocate for what is often referred to as "proper" or "correct"



language use. Ultimately, focus group students shared that abiding by their teachers' beliefs about language was more important than enacting their own beliefs because of what was at stake with their grades. Students' responses ranged from a clear, "No . . . [code-meshing] would just never happen" (Chloe, student in Teresa's second iteration course), to wondering if agency was even a possibility: "Could we even say anything since it's [the teacher's] classroom, or could we challenge [their beliefs] in anyway?" (Trevor, student in Teresa's first iteration course). These sentiments mirrored Cayla and Peyton's previous examples about writing to please the instructor. However, students in Taylor's second iteration focus group noted that such authority and control was detrimental to their learning.

**Malia:** . . . I just left a class where I can't even raise my hand. Like if I question, it's pretty much like you fail or you're wrong . . . I need to be able to express and question. Like if I can't, then what am I learning? What am I understanding? How am I gonna respect you if you won't even allow me to have a question or have an opinion in any type of way?

**Peyton:** Yeah, going off of that, like, I think that that's honestly the best way to learn is like being able to, not being afraid to raise your hand to ask a question, and like having a mutual, having a mutual respect between like a professor and the student. I hate it when people act like they have more power over each other . . . a professor should just say, okay, I'm going to teach you this material. Ask me if you have any questions, or if you want to, like, challenge me, and say like, oh, this is wrong, go ahead. Like, I'm here, we're here to learn from each other versus sit in your desk and learn. Instead of that, I feel like this class . . . he incorporated us into the lesson instead of just talking at us.

Malia and Peyton advocated for instructors to invite students to question, challenge, and simply discuss their thinking in classes in order for them to "learn from each other" and respect each other; they advocated for increased agency in their own education. Malia and Peyton went on to acknowledge how Taylor invited them to be active participants in their development as writers, but recognized that future instructors would not likely encourage their exploration of language choices. Although the CLA innovation was designed to promote transformative action in education, students' perceived lack of agency in classrooms led to a sense of resignation in being

complicit in the language beliefs and standards promoted by instructors across their classes.

**Research Question #2: How Might a Collaborative, Co-designed CLA Pedagogy in FYC Support Instructors in Promoting Students' Linguistic Consciousness and Developing Students' Postsecondary Writing Skills?**

In implementing this study, I employed DBR to address several methodological needs in language diversity scholarship, such as the need to bridge theory and praxis regarding language rights in education and the need to work *with* teachers “as partners” (Sweetland, 2010, p. 174) to initiate long-term educational changes. Given the need for researcher-teacher collaborations and the collaborative affordance of DBR, I engaged in retrospective analysis to understand how our collaborative, co-designed CLA pedagogy supported instructors in promoting students' linguistic consciousness and postsecondary writing skills. From this analysis I found that the innovation required continual negotiation between the instructors and myself but that the iterative nature of the study supported teachers in enacting agency as the innovation progressed.

**Need for Ongoing Negotiation**

*Assertion: Collaborative innovations require ongoing negotiation between instructors and researchers as both parties navigate the influence of past teaching and learning experiences on the current innovation.*

When Taylor, Teresa, and I first began meeting to plan for the innovation during the summer of 2018, I presented them with the two essential elements of the study: faculty facilitating conversations and activities with students regarding the relationships between language, power, and identity; and students examining and questioning these relationships through inquiry and writing, and reinforced that, though the study was grounded in these elements, the ultimate innovation would be collaboratively designed and modified. My

collaboration looked differently with each instructor, and required ongoing negotiation with both Taylor and Teresa as we all navigated how our past teaching and learning experiences as well as our beliefs about language influenced our work together and our implementation of the innovation. CLA pedagogy pushes against teacher-centered classrooms and deficit stances. Additionally, it complicates ways of responding and being in the English classroom that promote SAE as *the* superior language variety and that embrace the fallacy that SAE provides equal economic and social opportunity for all language users. As a result, Taylor and Teresa worked to reconcile past approaches and, sometimes, competing pedagogies with our innovation.

To support them in processing the challenges and successes in implementing the innovation, I asked both instructors to engage in weekly teaching reflections as part of their participation in the study. The teaching reflections greatly supported Taylor during the first iteration in articulating his feelings of fear, disappointment, and resistance when it came to implementing CLA pedagogy. The process of engaging in reflection also supported him in working through various discrepancies in his antiracist teacher identity, which promoted equitable teaching practices, and his “English teacher identity,” one that led him to feel compelled to promote the superiority of SAE for educational and professional communication. At the start of the second iteration, in a January 18<sup>th</sup> reflection, Taylor noted that during the first iteration he “rolled out essentially the same class [as previous semesters] with revised assignment sheets, and those revised assignment sheets were not enough to connect with students, or at least for their connection with the idea of language.” A couple of weeks later, on February 8<sup>th</sup>, Taylor reflected that having CLA “as the cornerstone for the class rather than as an afterthought” made a significant difference in students’ engagement with the innovation and in their developing linguistic consciousness. By having CLA development embedded in the day-to-

day classroom work and by scaffolding students' larger assignments with different lowstakes writing and activities, students were engaging in, and excited to engage in, ideological conversations about language and writing, unlike students in the first iteration course.

