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Contingency as a Barrier to Decolonial Engagement: Listening to Multilingual Writers

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Abstract Based on the concept of transformative listening by García (2017) that views listening as a form of decolonial work that must take place in writing centers, the article examines colonial thinking and contingency as toxic preexisting conditions of writing center ecology that hinder our ability to listen to marginalized multilingual voices. Recognizing the commonality between multilingualism and contingency, both as ignored marginalized intersecting identities in the hierarchy of the racialized and corporatized university system, the article describes the complexity of engaging contingent workers in decolonial work and listening. Further, it argues that contingency creates significant barriers to the type of antiracist and decolonial work that García calls for that cultivates transformative listening. The article proposes specific types of collaborative training and partnerships that writing centers should invest in to foster decolonial listening and work while addressing the material constraints faced by contingent faculty and staff.

Keywords writing center, white language supremacy, antiracist pedagogy, contingency, grammar feedback

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In my role as a multilingual writing program coordinator and instructor with a contingent appointment, I extensively work with and advocate for multilingual students of color, a racially and linguistically marginalized group in writing-centered spaces whose ecologies are deeply shaped by linguistic racism (Inoue, 2015, 2019). Linguistic racism that perpetuates and reinforces a historical and evolving system of racial and linguistic hierarchy affects our abilities to listen to marginalized voices, well and deeply (Cui, 2019). Many multilingual students of color who enter writing-centered conversations often feel unheard by writing instructors and witting center tutors. As I attempt to understand and respond to the "listening" challenges that I daily witness and hear about in my local context in order to create an antiracist writing ecology (Inoue, 2015) where we can listen to multilingual students of color, well and deeply, I cannot help but recognize another pervasive toxic condition that greatly hinders our ability for listening: The majority of workers in writing-centered spaces hold contingent status.

According to the 2014 report by Emily Isaacs and Melinda Knight, 71% of writing center directors were nontenure line. Similarly high percentages of contingent employees were reported in the 2017 survey conducted by the National Census of Writing, 53% (contingent writing program directors) and 72%

(nontenure or hybrid categories of faculty), respectively. The percentage of continent appointments are growing—consistently and rapidly. However, questions regarding the relationship between contingent workers and multilingual students of color remain underexplored in the literature. The faculty, staff, and students who have the responsibility for listening and responding to racially and linguistically marginalized writers are serving in "insecure and unsupported positions" in the increasingly corporatized university system "with little job security and few protections for academic freedom" (AAUP, 2015; Naydan, 2017, p. 29). It is important to consider the constraints faced by contingent workers who work with multilingual students of color and how these constraints might affect their ability to listen and respond to marginalized voices (García, 2017; Ratcliffe, 2005).

This essay discusses contingency in relation to our ability to listen to linguistically marginalized voices. Based on the concept of transformative listening by Romeo García (2017) that views listening as "a form of actional and decolonial work" (p. 33) that must take place in writing-centered spaces, the article examines colonial thinking and contingency as toxic preexisting conditions of writing center ecology that hinder our ability to listen to marginalized multilingual voices. Recognizing the commonality between multilingualism and contingency, both as ignored marginalized intersecting identities in the hierarchy of the racialized and corporatized university system, the article describes the complexity of engaging contingent workers in decolonial work and listening, and by doing so, it argues that contingency creates significant barriers to the type of antiracist and decolonial work that García calls for that cultivates transformative listening. I close the essay by proposing specific types of collaborative training and partnerships that writing centers should invest in to foster decolonial listening and work while addressing the material constraints faced by contingent faculty and staff.

By focusing on multilingual students and contingent workers, two groups who share the commonality of institutional marginalization, one by classism and the other by colonial thinking and linguistic racism, the article contributes to the broader conversations on race, power, and identity politics in the field that have been advanced, most notably, by Harry C. Denny (2010), Jackie Grutsch McKinney (2013) and García (2017). Whereas previous scholarship has often concentrated on the relationship of those who are in the center vs. those who are in the margin, this article draws attention to the relationship between two marginalized groups in writing-centered spaces. The essay extends the scholarship on labor issues and writing-centered work (e.g., Fels et al., 2021; Geller & Denny, 2013) by discussing the significance of contingency issues in relation to decolonial and social justice work that aims to address a deficit view of multilingualism in the context of writing center work. Lastly, it is important to mention that the article represents underrepresented voices of multilingual faculty of color with contingent appointments, which the fields need to be more intentional about listening to. My arguments draw from scholarship in applied linguistics and writing studies as well as my lived experience from various facets of my academic life: as a former international student of color, as a woman Asian immigrant scholar with a contingent appointment, and as a non-native writing teacher and scholar of color who works extensively with multilingual writers.

