Linguistic Diversity from the K–12 Classroom to the Writing Center: Rethinking Expectations on Inclusive Grammar Instruction

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Cover Page Footnote

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Abstract   Language expresses our values and identities, but in educational spaces, multidialectical and multilingual students' voices are often silenced in favor of Standard English (Lockett, 2019). As writing tutors and future language arts educators, we have developed a research-based inclusive grammar curriculum and classroom-based resources to expand the conversation surrounding linguistic inclusion. Guided by the principle that all students should be offered the opportunity to learn the conventions of Standard English, we advocate for inclusive teaching of Standard English grammar in K–12 classrooms and writing centers (Godley et al, 2015). Using previous research on multilingual students, linguistic inclusivity, and dialectical diversity, we created a website for K–12 classroom teachers that provides easily accessible, developmentally appropriate resources to normalize the idea that there is no single way to correctly write or speak English. These resources better prepare K–12 students to utilize writing center services, as both writers and tutors, once they reach higher education. Our lesson plans, worksheets, resource guides, and supplemental materials are designed to provide teachers with resources to have a conversation with students about the power and complexity of language and to anticipate the values of writing center work to support every writer to confidently use their own voice.

Imagine yourself sitting under the warm glow of the writing center lamps. A writer shuffles in and explicitly asks you for sentence-level grammatical help. As the writer reads their paper aloud, your ear becomes distracted by the continuous absence of articles throughout each sentence. As you are hyperfocusing on the lack of articles, you become increasingly concerned that if the writer turned in this paper, the professor would lower their grade—and maybe even question the effectiveness of the writing center. To resolve this dilemma, you prioritize explaining articles to the student, whose first language is not English. You attempt to employ directive tutoring, informing them that the word "the" is needed before each noun, but quickly find that you have no explanation as to why "the" is needed in one

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place and "a" in another. Scenarios like this one often force tutors to question their role in addressing arbitrary Standard English rules.[1] We ask ourselves, am I supporting writers if I deliberately choose not to correct their grammar? Am I supporting them if I do?

As tutors, we constantly wrestle with how our tutoring practices can both acknowledge and eliminate the implicit discrimination found in the feedback strategies, error correction, and grammar instruction our students experience outside the writing center. As aspiring teachers and current writing tutors, we are invested in better understanding how to effectively and inclusively teach language and grammar both in the writing center and the K–12 classroom.

Without firsthand experiences tutoring grammar-related issues in a writing center, we would not be primed to question and explore the influence of white supremacy on grammar in our teaching. At the same time, without studying language acquisition in our education classes, we would not know, for example, that students whose first language is not English acquire the command of articles last. Because we occupy both spaces, though, we know that a missing or improper article—a deviation from Standard English that is common for multilingual students, and which is often noticeable to native speakers but does not interfere with meaning—can bring forth unjust judgments that perpetuate stereotypes and racial discrimination. We recognize our privilege at the intersection of these fields of study, as we are uniquely equipped to see both the theory and practice undergirding what Asao Inoue calls "white language supremacy" (Inoue, 2019).

Consequently, this article seeks to examine the implications Standard English has on multilingual and multidialectical students in both writing centers and K–12 classrooms. We propose a practical approach to teaching the value of linguistic variety in K–12 classrooms as both an expression of the inclusivity of writing center scholarship and a way to prepare future college students to thrive, as writers and tutors, in campus writing centers. Through this project, we aim to share what we have learned to support and inform tutors and teachers as they are charged with navigating the interconnected complexities of language, identity, and racism.

Research on K–12 education and writing centers both debate whether or not to teach and correct grammar-related choices in student writing. While some scholars argue that a command of Standard English grammar provides necessary tools for upward mobility in society (Alim, 2005; Godley et al., 2015; Mulroy, 2004; Salem, 2016), others argue that teaching grammar perpetuates hierarchies of race and class tied up in Standard English (Baker-Bell, 2020; Godley et al., 2015; Lockett, 2019). Our experience as tutors and future teachers affirms that Standard English remains a powerful gatekeeper to higher education, and also that Standard English is a crucial barrier to making both public education and higher education truly inclusive spaces. This fraught relationship with Standard English is an important thread that connects K–12 teachers and students to the writing centers situated in higher education institutions. In order to create much-needed, bottom-up change, K–12 classrooms and writing centers alike must teach both the rules of Standard English but also the power systems of race and class that are implicated in language education. How can we do away with a system that is seen by many as integral to the success of English-speaking individuals? On the other hand, how can we continue to support a system that clearly disadvantages multilingual students and other marginalized groups? Before offering the resources and best practices that we have developed in our research on inclusive grammar instruction, we want to review the scholarship that has informed our understanding of this issue. We aim to point out the complexities of and intersections between the current conversation about the ethics of English grammar education in K–12 settings and higher education writing centers.