Whereas the teaching reflections were central to Taylor's negotiation of past experiences with the current innovation, Teresa's negotiation came about during our one-on-one interactions throughout the innovation. During these meetings, Teresa and I would brainstorm activities that would support students in leading up to their larger assignments. After developing the activities, I would explain how I was going to facilitate them during class (in the first iteration), or Teresa would walk us through the activities if she were going to facilitate them during class (in the second iteration). Because Teresa's linguistic knowledge was also developing during the innovation, our planning sessions included discussion of linguistic principles and necessary vocabulary in order for successful implementation of the planned activities. Perhaps because Teresa was focused on learning how to facilitate the activities and making sure she had an understanding of the content, she did not consistently engage in reflection of her teaching or of her participation in the study. The limited reflection allowed competing pedagogies and ideological stances to simultaneously exist in her classroom. For instance, she facilitated class discussions on how viewing language use as "correct" and "proper" undermines the reality of language variation while also voicing the need for students "to fix" their writing. Rather than reflecting on how her teaching may have promoted competing stances, her reflection focused on the general progress of the course. At times, I asked Teresa to reflect on her participation in the study and about her beliefs about language during our meetings. Over time, Teresa described our collaboration as a combination of "young" and "old" viewpoints. Similar to how she saw the differences between teachers' beliefs in the PLC, Teresa positioned our differences regarding

language and power as “new school” versus “old school” rather than as differences in ideology. Since she did not position it as a difference in ideology, but as a difference in generations, she rationalized an acceptance of her appropriateness-based stance.

At times, I also struggled to navigate my varying roles in the study, which included, researcher, colleague, peer, graduate student, expert, and learner. To support me across these roles and to ground my interactions with the instructors and students, I continually referred back to the essential elements of the study. For example, when it became clear in Taylor’s first iteration that the essential elements were not quite being fulfilled, we examined possibilities for why during the modification meetings and, together, sought to make adjustments so that the second iteration would more closely align with the essential elements of the study. Despite the critical framework with which I had initiated the study, though, I sometimes found it difficult to challenge or push Taylor and Teresa beyond their comfort levels in implementing the innovation. I believed that forcing an ideological perspective on them would not be plausible or ideal. For long-term enactment of the innovation and change in education, I felt that the work of ideological commitment had to come from within the instructors through continual learning and reflection. Thus, my collaboration with Taylor included serving as a sounding board during his time of reflection and offering conclusions from my observations regarding students’ uptake and development of linguistic consciousness. My collaboration with Teresa included serving as a mentor for developing curricula and facilitating activities with students and encouraging reflection of her teaching and beliefs about language during our one-on-one meetings.

### **Promoted Instructors’ Agency**

*Assertion: The iterative process of the collaboration promoted instructors’ agency in designing, modifying, and implementing CLA Pedagogy in FYC.*

Although the study necessitated ongoing negotiation between myself and the instructors as well as between the instructors' past pedagogies and the current innovation, the iterative process of the collaboration encouraged instructor agency. Throughout the first iteration, Taylor wrestled with his desire to enact the transformative CLA innovation and his feelings of fear and discomfort in doing so. Because of his reflective work during the first iteration, Taylor appeared to hold a clearer internal motivation for enacting CLA pedagogy going into the second iteration, which evoked a stronger sense of confidence with the innovation for the second iteration.

In recognizing that CLA development needed to be embedded into the course, rather than sprinkled in as an "afterthought," Taylor revisited the resources I had collected during our summer planning meetings and chose to incorporate more of them for the second iteration. Although Taylor drew from this collection of texts and activities, he transformed them to represent his style of teaching as evidenced by the revised daily freewrite prompts as well as the mini class lectures. Additionally, Taylor brought in more videos and discussion questions and facilitated mini-lectures that highlighted his background in linguistics. Overall, Taylor's participation in the study highlights the affordance of multiple iterations in DBR and showcases the value of reflection as a teaching practice.

Beyond supporting his agency within the innovation, the iterative nature of the study influenced Taylor's thinking and planning regarding all of his classes. Where he had previously been cautious of our work because of past negative experiences with students, he witnessed positive learning experiences during the second iteration, and began to apply some of the innovation's strategies to other courses he was teaching that semester. Taylor shared that the first iteration of the study "caus[ed] him to look at the bigger picture" of teaching rather than getting too focused on the day-to-day or unit-to-unit. In particular, the work from the innovation

supported Taylor in revisiting his antiracist teaching agenda for his research-based writing class and his American literature class. Recognizing students' engagement with the curriculum during the second iteration, Taylor came to understand the importance of structure and delivery when presenting social justice topics to students. He shared that, in past courses, students would often shut down when presented with social justice topics. As part of our innovation, Taylor scaffolded linguistic content and facilitated discussions so that students would engage in deductive reasoning and come to their own informed conclusions about language use and language discrimination. With this approach, students remained open and willing to participate in ideological conversations, and Taylor expressed a desire to implement this approach when teaching research-based writing and literature as well.