Transformative Listening as a Form of Decolonial Work

Writing-centered conversations are not free from power relations and identity politics (Denny, 2010; García, 2017), and thus, regardless of writing instructors' or tutors' good intentions, they often reproduce "patterns of neocolonialism—the relationship between nations, ethnic groups, language, and ways of knowing that are rooted in historical colonial relationships and continue into the present" (Page, 2023, p. 26). Colonial epistemologies privilege Western ways of knowing, thinking, and being while attributing little value or even negative characteristics to other knowledges and ways of knowing (Rohleder, 2014). Colonial thinking is deeply embedded in all aspects

of educational philosophy and practices—including dominant standards of academic writing and tutoring pedagogies employed by writing centers. And it affects all of us who are part of the writing ecology. The word choice, *ecology,* here is intentional as the metaphor of ecosystem emphasizes interconnections and interdependence that exist in our space of "enmeshed identities and discourses" (Spohrer, 2006, p. 7) and has been used by other writing scholars, most notably Asao Inoue (2015) and Alice Gillam (1991). Inoue (2019) asserts that the dominant standards of academic writing are deeply informed by the White racial habitus—"linguistic, bodily, and performative dispositions" (p. 5), and thus are "de facto racist and white supremacist" (p. 5). Racio-linguistically diverse habitus that do not match the White racial habitus are often deemed inferior or deficit.

Colonial habitus as a toxic preexisting condition embedded in writing center cultures and pedagogies greatly impedes our ability to listen to multilingual students with marginalized identities. When tutors uncritically adhere to the dominant color-blind approaches to one-to-one writing tutoring that are developed based on the assumption that students are native speakers of a privileged variety of English (Eckstein, 2019), they are likely to ignore multilingual students' requests to provide corrective grammar feedback (McKinney, 2013; Salem, 2016) and prioritize higher-order concerns over multilingual students' real concerns. When tutors maintain their preference for nondirective strategies, they are likely to pass over students' needs for directive help (Bond, 2019). When tutors worry about being associated with doing remedial work (Bond, 2019; McKinney, 2013; Salem, 2016), their own worries and concerns are likely to make it difficult for them to recognize and respond to students' anxiety and fears as multilingual writers even when students express these concerns explicitly. The dominant writing center practices are not neutral because they only serve privileged students in the center and prevent racially and linguistically marginalized voices from being heard. Without making conscious efforts to decolonize our thinking and practice, we are likely to continue to privilege the already privileged and to continue to fail to listen to multilingual students who are in the margin. It should be noted that this toxic racialized power dynamic, which is reproduced by the dominant color-blind tutoring practices, is difficult to disrupt when most bodies that occupy writing-centered spaces hold contingent positions. According to Sue Doe (2011), contingent workers in writing-centered spaces are doubly marginalized due to their own contingent status and the status of writing centers and writing programs as marginalized units within universities. The doubly marginalized position of contingent workers makes it difficult for them to challenge dominant practices that are often viewed as "best practices." In other words, contingency can and does function as a structural mechanism that maintains both classism and colonial thinking about multilingualism.

In order for writing centers and writing-centered conversations to disrupt the historical systems of privilege and marginalization, García (2017) argues that we need to engage in decolonial work through deep listening. Depicting the significance of being situated in the region of the Lower Rio Grande Valley and the burden of being associated with the region's histories, García (2017) discussed the important role that listening played in his identity work. He wrote:

> *[Listening] became a form of expression that I found to be transformed and transformative. From listening I understood that I was situated within a historical space and connected to historical bodies . . . [and] my body was thrusting the spaces between societal limitations and new self-definition. (p. 30)*

For García, listening is a functional vehicle for "actional and decolonial work" (p. 33) that allows us to move beyond the limitations of a Black/White racial binary and to cultivate a mindfulness of difference. Thus, he urged writing center communities to engage in practices of deep listening. Furthermore, García contends that writing centers should reorient tutor education to train tutors to become "theorists of racism" (p. 38) and "decolonial

agents" (p. 42) who understand how race and power influence all and are ethically and socially committed to social justice for all. Tutors who act as decolonial agents cultivate practices of deep listening as a form of decolonial work. They:

- Acknowledge the material reality of race and racism
- Develop a mindfulness of difference
- See students "as makers of place, shapers of subjectivities, and engineers of negotiated linguistic and literate practices" (p. 48)
- Engage in reflection and reflexivity

García's concept of transformative listening invites us to actively "offer up [our space] to be changed and transformed by student writers" (p. 42).