Literature Review

The long-standing debate surrounding the teaching of Standard English has yielded two distinct philosophies of teaching: prescriptive instruction and avoidance. Teachers and

tutors who want to engage students in learning the rules of Standard English often take a prescriptivist approach and mark deviations from Standard English as errors. As a result, they launch a crusade against any grammatical construction that is not a staple of Standard English, which leads to the moralization of dialects and strengthens the power of Standard English. As Kelly notes, "When you police those errors, mistakes, or rhetorical choices instead of inquiring about the rhetorical situation from the basis of genre convention, clarity, elaboration or understanding ideas, your enforcement of grammatics and syntactics of your Standard American English intends to preserve white middle class English" (Kelly, 2020). The expectation placed on students to be proficient in the conventions of Standard English in various English-speaking settings enforces a culture of belittlement and ostracization against those who do not subscribe to the conventions of Standard English. This push for conformity is exactly what pushes a narrative of marginalization and whiteness, which perpetuates violence against non–Standard English speakers. For these reasons, prescriptive grammar instruction has increasingly become synonymous with linguistic racism.

April Baker-Bell coins the term "white mainstream English" instead of "Standard English" to further highlight the explicit racism that comes from a pedagogy that supports such standards (Baker-Bell, 2020). Baker-Bell works to dismantle the system of white supremacy that pervades our English education system in both K–12 and higher education settings and supports the complete overhaul of Standard English use in such settings. Furthermore, she argues for the recognition of anti-Black linguistic racism that often appears hand in hand with grammar and writing standards. It is crucial that teachers acknowledge that upholding "white mainstream English" in the classroom not only disadvantages students of color, but is an act of linguistic racism against students who do not have access to the power of "white mainstream English." The endorsement for conformity in English-speaking and English-teaching spaces is one that has been central in educational fields for a long time (Baker-Bell, 2020; Lockett, 2019; Salem, 2016).

Baker-Bell's distinction centralizes the experiences of marginalized voices in classrooms that uphold Standard English.

On the other hand, avoidance instruction stems from the linguists' perspective that grammar is something that is implicitly learned (Barman, 2012). This grammar-teaching philosophy was implemented in the majority of public school classrooms when the National Council of Teachers of English endorsed the implicit learning model. The purpose of English-teaching spaces "was not to liberate but to sort and classify, not to intellectually expand but to standardize, not to transform but to conform" (Souto-Manning et al., 2019, p. 65); in response to this rejection of prescriptive instruction, teachers were encouraged to not teach grammar at all. The implicit learning model of Standard English in K–12 classrooms, in avoiding direct attention to language, has actually strengthened the generated and implicit narrative of "anti-black linguistic racism" in our classrooms (Baker-Bell, 2020).

The modern nature of writing centers to "[make] the writer do all the work," similar to the K–12 strategy of avoidance, explicitly disadvantages multilingual and multidialectial students when seeking feedback on their writing (Grimm, 2011). If students are expected to be proficient in their command of Standard English when first visiting the writing center, whether through direct or implicit instruction, there is an injustice being perpetuated surrounding who does or does not gain access to Standard English language instruction in higher academia. Alexandria Lockett argues that "the work of getting someone to talk and write like 'educated (white) folks' is an act of violence because it functions on the basis that patriarchal white supremacist manners of expression [are] superior to those of unassimilated non-white people" (Lockett, 2019). Teaching and correcting to Standard English is an act of violence and a tool of oppression against marginalized groups seeking assistance in a writing center setting. Yet, you could also argue, so is *not* teaching and correcting to the standard. What results from these interactions is a larger rift between those who do and those who do not have access to Standard English.