The iterative nature of the study also supported Teresa's growing agency in the innovation as well as her confidence with the innovation's content. Whereas I expected to remain the facilitator for various class discussion and activities during the second iteration, Teresa chose to take on this role as early as the second week of the second iteration. She shared that having watched my facilitation the previous semester, she felt more confident about the trajectory of the innovation, especially in regard to the linguistic content. In taking on the facilitation work, Teresa appeared to become more invested in the innovation and sought out additional videos, activities, and readings that complemented the curricula we had collaboratively designed. At the conclusion of the study, Teresa shared her intent to continue implementing the innovation in her FYC courses the following year and to continue to seek out additional resources that would expand the possibilities of the innovation.

### **Research Question #3: How Might CLA Pedagogy in FYC Work Toward the National WPA Outcomes for FYC?**

In my third and final research question, I asked how the innovation might work toward the national WPA outcomes for FYC. The WPA Outcomes Statement (2014) emphasized students' development of Rhetorical Knowledge; Critical Thinking, Reading, and Composing; Composing Processes, and Knowledge of Conventions. Through retrospective analysis, I found that the CLA pedagogical innovation actually complicated the outcomes, specifically in regards to Rhetorical Knowledge and Knowledge of Conventions, rather than worked toward the outcomes.

#### **Complicating and Challenging Outcomes for FYC**

*Assertion: CLA pedagogy complicates the national WPA outcomes for FYC by inviting students to question and challenge notions of rhetorical effectiveness.*

The WPA Outcomes prioritize the need for students to compose different kinds of texts with different purposes and audiences in mind. Additionally, the outcomes promote students' understanding of rhetorical awareness when it comes to text, genre, audience, and language expectations. Specifically, the Rhetorical Knowledge outcome states that, "Writers develop rhetorical knowledge by *negotiating* [emphasis added] purpose, audience, context, and conventions as they compose a variety of texts for different situations" ("Rhetorical Knowledge," para. 1), and the Knowledge of Conventions outcome notes that, "Successful writers understand, analyze, and *negotiate* [emphasis added] conventions for purpose, audience, and genre, understanding that genres evolve in response to changes in material conditions and composing technologies and attending carefully to emergent conventions" ("Knowledge of Conventions," para. 2).



The CLA pedagogical innovation, on the other hand, asked and encouraged students to question rhetorical expectations and conventions in relation to the purposes they served and, more importantly, whom they served. Specifically, the CLA pedagogical innovation invited students to,

- examine the histories of different language varieties and conventions;
- question what it means to “negotiate” with audience and genre expectations;
- complicate perceptions of “appropriateness” and “correctness” in writing and language use;
- reflect on their complicity in upholding discriminatory and racist language and writing standards;
- and understand the risks and consequences of both rejecting and working within the bounds of academic expectations and rhetorical conventions.

Students, across classroom contexts, engaged in such critical inquiry while building their postsecondary composition skills. For instance, in working toward their memoir and narrative assignments, students examined their everyday language practices in various situations and with various interlocutors. Students then named how and why their language practices changed depending upon the situation, audience, and genre, gaining rhetorical awareness as outlined in the WPA Outcomes Statement. However, the CLA innovation also asked students to question when and why they (or others) chose to negotiate in various instances of communication. Such critical inquiry was sustained throughout the innovation as students further examined academic writing conventions alongside raciolinguistic ideologies. Taylor, in processing students’ receptivity to the innovation early on during the second iteration, stated that,

One thing that I thought near the beginning of our collaboration was that students, you know, might not necessarily appreciate being critical of English in an English class. It's

kind of a bit of a paradox, but it's a new perspective for students, and I think that it's a refreshing perspective to take because of their preconceived notions. . . . It gives them an understanding, I hope, that . . . moves beyond the stereotypical structure of an English class. I think that they appreciate being able to talk about English in a way that is actually more intelligent than the typical English classroom in which White standards are the identity that's rewarded.

This assertion mirrors sentiments made by Alim and Smitherman (2012) who noted that “White Mainstream English and White ways of speaking become the invisible—or better, inaudible—norms of what educators and uncritical scholars like to call academic English, the language of school, the language of power, or communicating in academic settings” (p. 171).

At present, the WPA Outcomes promote White ways of languaging by couching it in sentiments of rhetorical effectiveness and conventions. The Outcomes promote learning how to analyze and respond to various communicative situations to meet disciplinary expectations; however, the CLA innovation sought to push against this backdoor discrimination by supporting students in examining and naming who benefited from disciplinary ideals of rhetorical effectiveness and by promoting students’ agency in choosing when to conform to and when to challenge disciplinary conventions of rhetorical effectiveness. Taylor contended that, because of the innovation, some students will have “a more developed understanding of English” than many of their future instructors. Taylor also expressed hope that students would “rise up” out of their complicity in regard to discriminatory language standards. But what might be the consequences of doing so, especially for students with marginalized identities? While I do hope that students from the study enact agency in their language choices, I affirm that instructors, and administrators,<sup>7</sup> must rise up out of their complicity in teaching and promoting discriminatory language practices. As Inoue (2019) argued,

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<sup>7</sup> I include administrators in this assertion to highlight the recursive nature of power in education. Just as students in this study articulated limited agency in their education, instructors may also perceive various agentive constraints, which direct their pedagogical choices. Administrators, such as program directors, department chairs, college deans, etc., must support instructors in transforming writing classrooms into equitable learning environments.