According to García (2017), deep listening as a form of decolonial work involves understanding the material reality of the marginalized because "power dynamics materialize within" our spaces and practices (p. 6). Therefore, as I fully embrace García's view of one-to-one tutoring as a site of decolonial work where transformative listening and a mindfulness of difference are cultivated, I must examine the material realities faced by those who engage in the types of initiatives toward becoming decolonial agents. One of the most detrimental and persistent material conditions that I must grapple with in promoting decolonial work is that the majority of workers in writing-centered spaces, including myself, hold contingent status that is characterized by marginalization and precarity (Fels et al., 2021; Geller & Denny, 2013). As noted by Elizabeth Busekrus (2014) and Dawn Fels et al. (2021), contingency may allow individuals with privileged identities freedom to speak to administrators in power. On the other hand, for those with various marginalized identities, their contingent status is likely to add another layer of marginalization, which complicates their involvement in decolonial work and advocacy for other marginalized groups such as multilingual students of color. It is the latter group of contingent workers who find themselves in a position of multiple marginalization that requires more of our attention and action toward decolonial work. If those who are supposed to serve and advocate for linguistically marginalized students also hold marginalized positions within the system, what limitations and challenges would they face? In order to effectively engage contingent workers in decolonial education on transformative listening, we need to assess the material realities of contingent workers who are called upon to serve linguistically marginalized students.

Contingency as a Significant Barrier to Decolonial Work

In my role as a multilingual writing program administrator and instructor of color with a contingent appointment who works closely with contingent faculty and staff in the writing program and writing center, navigating challenges associated with my own contingent status and the contingency of those that I work with is part of the wrestling and negotiation involved in my day-to-day work. The multilingual writing program I currently coordinate comprises 100% faculty with contingent appointments. The multilingual writing program has never hired anyone with a tenure-track faculty appointment for either the coordinator or instructor positions. Similarly, our writing center that I collaborate with in supporting multilingual writers is also directed by a coordinator with a contingent appointment, and their staff consists of 100% part-time contingent workers—professional and undergraduate peer consultants. Due to the limited and fluctuating funding situations of the center, the only part-time professional consultant position that is dedicated to serving multilingual writers is sometimes vacant, and even when the position is filled, their hours are often limited to up to 10 to 12 hours a week. During the pandemic, contingent faculty, staff, and student workers who primarily serve international multilingual students also had to face a heightened precarity as their contingent budgets for programming, hiring, and training were directly hit by significantly reduced and much less stable international student enrollment. The unstable and precarious

employment conditions of contingent workers make them one of the most vulnerable in the corporatized academy. Contingent workers' professional identities are marked with job insecurity, feelings of disconnection, isolation, and being undercompensated (Spinrad & Relles, 2022). The precarity and instability of contingent employment stand in direct conflict with what is needed to meaningfully engage them in decolonial listening and work: willingness to resist the norm and long-term investments in collaboration and education.

The Political Nature of Decolonial Work

Engaging contingent workers in decolonial work can be easily complicated by their precarious employment conditions because decolonial work is deeply political. Taking an antiracist, decolonial stance involves questioning, problematizing, and disrupting widely accepted mainstream institutional policies and practices. In university settings, this would mean deviating from how pedagogy and scholarship has been traditionally understood and delivered. When racism is deeply ingrained and naturalized into the system and culture of higher education institutions, an antiracist approach must inevitably "[deviate] from the norm of the academy" and "[challenge] previously unquestioned truth" (Wagner, 2005, p. 1). Wagner writes that teaching and engaging in antiracism is especially challenging in a university environment because antiracism challenges the essential underpinning of the university system that is grounded in the Eurocentric norm—White male privilege in other words.