Although classrooms and writing centers have a history of avoiding grammar for different reasons, we argue that writing centers can relate and respond to the problems K–12 teachers experience that impact their inclusive grammatical instruction. A study conducted at Gazi University shows that as a result of time constraints, crowded classes, cultural and linguistic differences, and their lack of special training in teaching English to young learners, teachers were more likely to prioritize traditional examinations of grammar over communicative activities. Writing centers, in contrast, are uniquely situated to provide the individualized instruction that classroom teachers cannot provide. In this way, the problems that pervade the K–12 classroom can be supported by writing center work. Similarly, problems that pervade the writing center spaces can be addressed in the ways in which Standard English is taught in K–12 classrooms. Writing centers are modeled around the importance of "higher order concerns" (Salem, 2016). That being the case, writing tutors are often instructed to avoid or delay discussion of "lower order" (grammatical) concerns (Salem, 2016). Here, writing centers could benefit from K–12 research that suggests contextualized grammar instruction is valuable for student writers, particularly those who are multilingual or multidialectical (Jong & Harper, 2010; Myhill et al., 2012; Paris, 2012). As classrooms grapple with the effects of prejudices surrounding cultural and linguistic diversity, we find, too, that writing centers are faced with similar challenges.

Teachers who aim to incorporate linguistically inclusive grammar instruction in their curriculum are often grounded in a knowledge of critical language awareness. H. S. Alim supports the implementation of critical language awareness programs in U.S. classrooms because such programs take students' languages into account as well as the connection between the sociopolitical and sociohistorical elements that reinforce segregation in society (Alim, 2005). The purpose of critical language awareness programs is for students to "develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles" (Alim, 2005). In a study conducted by Amanda Godley focusing on the impact of critical language awareness programs, the results showed that critical language awareness programs have an effect not only on students' experiences in the classroom but also on teachers' awareness of privilege and biases. Ultimately, the aim is to have students' and also teachers' awareness of the diversity of languages, cultures, ethnic groups, and social roles grow (Godley et al., 2015). Both Alim and Godley's propositions for creating a more linguistically diverse curricula and engaging in antiracist teaching and tutoring practices focus on destigmatizing dialects and call educators to challenge Standard English. In the end, though, this approach affirms linguistically diverse students without also providing access to Standard English, which we argue is a necessary combination in order to create both individual and systemic change. While critical language awareness programs promote linguistic diversity, they fail to address the instruction of Standard English for all students. Furthermore, "students who speak African American English and other stigmatized dialects of English benefit from instruction that provides them with access to Standard English while valuing the other dialects they speak and giving students the tools to critique why some dialects of English are valued more than others" (Godley et. al, 2015, p. 107). Without permitting all students access to the knowledge and tools regarding Standard English, teachers and tutors are not facilitating equity within English classrooms.

With the individualized attention writing tutors can offer writers, writing centers are given the opportunity to differentiate their instruction and teach grammar in an individualized way that is deeply connected to the content of the writing—and simultaneously inclusive of students' linguistic identities. In other words, we are uniquely positioned to both teach and critique Standard English. Linguistically inclusive writing center work is grounded in acknowledging the power held in writing center interactions between tutor and writer: by challenging the structures that uphold the exclusive nature of Standard English (Grimm, 2011). In order to challenge these power structures, tutors are taught

to ask questions and listen to the writer, making space for their concerns first and foremost in the writing session (Kelly, 2020). It is crucial that tutors value a writer's perspective of themselves, and their world, to prioritize the writer's identity within the text.

While we have seen the benefits of this dual approach as writing tutors—giving students autonomy to make choices, and both teaching and raising skepticism about Standard English—there is less research on how to take this approach in a K–12 classroom, where students receive less individualized instruction and are beginning to learn about their own linguistic identities. For that reason, we have developed a series of materials for K–12 teachers that help students begin thinking and reflecting on their identities and choices as writers, inspired by writing center scholarship that models this dual approach.