We must stop justifying White standards of writing as a necessary evil. . . . We must stop saying that we have to teach this dominant English because it's what students need to succeed tomorrow. They only need it because we keep teaching it! (p. 364)

Furthermore, I believe that the national organization, which so many individual writing programs look to for their own programmatic outcomes, must account for its complicity in promoting White ways of languaging in their Outcomes Statement.

### **Implications and Future Research**

In chapter two, I situated this study within literature exploring approaches to language diversity in FYC and within literature on college writing teacher preparation and professional development. In the sections that follow, I present implications for each body of scholarship and suggestions for future iterations of the innovation based on findings from implementing CLA pedagogy across four sections of FYC.

#### **Approaches to Language Diversity**

As discussed in chapter two, conversations about language diversity often fall into a debate between monolingual or appropriateness-based approaches, which promote separation between home language varieties and institutional language varieties; and multilingual or critical approaches, which challenge the ideology of appropriateness and seek to empower linguistically marginalized students. Proponents of appropriateness-based approaches have rationalized that learning and performing “codes of power” (Delpit, 1988) provides students with access to greater economic and social success; yet, as Flores and Rosa (2015) contended, the idea of SAE being a language variety that leads to greater opportunity is a fallacy. And, I would add, a fallacy with racist underpinnings.

Alim (2005) asserted, when first introducing CLA to language study, that “our pedagogies should not pretend that racism does not exist in the form of linguistic discrimination”

(p. 29). The CLA pedagogical innovation, framed by and implemented through a critical race pedagogy (Lynn, 1999) lens, was fundamentally antiracist as it invited both instructors and students to examine the co-naturalization of race and language (Rosa & Flores, 2017) and actively challenge perceptions of the “effectiveness” and “appropriateness” of language use in writing. Although the innovation’s design was fundamentally antiracist and challenged the ideals of appropriateness, Taylor and Teresa’s participation illustrated the difficulty of not only maintaining a critical stance toward language diversity, but also, at times, even articulating a critical stance given our deeply embedded beliefs about language. As such, researchers and educators must recognize that our beliefs about language fluctuate along a spectrum of language ideologies, and that maintaining a critical stance toward language diversity necessitates continual reflection of our teaching practices and interactions with others.

Likewise, students’ beliefs about language fluctuate and are greatly influenced by their instructors’ beliefs and assessment practices. I suggest that researchers investigate how various response and assessment practices might support students’ CLA development rather than work against critical understandings of language use. As noted in chapter five, I believe that responding to student writing from a dialogic stance (Huot, 2002) would have better supported students’ CLA development and postsecondary writing skills in this innovation. A dialogic approach would necessitate that instructors detail their experience interacting with students’ compositions as readers, rather than marking students’ compositions for errors in SAE usage (as was Teresa’s focus). This approach would also support students in further examining and questioning the relationships between language, power, and identity as instructors might push students’ thinking and questioning in direct response to their writing.

I argue that this form of response would encourage instructors to ground antiracist writing assessment (Inoue, 2015) in CLA pedagogy. For example, dialogic response would support instructors in continuously reflecting on and questioning their own responses to student writing as well as how they are affected by, and perhaps assessing, the dominant White discourses pervading higher education. Inoue (2015) noted that “classroom writing assessment is more important than pedagogy because it always trumps what you say or what you attempt to do with your students. And students know this. They feel it” (p. 9). Students across iterations noted that they write to meet their instructors’ requirements for a specific grade, not only in FYC, but across their classes. Therefore, future iterations of the innovation might implement labor-based contract grading (Inoue, 2015; Inoue, 2019) as a means of aligning the ideals of CLA pedagogy with the embodiment of CLA in classroom practice.

Additionally, I suggest that researchers examine how instructors might support students’ CLA development across FYC courses and even beyond FYC. In chapter five, I discussed how focal students in Taylor’s class during the second iteration showed potential to take action regarding CLA ideals if their thinking continued to be supported beyond ENGL 110C. Therefore, research should investigate how instructors’ embodiment of CLA in their teaching, across course themes and content, influences students’ linguistic consciousness when language diversity content is not explicit in the classroom.