Because of the subversive nature of antiracist work, it is important to consider questions of power and identity in discussing what it means to embrace an antiracist approach. As we are situated at varying levels of social positions of power, the level of precarity and constraints greatly differs depending on where we are located in relation to the center or the margin (Denny, 2010). The marginalized status or identities of tutors and their placement in the institutional hierarchy of power are likely to have significant impacts on how and to what extent they should conform to or resist the mainstream ways of thinking and being. When contingent faculty and staff view antiracist work to be too professionally risky, they might be reluctant to engage in conversations, professional development, community building, and collaboration for antiracist efforts. Bruce Horner (2000) wrote "being 'political' is . . . a luxury only those comfortably ensconced in the 'professional' class . . . can readily afford" (p. 97). According to Doe (2011), faculty and staff who have contingent appointments often "feel that they need to fit in, stay under the radar and meet mainstream goals for writing instruction" (p. 36). The inherently racist norms, structures, and policies of universities are often viewed as natural or objective, and they are often maintained by faculty and administrators in positions of power. Promoting antiracist pedagogy entails engaging in difficult conversations and challenging the dominant and widely accepted ways of doing things. The subversive goal of decolonial engagement will be likely to cause varying degrees of opposition from all levels. Contingent workers may fear that they may find themselves in politically challenging situations or awkward relationship dynamics with senior members at their institution. Therefore, extra caution needs to be taken before exposing contingent workers to what might be perceived as professionally risky.

Sustaining Long-Term Education and Collaboration Plans

When most staff and faculty work in insecure employment conditions and under contingent program budgets, developing and sustaining any long-term plan is extremely difficult. To illustrate, I once collaborated with a part-time professional tutor on making videos about writing consultation services. The purpose of the videos was for the professional consultant to make a self-introduction to international students and to describe what a writing consultation with him would look like. However, by the time we were ready to share the videos with students, he was no longer a writing consultant at our institution. He had found a full-time job elsewhere. The videos became useless.

Doe (2011) points out that due to the transient nature of contingent appointments,

contingent faculty and staff may be reluctant to create ties with other university resources or partners. Writing center professionals may understandably be hesitant to invest their valuable time and resources into building partnerships with nomadic adjunct instructors and contingent program coordinators when the possibility of the partnerships coming to an abrupt end looms large in their minds due to the contingency of their own employment or of their potential collaborators. The bureaucratic and administrative processes in higher education that are notorious for being slow also make precarious partnerships among contingent faculty and staff even more unstable. I have been in so many situations where I had to apologize to campus partners and collaborators for having to pause or cancel collaboration plans because my budget and/or staffing situations changed by the time the plans got approved. I have also been the recipient of similar apologies.

Not being able to develop and sustain long-term collaboration and education plans creates significant barriers to engaging contingent workers in decolonial work because meaningful changes in both belief and practice require continuing conversations and community building efforts, which cannot be done without consistency and a long-term plan of engagement. The types of changes that decolonial education aims for go much deeper and beyond acquiring a few new tutoring strategies. Becoming decolonial agents entails unlearning the familiar habits of seeing, knowing, and relating to the Other, which cannot be done through one-and-off workshops. As race theorists observe, "even with expressed commitment to social justice, it takes a lifetime to unlearn" our habits (Denny, 2010, p. 79). For this reason, García (2017) and others emphasize the importance of reflection and reflexivity in decolonial work. García recommends the use of portfolios "as a meditational and reflexive activity of decolonial action" (p. 50), through which tutors think about what it means to engage in decolonial work, reflecting on how power, race, and social relations play out in their daily writing-centered conversations with students. Teacher educators such as Yazan (2019) also suggest utilizing critical autoethnographic narratives as a tool to promote identity-oriented learning and critical awareness. Narratives as a genre allow writers to engage in reflection on the ongoing construction and negotiation of professional and other intersecting identities. When practiced consistently in a community setting that provides ongoing support and constructive feedback, reflection and reflexivity can help tutors and instructors developed abilities to listen to their own biases, emotions, and experiences that influence their pedagogical decisions. Thus, reflection and reflexivity, cultivated over time, lead them to listen better to the marginalized Other.