Justification for Research

While a multitude of sources address teaching strategies in classrooms and others discuss the psychological and personal implications of upholding Standard English, we have yet to discover a source that explicitly combines both teaching practices and grammatical acquisition. Additionally, while research has been conducted in writing centers and in classrooms regarding inclusive grammar, we have not found a resource that provides a connection between grammar instruction provided in both places. To address linguistic diversity and call attention to the political and social implications grammar instruction holds, our work—informed by our experience as tutors—provides practical resources for K–12 teachers to create classrooms that value linguistic and cultural diversity.

In developing materials, we have prioritized the idea that inclusion is context specific (Bishaw, 2012). Therefore, to focus on inclusive grammar resources, we must adapt and differentiate our material to be able to fit the needs of each student, teacher, classroom, and community. We define inclusive as including and valuing a variety of Englishes in the classroom (Greenfield, 2019). Our research focuses

on inclusion with respect to multilingual and multidialectical students in particular and characterizes grammar as open to integrating the rules and practices of other languages and dialects alongside Standard English.

The linguistic teaching practices both K–12 classrooms and writing centers use need to align to be able to effectively challenge the racism Standard English promotes. If students receive a K–12 education that values the diversity of language and the connection between language and identity but are told at a writing center that their writing must solely adhere to the conventions of Standard English, or vice versa, the students may be made to feel unprepared and uneducated. Therefore, the pedagogy of K–12 teachers and writing center tutors and directors must be in agreement. Each space can learn and benefit from the other to further the research regarding the instruction of inclusive grammar.

Despite extensive literature addressing teachers' lack of training concerning teaching grammar (Murphy & Haller, 2015; Petraki & Hill, 2011; Safford, 2016) and studies conducted about how the voices of multilingual and multidialectical students are often silenced in academic spaces (Baker-Bell, 2020; de Jong & Harper, 2010; Delpit, 1988), we have yet to find research that utilizes theory and previous research to create a practical, accessible solution. Armed with the awareness that grammar contains immense power and those who uphold Standard English are thought of as gatekeepers to higher education, as well as socioeconomic upward mobility, we acknowledge that avoiding grammar instruction has negative consequences that uniquely affect students of color, multilingual students, and students from low-income households. The negative implications of avoiding grammar instruction or focusing solely on upholding Standard English constructions penetrate both the classroom and writing centers. As writing tutors, we recognize the challenges of providing grammatical instruction for Standard English while still advocating for students to use their own voice in their writing. It is from this perspective that we turn our attention toward K–12 classrooms. If writing tutors and writing centers are grappling with addressing

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linguistic discrimination and the complexity of grammar, then K–12 classrooms, specifically English classrooms, must be where this conversation and reflection begins. Therefore, with the intention of creating as well as advocating for linguistic inclusion and dialect diversity, our website provides teachers with practical solutions for addressing grammar with students.

Teaching Inclusive Grammar in the Classroom

Our easy-to-navigate website houses lesson plans, templates, supplemental materials, and a booklist.[2] Since all of our material is based in research, we have provided citations, downloadable PDFs, summaries, and links to the original articles or videos. As aspiring teachers, we drew upon our knowledge from education classes to assist with the development of creating developmentally-appropriate and engaging lessons and materials. We want teachers to have easy access to materials that address inclusive grammar, so all of our materials are downloadable and ready to use. Additionally, we recognize that every student and classroom has different needs; therefore, our resources have been designed so that teachers can take advantage of our ideas for lessons and adapt them or any other aspect of the lesson to fit their classroom and their students.

Lesson plans are divided into three sections by grade level (K–5, 6–8, and 9–12) and are designed to fit the general developmental stages of each age group (see Appendix A). Each section contains two lesson plans with corresponding worksheets and handouts. The worksheets include questions and activities that draw on the main topic of the lesson for students to engage with independently or in small groups. For example, we have created a book template for students to fill out with their own stories and illustrations that mirrors the book *The World Belonged to Us*, which introduces K–5 students to the concept of different ways that language can be seen in people's lives (see Appendix C). The instructions can be found both on the worksheet itself and its corresponding lesson plan. It is at the teacher's

discretion to determine what worksheets to use, what questions are appropriate for their class, and whether the students work in groups or individually. However, many of our lessons are designed for students to work in groups, as research has shown students are more likely to engage with other students over material that they find relevant (Curtin, 2006; Lu & Kim, 2021). The lessons range from 15 to 35 minutes in length so that they can be easily implemented into a busy class schedule. Included in one of the lesson plans is instructions for a teacher's guide to teaching the lesson, which we refer to as a "mini-lesson." We recognize that teachers may not have the time to research a specific topic, such as code switching, on their own, so we included this corresponding teacher's guide to more easily access this material. This additional mini-lesson takes only 10 minutes to introduce students to code switching (without advocating for the use of code switching). Similarly, we provided a note to teachers in one of the lessons to explain our reasoning for the passages we chose from specific authors. This handout is intended to provide teachers with easily comprehensible background information and research.