Furthermore, I recommend that educators interested in implementing CLA pedagogy in new contexts, better attend to multicultural classrooms beyond dialectal and racial diversity. As Taylor shared in a teaching reflection during the second iteration, the innovation’s design did not fully consider issues of access to contextualized content, especially for international students. Examining how language is interconnected with social and political histories is central to the

development of CLA (Fairclough, 1992a). However, in designing the pedagogical innovation in this study, we narrowly focused in on some of the socio-political ideologies intertwined with language beliefs solely in a U.S. context. We incorporated examples and activities that necessitated understanding of historical and current race relations in the U.S., such as the civil rights movement, Dr. Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream” speech, and the Black Lives Matter movement. Therefore, future iterations should not assume students’ socio-political knowledge, but rather provide students with the necessary background information they need to critically analyze example texts and productively engage in class activities.

### **Professional Learning**

Since the initial design and implementation of the CLA pedagogical innovation, NCTE has re-envisioned professional development for teachers of English at all levels and put forth a new position statement. NCTE’s (2019) new statement emphasized participatory collaboration *with* teachers and shifted the conceptualization of professional *development* to professional *learning*. In the new statement, NCTE asserted that,

When seen instead as *professional learning* [emphasis in original], i.e., a collaborative venture in which teachers are recognized as learners, leaders, and knowledgeable professionals, [English Language Arts] educators are more likely to actually learn and, importantly, to develop a mindset of the value of lifelong learning that will in turn benefit both their own teaching and their students’ learning. (“Issue Defined,” para. 2)

The shift to professional learning as “a collaborative venture,” mirrors the findings from Wardle and Scott (2015) and Obermark, Brewer, and Halasek (2015), discussed in chapter two, who noted the importance of collaborative efforts for successful PD efforts. This shift also gives support to research methodologies, such as DBR, that often position teachers as collaborators to bring about educational transformation. Reinking and Bradley (2008) noted that a “by-product” of DBR is continual professional learning as “teachers become more reflective about their

practice” (p. 80). By opening up their classrooms and taking part in designing the CLA innovation, Taylor and Teresa continued building on the CLA work formally initiated by the PLC of spring 2017 and took an active role in moving language rights theory into praxis.

In chapter two, I argued that writing teacher preparation and PD regarding linguistic diversity is limited for FYC instructors. Additionally, most writing instructors’ beliefs about language have been informed in much the same ways as their students’ beliefs—through interactions with others voicing SLI and participation in institutions, such as government and education, intertwined with SLI. As such, the organization’s shift in perspective to professional learning will greatly benefit instructors, and, as a result, their students, as the development of CLA can be supported as the ongoing, evolving process that it is.

Because beliefs about language are deeply embedded and reinforced over time, it is crucial to support Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs), and early-career instructors, in developing CLA and embodying CLA in their classrooms. This support might include revisiting required graduate coursework to incorporate more language-focused or linguistics courses or revising current course offerings to promote and encourage critical perspectives regarding language and writing. Such revision is not only important for English departments but also departments across universities as all graduate students who are future-faculty members go on to teach writers and/or writing in their disciplines. In addition, Teaching College Composition courses might be reenvisioned and developed for a stronger interdisciplinary approach, drawing on the fields of education and linguistics, to complicate key concepts, such as genre, audience, and conventions, among others, in the field of rhetoric and composition.

Moreover, professional learning might emphasize how the field of rhetoric and composition is shaped by, responds to, and takes up the construct of race to examine the role of

raciolinguistic ideologies (Alim, 2016; Flores & Rosa, 2015) for the teaching of writing. In doing so, writing programs, or even individual instructors, might then revise programmatic or course SLOs to promote more equitable outcomes and assessment practices. As I have acknowledged throughout this dissertation, explorations of race positively challenged Taylor's identity and implementation of CLA pedagogy as a White male in the classroom. On the other hand, explorations of race consistently led to avoidance or even resistance from Teresa, a White female—ultimately limiting her awareness and understanding of how the construct of race impacts perceptions of language use.

What is the role of professional learning, then, if and when instructors continue to hold or enact beliefs that do harm to students? As mentioned in chapter two, Lovejoy et al. (2018) noted that, “. . . we must respect teachers' pedagogical ideas and practices when they voice resistance,” but that we can, “ask them to examine their pedagogy in light of what our profession knows about language, writing, rhetorical situations, and choices” (p. 333). Inoue (2019) took a more critical stance toward educators resisting classroom practices that would tackle linguistic violence in the classroom, exclaiming, “what a blind sense of privilege!” in response to educators who say, “I'm just not ready . . . I don't feel comfortable yet, maybe next semester” (pp. 21–22). What do we do? Do we respect our colleagues' ideas and practices? Do we call them out for not recognizing their privilege? I do not believe there is a clear answer as our various positionalities and privileges complicate possible responses. However, I am hopeful that the shift toward professional learning (NCTE, 2019), “to develop a mindset of the value of lifelong learning” (“Issue Defined,” para. 2), will invite and motivate instructors to continually reflect on their pedagogies for linguistic social justice.



### Final Thoughts

Through this study, I sought to support Taylor and Teresa in applying their thinking about language and the teaching of writing from the PLC to the FYC classroom. In doing so, we developed curricula to promote students' development of CLA while strengthening and enhancing their postsecondary writing skills. In presenting the findings of the innovation, I highlighted the challenges and difficulties of implementing CLA pedagogy for each instructor while also showcasing the successes and social justice possibilities for doing such work.