Is it possible for writing centers and programs to engage contingent faculty and staff in reflection and reflexivity practice through regular community meetings and sharing of ongoing learning? I am a firm believer of reflection and reflexivity through journaling and portfolio activities promoted by García (2017) and Bedrettin Yazan (2019), and I often integrate these elements into professional development workshops and faculty learning communities on decolonial pedagogy. However, many part-time instructors and writing consultants cannot simply attend these meetings because their availability is often very limited. When their work hours are restricted because of their part-time status, or because they teach five to seven writing courses over multiple campuses as some of the adjunct instructors in our writing programs do every semester, contingent faculty and staff simply cannot find room for anything beyond their primary responsibilities of teaching or tutoring. Even though professional development should not be treated as "extra," participation in professional development activities often does not count toward their work hours, and therefore is not compensated and cannot be required. When I consider the material reality of inequity faced by contingent faculty and staff, I wonder whether inviting them to attend professional development meetings on antiracist pedagogy without providing compensation for their participation is unethical even though I believe they would benefit from attending these meetings. And what I can offer contingent faculty members and staff as

compensation, if any, is often embarrassingly limited due to my own position as a contingent faculty member who is far removed from budgetary decision-making conversations.

Grammar Feedback as a Form of Decolonial Listening

Equipping tutors with effective and culturally responsive feedback strategies is another important area that should be incorporated into decolonial tutor education because failing to listen and respond to multilingual students of color when they request explicit grammar feedback can lead many multilingual writers to frustration and disappointment. I vividly remember how I left many one-to-one writing consultation sessions feeling unheard, dismissed, and dislocated when the tutors who worked with me consistently overlooked my priority concern as an international multilingual writer: grammar. More than two decades later, I sill witness many of my multilingual students of color experiencing similar frustrations at writing centers. Many writing center scholars (e.g., Denny, 2010; Denny et al., 2018; McKinney, 2013) have also observed the marginalization of multilingual students of color in writing centers and problematized the dominant nondirective tutoring approach that prioritizes global concerns over sentence-level grammar issues. However, the complexity of practicing deep listening through grammar feedback and contingency as a factor that complicates the implementation of such feedback practice have rarely been discussed.

First, acquiring competence and confidence about providing grammar feedback is a long-term task for even some writing instructors and ESL professionals, let alone undergraduate writing center tutors and contingent staff with little background in second language acquisition. As Paul K. Matsuda (2012) argues, helping students improve grammatical accuracy through feedback requires some knowledge of second language acquisition and pedagogical grammar. For example, applied linguistics research on corrective grammar suggest that grammar feedback can be more effective when students are developmentally ready in their second language acquisition process, and when it is provided with metalinguistic commentary or in a focused manner by directing attention toward a limited number of error types (e.g., Bitchener & Ferris, 2012; Chandler, 2003; Karim & Nassaji, 2019; Sheen, 2008). In my experience of working with writing center tutors, the discomfort that many writing tutors experience about providing corrective grammar feedback comes not only from the belief that proofreading or fixing errors is not their job (Denny et al., 2018; Salem, 2016) but also from the fact that they lack metalinguistic grammar knowledge. Tutors who are native speakers of English can intuitively tell where grammar errors are and how they should be fixed. Yet, without adequate training in pedagogical grammar, they often cannot explain why: why they are errors and what specific grammar rules should be applied to different syntactic and semantic contexts. However, without institutional support that recognizes and compensates the intellectual labor involved in developing necessary metalinguistic skills, expecting contingent workers to participate in regular training in pedagogical grammar is unrealistic.

Also, the goal of training contingent faculty and staff to practice grammar feedback as a form of decolonial listening and work cannot be achieved simply by offering a few grammar sessions to tutors or by revising tutoring protocols to prioritize grammar concerns. It is a complex task to discern what it means to listen deeply when responding to multilingual writers' requests to focus on grammar. García (2017) explains that decolonial work in local contexts and circumstances requires "a more nuanced application of listening" (p. 40). Listening deeply means understanding that "students carry with them the burden of their histories and geographies" (p. 40). When we listen, well and deeply, to multilingual students of color, we learn that many of them bring long histories of receiving language instruction that is deeply shaped by White language supremacy (Inoue, 2019) and colonial deficit thinking about multilingualism, which see the "other" as deficient and inferior. The grammar anxiety and/or negative perceptions of themselves as writers can be what García calls "colonial wounds" (p. 44) that are inflicted by the

accumulative effects of being traumatized by harsh feedback they have received over the years from teachers who were unaware that their feedback practices were racist and harmful, though well intended (Denny, 2010; Denny et al., 2018; Inoue, 2019). Multilingual writers' excessive focus on grammar may be an indication that that multilingual students are currently working with course instructors with deficit thinking about multilingualism, who directly or indirectly communicate that multilingual students need help with "cleaning up" their writing. However, it is also possible that multilingual writers may have internalized racism as a result of accumulating experiences of linguistic injustice and racism in writing-centered spaces that are inscribed in their multilingual bodies. The deficit thinking about multilingualism they have internalized can corrupt how they see themselves as writers and the writing they produce (Bond, 2019). Therefore, writing tutors or anyone who works with multilingual students of color in writing-centered spaces should be trained to listen to and beyond what is being said by multilingual students of color. The decolonial education that emphasizes deep listening can help tutors become aware of multilingual writers' wounds that have been caused and are still being reproduced by everyday colonial practices and relationships.