Additionally, we recognize that continuity with a specific topic like grammar is difficult to implement frequently and consistently. Therefore, each lesson focuses on an aspect of linguistic inclusivity and dialect diversity, such as choice or the connection between identity and language, and can be taught in isolation. Our aim is for students to receive at least one lesson during their time in K–12 schooling to become more aware of the power of language. However, teachers are encouraged to continue the discussion concerning inclusive grammar with their students.

To help teachers prepare additional inclusive grammar lessons, we have developed templates that are organized by topic to include relevant scholarly research, summaries of each source, and structured ideas to create additional lesson plans. The topics include the power of Standard English; linguistic inclusivity; speech, writing, and identity; code switching and code meshing; why talk about grammar; and creating inclusive classrooms (see Appendix B). Often, a simple way to

promote linguistic inclusion in the classroom is to use authentic literature that represents the experiences and identities of students of color and upholds voices of color. After researching and reading books, we developed a booklist that highlights 10 picture books and 5 chapter books that celebrate dialectical and cultural diversity. Teachers simply pull from the suggested books on the list or can use the provided references to websites and video read-alouds to discover more resources.

Our material draws on our identities as writing tutors and future educators and stems from a belief that students should be able to engage in natural interactions with language even in academic and professional settings. To affirm students' identities, their dialect must also be invited and respected in spaces where students are often instructed to code switch or simply not use their own dialect in favor of Standard English. Our materials aim to address the challenges Standard English presents when it is taught as the only acceptable way to write or speak in English. We support the argument that Standard English is a living dialect, meaning that it is subject to change and possesses no inherent superiority. Consequently, our resources were created with the intention of providing teachers with practical, thoroughly researched ideas for how to help students understand that there is no single, correct way to write or speak in English.

In creating these guides, but in thinking more broadly about teaching grammar either in the context of K–12 classrooms or writing centers, we adhered to the following principles:

1. Every student deserves access to learning Standard English.
2. When teaching Standard English, teachers should always make students aware of its prejudice in terms of race and class.
3. Student writers should be empowered to make mindful choices about when to use Standard English, code switch, or code mesh.

These guiding principles informed our teaching strategies and provided us the perspective to notice the importance of exposure to the power and conventions of Standard English in K–12 classrooms. Establishing a framework for inclusive grammar throughout their K–12 education prepares students to decide and defend their own linguistic choices in academic settings beyond K–12.

As students who grew up entrenched in the conventions of Standard English, we recognize our limitations in creating material that seeks to incorporate a variety of dialects. Initially, our goal was to create material that explicitly demonstrated a variety of dialectical differences; however, we quickly realized that our knowledge was limited and our identities prevented us from directly addressing a variety of grammatical constructions in different dialects. Yet, we still wanted to create material in which students with a multitude of different identities could see themselves represented. Therefore, we sought to include authentic literature and open-ended discussion questions to introduce students and teachers to the idea of challenging the power of Standard English and valuing multiple dialects. While grappling with the challenge of ensuring that the materials fully addressed the deep topics surrounding the power of language, we were also faced with confirming that the materials remained developmentally appropriate. Although our materials address issues with Standard English being viewed as the only appropriate dialect, because of the challenges of considering a multitude of various identities and our own, we use the terms grammar and language to cover a broad range of connected but individual concepts. This is also a result of our struggle to find previous literature and research regarding explicit grammar instruction in a variety of dialects. Therefore, work remains to be done regarding literature and research on specific grammar rules and the connection between how these rules can be taught to create inclusive spaces.