Much like Taylor and Teresa's internal struggles with promoting some of the CLA ideals in FYC, I am often asked about or challenged on whether implementing CLA pedagogy in the teaching of writing is a service or disservice to students, whether promoting students' agency in choosing to conform or not to conform to racist linguistic expectations—spoken or written—prepares students for the current realities of linguistic discrimination in academic spaces and beyond. I firmly believe that writing instructors must promote students' agency as communicators by supporting students in developing an awareness of how language works and how language is intertwined with various socio-political ideologies. It is a disservice to students to falsely tell them that they will find economic and social success through the use of SAE. Moreover, it is a disservice to students for instructors to give lip service to linguistic appreciation through appropriateness-based stances, only to reify White language practices in their assessment of student writing and perpetuate linguistic discrimination. I affirm Godley and Reaser's (2018) assertions that "changing our unconscious responses [implicit attitudes toward language] requires extended time and effort," and that "given the role teachers play in perpetuating linguistic inequality—and the role they can play in upending linguistic inequality—it is time and effort

well spent” (p. 9). I argue, though, that it is not just “time and effort well spent,” but time and effort that *must* be spent.

### Summary

In this chapter, I discussed the findings of the CLA pedagogical innovation in relation to the study’s research questions. I provided five theoretical assertions regarding the study’s local instruction theory. These assertions also inform the continued implementation of CLA pedagogy in FYC courses more broadly. These assertions are reiterated below:

1. Instructors’ articulated and embodied beliefs about language influenced students’ developing linguistic consciousness.
2. Students’ perceived lack of agency in education strongly affected the transformative aims of the innovation as students articulated resignation for or complicity with discriminatory beliefs.
3. Collaborative innovations require ongoing negotiation between instructors and researchers as both parties navigate the influence of past teaching and learning experiences on the current innovation.
4. The iterative process of the collaboration promoted instructors’ agency in designing, modifying, and implementing CLA Pedagogy in FYC.
5. CLA pedagogy complicates the national WPA outcomes for FYC by inviting students to question and challenge notions of rhetorical effectiveness.

I then discussed how this study contributes to literature regarding language diversity in education by illustrating the difficulty of not only maintaining a critical stance toward language diversity, but also, at times, even articulating a critical stance given our deeply embedded beliefs about language. Additionally, I discussed how this study contributes to literature on professional

learning (NCTE, 2019), illuminating how collaborating *with* instructors promotes their agency in moving language rights theory into praxis. I concluded by affirming the value of CLA pedagogy in promoting linguistic social justice.

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## APPENDIX A

## STUDENT PARTICIPANTS' PSEUDONYMS AND RACIAL IDENTIFICATIONS

Instructor	Iteration	Student Pseudonym	Student Race/Ethnicity
Taylor	First	Cayla	Black
		Darrion	Black
		Davis	White
		Jerrod	White
		Jesslyn	Black
		Kennedie	Black
		Lily	White
		Riley	White
		Tamara	Black
		Travis	White
	Second	Peyton	White
		Malia	Black
		Brea	Black
		Kimberly	Black
Teresa	First	Naya	Black
		Rachael	White
		Trevor	Black
		Cody	White
		Caleb	Black
	Second	Kaia	Black
		Ellie	White
		Alison	Black
		Chloe	White
		Ava	Indian-American
Eli	Black		
Sophie	White		

## APPENDIX B

## CLA CURRICULUM FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY

## Meeting 1: Language Ideologies

<b>Readings</b>	<p>Selections from,</p> <p><i>English with an Accent</i>—Rosina Lippi-Green</p> <p><i>Authority in Language: Investigating Language Prescription and Standardization</i>—James and Lesley Milroy</p>
<b>Discussion Questions</b>	<p>What did you find intriguing and/or challenging about the readings?</p> <p>How does standard language ideology affect/operate in your interactions with students and colleagues?</p> <p>At present, how do you identify your stance toward the acceptance or rejection of standard language ideology? What experiences and ideas inform your stance?</p>

## Meeting 2: Code-meshing

<b>Readings</b>	<p>Selections from,</p> <p><i>Other People's English</i>—Vershawn Ashanti Young, Rusty Barrett, Y'Shanda Young-Rivera, Kim Brian Lovejoy</p>
<b>Discussion Questions</b>	<p>Write down your five best likes and five worst fears about code-meshing. What experiences have influenced your list? (adapted from <i>OPE</i> Ch. 6).</p> <p>Since the blending of dialects, registers, and rhetorics is all around us, can/should code-meshing and academic writing be routinely reconciled? (adapted from <i>OPE</i> Ch. 6).</p> <p>How is or how might code-meshing be invited into your writing classrooms?</p>

## Meeting 3: Students' Right to Their Own Language

<b>Readings</b>	<p><i>Students' Right to Their Own Language</i> Policy Statement (CCCC)</p> <p>“No One Has a Right to His Own Language”—Allen Smith</p> <p>“CCCC Guideline on the National Language Policy”</p>
<b>Discussion Questions</b>	<p>What opportunities and/or pitfalls do you see in Smith's argument that “students do not have a right to their own language; they only have a right to</p>

learn a language which will produce the proper effects on whatever audience they may speak or write to”? (p. 158).