Some tutors may wonder whether providing corrective grammar feedback may reify their painful traumas or reproduce White language supremacy by positioning native intuition as being superior and multilingual literacies as a deficit. At the same time, they might also worry that not responding to their direct request to correct grammar errors might make students feel ignored and frustrated. Deciding what feedback to provide and how to deliver feedback in ways that decolonize the relationships, between tutors and students and between privileged English dialects and other marginalized languages and English varieties, requires much sensitivity that can be developed by deep listening. By practicing deep listening, tutors can learn about each individual student's unique history and journey as a multilingual writer with intersectional identities. Knowing students' backgrounds, short-term and long-term goals, and where they are in their journey of developing as a confident multilingual writer can help tutors to understand, interpret, and respond to multilingual students' requests or nonrequests.

We must note that it is difficult for contingent workers to engage in this type of deep listening because the work takes extra emotional and intellectual labor. To illustrate, when I work with a student who has a high level of grammar anxiety, even before the student asks for grammar feedback, I first let them know that I will provide grammar corrections and explanations during or after the session. Doing so allows me to talk about other aspects of their writing without making them wonder or worry. Many of my sessions with multilingual students who ask for grammar feedback are frequently followed up by email conversations, through which I provide explicit grammar feedback and metalinguistic explanations. Through my own journey as a multilingual writer, I am well aware that second language anxiety does not disappear as a result of having a few sessions with tutors who provided a lot of positive comments. However, I am intentional about acting as a decolonial agent by making sure that grammar is never the sole focus of our conversations about writing and that my students hear from me what can later become sources of their confidence and motivation. As I listen deeply with a mindfulness of difference that García (2017) emphasizes, I also remind myself that I should not make assumptions about international or domestic multilingual students of color. Not all multilingual students need or want corrective grammar feedback. The ways I practice deep listening through feedback dialogues with students require a lot more emotional and intellectual labor than the amount of labor involved in conducting a typical single tutoring session. Even though I see many benefits of extending feedback dialogues over multiple in-person and online sessions, I cannot recommend the same feedback strategy to other part-time instructors and consultants. It is then challenging to find alternative ways to engage contingent workers in cultivating deep listening through feedback without imposing extra intellectual and emotional labor on them.

There is yet another material condition that seriously limits contingent workers' ability for deep listening: space. For many contingent faculty and staff, engaging in this type of deep listening described above is not feasible because practicing deep listening requires a physical space where tutors and students can attune their attention to each other. Listening well and deeply during one-to-one conversations involves responding by revealing or asking about deeper issues such as sources of fear as writers, their feelings about feedback they received elsewhere, and struggles and successes in their current and past writing courses. An ideal space for such one-to-one conversations is a private room. However, many part-time faculty and staff do not have access to private offices or any offices at all. Having a space for deep listening is a material privilege that I have as a contingent full-time faculty member. The other day, an adjunct faculty member that I ran into in the hallway shared with me that he only does virtual meetings with students because it is not possible to have private conversations in his adjunct faculty office that he shares with five other people. The lack of space for deep listening or any listening is a problematic material condition that is shared by many adjunct faculty members, and it signifies their marginalized status in the corporatized, classist university system.

Forming Decolonial Alliances

Practicing deep listening as a form of decolonial work in one-to-one writing-centered conversations requires an environment where faculty and staff can raise questions about dominant practices without a fear of losing employment. The vulnerability and precarity faced by contingent workers who provide writing-centered instruction and services, when combined with the fact that they make up the largest percentage of appointments, create significant barriers for developing and sustaining resources and partnerships needed to provide the type of decolonial education that cultivates deep listening. Nevertheless, these challenges should not stop us from making efforts toward including contingent workers in decolonial work. Considering the material constraints that limit our capacities and resources as well as the fact that these conditions are likely to persist, what practical and strategic steps can we take toward fostering the culture of deep listening without excluding and marginalizing contingent workers? I conclude the article by making some specific proposals.