How might you (or how do you) facilitate class discussions with students surrounding the concepts in Students’ Right to Their Own Language and/or the National Language Policy?

#### **Meeting 4: Teaching Writing from a CLA Perspective**

<b>Readings</b>	<p>“Myth Education: Rationale and Strategies for Teaching Against Linguistic Prejudice”—Leah A. Zuidema</p> <p>“Exercise 1: An Exercise in Dialect Patterning” (pp. 4-6)—Walt Wolfram and Natalie Schilling-Estes</p> <p>“The Story of Aks”—Anne Curzan and Michael Adams, from <i>How English Works</i></p> <p>Encouraged Reading:</p> <p>“African American English and White Linguistic Appropriation” (pp. 166-170) in Hill Ch. 6—Jane Hill, from <i>The Everyday Language of White Racism</i></p>
<b>Discussion Questions</b>	<p>Based on your thinking over the course of our professional development, what are your thoughts on/how might you respond to the following statement by Zuidema: “to ignore the ‘smug’ students is a grave mistake, for these are the people who hold—or, as adults, will hold—much of the power that allows linguistic stigmatization and discrimination to continue” (p. 667).</p> <p>How might you embed teaching toward a critical language awareness in/through our general education learning outcomes?</p>

## APPENDIX C

### LOCAL INSTRUCTION THEORY TEXTS AND RESOURCES

#### Selections from,

Looker-Koenigs, S. (2018). *Language diversity and academic writing: A Bedford spotlight reader*. Bedford/St. Martin's.

- Anzaldua, G. How to tame a wild tongue. (pp. 33-45).
- Baron, N. S. Are digital media changing language? (pp. 170-177).
- Battistella, E. L. Slang as bad language. (pp. 183-191)
- Erdrich, L. Two languages in mind, but just one in the heart. (pp. 18-23)
- Fought, C. Are white people ethnic? Whiteness, dominance, and ethnicity. (pp. 114-124).
- Matsuda, P. K. Writing involves the negotiation of language difference. (pp. 230-232)
- McWhorter, J. Straight talk: What Harry Reid gets about black English. (pp. 125-129)
- Roozen, K. Writing as linked to identity. (pp. 227-229)
- Seitz-Brown, M. Young women shouldn't have to talk like men to be taken seriously. (pp. 92-96).
- Tan, A. Mother tongue. (pp. 24-29)
- Thaiss, C. and Myers Zawacki, T. What is academic writing? What are its standards? (pp. 288-293).
- Young, V. A. The problem of linguistic double consciousness. (pp. 325-334)

#### Multimodal or Visual Texts

Arthur, C. (2017, August). The cost of code switching [Video File]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bo3hRq2RnNI>

I Has a Dream. (2005). In K. Walters, & M. Brody (Eds.), *What's language got to do with it?* (pp. 330-331). W. W. Norton & Co.

Lyiscott, J. (2014, February). 3 ways to speak English [Video File]. Retrieved from [https://www.ted.com/talks/jamila\\_lyiscott\\_3\\_ways\\_to\\_speak\\_english?language=en#t-251190](https://www.ted.com/talks/jamila_lyiscott_3_ways_to_speak_english?language=en#t-251190)

McWhorter, J. (2013, February). Txtng is killing language. JK!!! [Video file]. Retrieved from [https://www.ted.com/talks/john\\_mcwhorter\\_txtng\\_is\\_killing\\_language\\_jk/up-next?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/john_mcwhorter_txtng_is_killing_language_jk/up-next?language=en)

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PBS. (2005). Mapping attitudes. *Do you speak American?* Retrieved from <https://pbs.org/speak>

Rankine, C. (2014). *Citizen: An American lyric*. Graywolf Press.

### **Additional Readings**

- Alexie, S. (1998). Superman and me. *The Los Angeles Times*.
- Cremona, V. (2010). My pen writes in blue and white. In S. Gillespie, & R. Becker (Eds.), *Across cultures: A reader for writers* (8th ed.) (pp. 206-209). Pearson.
- Curzan, A., & Adams, M. P. (2012). *How English works: A linguistic introduction* (3rd ed.). Longman.
- Mackall, J. (2005). Words of my youth. In J. Kitchen (Ed.), *Short takes: Brief encounters with contemporary nonfiction* (pp. 53-54). W.W. Norton & Co.
- McWhorter, J. (2005). Missing the nose on our face: Pronouns and the feminist revolution. In K. Walters, & M. Brody (Eds.), *What's language got to do with it?* (pp. 376-383). W.W. Norton & Co.
- Ping, W. (2005). Book war. In J. Kitchen (Ed.), *Short takes: Brief encounters with contemporary nonfiction* (pp. 57-58). W.W. Norton & Co.
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### **Advertisement Analysis Assignment Texts**

- Always. (2015). #LikeAGirl. [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yIxA3o84syY>
- Anheuser-Busch. (2007). Bud light classroom. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aJt35ntcaec>
- Babbel. (2018). An alien abroad. Retrieved from [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Su\\_4OjIjqok](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Su_4OjIjqok)
- Coca-Cola. (2014). It's beautiful. [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D4BC8zUfNhU>
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## APPENDIX D

### INSTRUCTOR REFLECTION GUIDE

One to two times a week, reflect on your participation in the CLA innovation. Below I have provided sample prompts for reflection, though feel free to reflect to other questions/prompts that come up in response to critical language awareness. We will draw upon your reflection in conjunction with my observation field notes during our planning meetings to make any necessary classroom changes and to analyze the progress being made toward our pedagogical goals.

1. What was my best teaching moment this week regarding the CLA innovation, and how can I have more moments like it?
2. What was my most challenging teaching moment this week regarding the CLA innovation and why? How might I respond next time or what changes might I need to make?
3. In what ways did my students surprise me this week or in what ways did I surprise myself this week in regards to the innovation?
4. What additional assistance, support, and/or resources do I need to better implement the CLA innovation?

**APPENDIX E**  
**FIELD NOTES GUIDE**

Evidence of <b>faculty</b> facilitating conversations and activities regarding the relationship between language, power, and identity.	Evidence of <b>students</b> examining and questioning these relationships through inquiry and writing.
What factors appear to be <i>supporting</i> students' development of linguistic consciousness and postsecondary writing skills?	
What factors appear to be <i>hindering</i> students' development of linguistic consciousness and postsecondary writing skills?	
What modifications may be needed?	



## APPENDIX F

### INSTRUCTOR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Describe your experience in planning for the CLA innovation during summer 2018.
2. Describe your experience during the school year as we worked to modify the CLA innovation.
3. How did the work in our professional learning community (spring 2017) influence your implementation of the CLA innovation?
4. How might the professional learning community (spring 2017) have better supported you for implementing the CLA innovation?
5. What were the most successful pedagogical experiences that occurred in your classes as part of the CLA innovation? How might you draw upon these successes for future classes?
6. What were the most challenging pedagogical experiences that occurred in your classes as part of the CLA innovation? What might support you in responding to these challenges for future classes?
7. What surprised you about implementing the CLA innovation?
8. How do you envision building upon or adapting the innovation in future classes?
9. What have you learned about yourself as a teacher through implementing the innovation?
10. What have you learned about language or yourself as a user of language through implementing the innovation?
11. How might you support colleagues in implementing a similar CLA innovation?

## APPENDIX G

### STUDENT FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

1. How have you studied or approached language in past classes? How is it similar to or different from how language was studied or approached in this class?
2. Which readings, class discussions, or activities about language are most memorable for you? What about them made them memorable?
3. Which readings, class discussions, or activities about language were most challenging or frustrating for you? What about them made them challenging or frustrating?
4. What have you learned about language from this class?
5. What have you learned about yourself from this class?
6. How do you plan on using what you learned about language from this class in future classes? At work? In interactions with others?

## VITA

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- Ph.D. Department of English, Old Dominion University, 2015-2020  
 Emphases: Composition and Rhetoric; Applied Linguistics  
 Dissertation: *Critical Language Awareness Pedagogy in First-Year Composition: A Design-Based Research Study*
- M.A. Department of English, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, 2011-2013  
 Emphasis: Linguistics  
 Master's Project: *Appalachian English Curriculum*
- B.A. Department of English, Mars Hill College, summa cum laude, 2007-2011  
 Concentration: Secondary Education  
 Thesis: *Eliminating Misconceptions of African American Vernacular English*

### RESEARCH

#### Referred Journal Article

- Weaver, M. M. (2019). "I still think there's a need for proper, academic, Standard English": Examining a Teacher's Negotiation of Multiple Language Ideologies. *Linguistics and Education*, (49), 41-51.

#### Select Conference Presentations

- Walking the Walk of Critical Language Pedagogy. CCCC, Milwaukee, WI. (March, 2020).  
 "Should I be doing this kind of work?": Wondering About Critical Language Awareness Pedagogy. NCTE, Baltimore, MD. (Nov, 2019).  
 Students' Developing Critical Language Awareness across First Year Writing. CCCC Mid-Atlantic, Norfolk, VA. (May, 2019).

### RELEVANT TEACHING AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Instructor of Composition, Virginia Tech, 2019-present  
 Graduate Assistant to the Associate Chair of Writing Studies, Kristi Costello, ODU, 2019  
 Graduate Teaching Assistant, Instructor of Record, ODU, 2018-2019  
 Graduate Assistant to the Writing Program Administrator, Jenn Sloggic, ODU, 2016-2018  
 Instructor of English and Rhetoric, Lees-McRae College, 2013-2015