- Trust between tutors and tutees is a foundation for deep listening; however, it is difficult to establish trust and rapport in a 30- or 60-minute one-off tutoring session (Camarillo, 2018). Harry Denny et al. (2018) also suggested that a single interaction with a tutor rarely gives sufficient time for providing support students need. As one of varied approaches to tutoring, I suggest that writing centers and writing/English programs collaborate to offer credit-bearing course-based writing tutorials. Multilingual students enrolled in such courses can be matched with writing center professionals or graduate tutors and have regular appointments throughout the semester. Laura K. Miller (2020) also suggests undergraduate peer tutors can be effective embedded tutors and make positive impacts on students' mindsets about writing. The course-based embedded tutoring model allows professional and peer tutors to build relationships with multilingual writers for transformative listening. Additionally, by teaching credit-bearing English courses, writing center tutors can build relationships with instructors and program chairs of the writing program, including those with tenure-track appointments who can be stable partners for writing centers' social justice initiatives. Such partnerships can also increase the visibility and relevance of writing centers (Doe, 2011).
- Writing tutors should be prepared to listen and respond to multilingual students' requests to provide grammar feedback. Denny et al. (2018) encourage writing centers to fully own a role in grammar instruction to be truly student-centered. I suggest that writing centers build

partnerships with degree programs in applied linguistics, TESOL, and/or education that house scholars and graduate students who have expertise and interest in grammar instruction. Consider having peer tutors take some courses in applied linguistics including pedagogical grammar as part of their tutor education. Scholars and graduate students from the above academic programs can also be invited to offer regular workshops for peer and professional tutors on second language acquisition of grammar features and effective grammar feedback. Increasing knowledge in grammar and second language acquisition will help peer and professional tutors develop their ability to listen deeply and respond appropriately to various needs of multilingual writers. Also needed are efforts among faculty in writing studies and applied linguistics to co-develop a research agenda that focuses on feedback and pedagogy as decolonial work.

- Many adjunct writing instructors cannot do one-to-one conferences with students in their writing courses because they do not have the time and physical space for one-to-one meetings, which limits their ability to practice deep listening. Writing centers can partner with writing programs to embed writing center tutors into multilingual sections that are taught by adjunct instructors to offer multiple one-to-one sessions to students enrolled in those sections. The peer and/or professional tutors can also visit classes to co-facilitate peer-review sessions and workshops on various topics. This way tutors can not only function as additional ears for adjunct instructors but also have more interactions with multilingual students in and out of the class, which can create more opportunities for deep listening.

These recommendations should not be viewed as universal solutions. Rather, they serve as practical examples of cross-divisional decolonial partnerships that are mindful of material constraints of contingent workers. Due to variable institutional constraints and contextual factors, not all of the recommendations proposed here will be equally feasible or effective. Implementing some of the recommendations may require navigating institutional hurdles for some writing centers and programs. For example, linking part-time writing center professionals to credit-bearing writing tutorial courses as instructors or co-instructors may involve having the personnel go through extra procedures required by Human Resources because course instructor positions in some institutions are considered to be academic appointments that are separate from staff hiring. Also, course-based tutor education programs that may be effective for undergraduate peer tutors may not be appropriate for contingent professional tutors, and vice versa. The implementation of the above and other initiatives should be guided by the consideration that contingent workers should not be considered as one homogenous group. When taking actions toward decolonial work, we should be careful as much as possible to avoid exploiting or excluding one contingent group of workers over another.

Any efforts toward institutional and cultural change must include faculty and staff with contingent appointments, and to meaningfully engage contingent workers in decolonial work, we must consider their marginalized status reflected in their material conditions. Without addressing the material reality of marginalized contingent faculty and staff, we cannot improve our collective ability to listen to multilingual students of color, nor can we expect individual contingent faculty and staff to engage in listening as decolonial work. In addition to having the shared goal of serving multilingual students, writing centers and contingent workers share the commonalty of institutional marginalization. These commonalities can be a basis for forging alliances to resist racism and classism that are pervasive in academia (Doe, 2011). Like García (2017), I believe that writing centers should position themselves as advocates for multilingual students and leaders of decolonial education within universities. As writing centers commit to forming decolonial and strategic alliances with writing and other programs, they can

emerge as champions of equity who engage all community members in joining forces against classism and racism toward creating a more equitable writing ecology.

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