Conclusion

A new writer walks through the writing center doors seeking sentence-level support. You recognize that Standard English grammatical structures are complex, so before addressing

grammatical concepts with the writer, you focus on establishing the relationship first. Through recurring meetings, you and the writer are able to talk and get to know each other. These conversations allow you to learn where the writer comes from, how they speak, and their relationship with Standard English. Then, when an error in verb tenses occurs, you are able to draw upon your prior conversations about the writer's language experience and create a dialogue about Standard English conventions, while also emphasizing the value of using their voice through their writing. A relationship with the writer allows you to more effectively validate their dialect, because you know that writing is personal and political.

Forming a relationship of trust allows writing tutors to have meaningful, contextualized conversations with writers about sentence-level topics. But what if a writer you just met asks you for help with grammar? Based on our experience and research, here is our advice to you. First, we argue that you should ask the writer what they noticed about the paper and their goals for the session. By doing this as the first step, you can evaluate whether the writer wants help with a particular Standard English grammatical convention, such as changing verb tenses, and determine whether or not the error is a stylistic choice. If the writer has a particular concern, you should work with the writer to identify patterns and support the writer in identifying not just where but also why they might change a verb tense to be consistent. However, if the writer does not identify a particular grammar concern, you might more explicitly ask what the writer knows regarding verb tenses and whether they want feedback on this sentence-level concern. This is also an appropriate point in the conversation to introduce the writer to the concept of Standard English and dialectical differences, and to remind the writer that they have choices. Drawing on the best practices in our lesson plans, this approach affirms the student's identity and supports the exercise of choice in their writing.

Tutors, like writers, have varying degrees of familiarity with Standard English and other dialects; if a writer wants help with conventions in which the tutor is not an expert, the role of the tutor is to support the writer in defending their choice. Writers, from K–12 to college and beyond, should feel empowered to challenge Standard English. Therefore, tutors might offer the writer resources to help them write a footnote regarding their linguistic decision or role play a face-to-face conversation with their professor. A tutor could point writers to published authors' works written in the same dialect, academic articles that model dialectical differences, or research from this article to help the writer explain why their dialect serves their purpose. The writer has the choice to decide, weighing both their own identity and also the audience and setting, when they establish the purpose of their writing. We believe that tutors should offer writers relevant information regarding linguistic diversity to be able to defend their choice of how they want to write.

As we continue our journey as writing tutors, this project has expanded our knowledge surrounding multilingual writers, teaching practices, and the value of dialectical diversity. We advocate for the instruction of inclusive grammar in writing centers in addition to K–12 classrooms. As more writers enter the writing center in search of sentence-level, grammatical support, we believe that writers should have the choice to decide how they want to write, whether they want to utilize Standard English or want assistance defending their choice to use their own dialect. Though people often judge a person based on their writing, specifically their command of Standard English, the writing center can work to alleviate concerns about writing being corrected or judged by either giving writers access to Standard English or giving the encouragement to write beyond it.

The writing a student brings to the writing center is intertwined with their sense of identity. Regardless of the dialect in which our students write, as tutors—and one day, as teachers—our purpose is to validate each student's writing to ensure that they know that their voice is being heard. This message of affirmation for writers' identities is the grounding principle for our work as writing tutors and as future educators.

Acknowledgments

Notes

1. In this paper, we will be using the term "Standard English." There are many different phrases that often mean something similar to Standard English including Standard Written English, White Mainstream English, White Standard English, Standard American English, and more. For the purposes of this article we will use "Standard English" when referring to the conventions of academic English language usage.

2. https://pages.stolaf.edu/inclusive-grammar/

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Appendix A: Lesson Plan Grades 9–12: "The Importance of Choice"

Standards: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.C, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.D, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.6
Lesson Time: 30–35 minutes
Essential Question: What is the role of choice in *spoken* language use?
Key Vocabulary: Dialect; Standard Written English; Diversity
Lesson Materials: Ted Talk *3 Ways to Speak English* (*Jamila Lyiscott: 3 Ways to Speak English | TED*, 2014. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k9fmJ5xQ_mc.); Worksheet; Speaker's Theater Activity Sheet; Pen/Pencil or Tablet/Laptop
Higher order questions: How is language an expression of identity? What is the value of dialectical diversity?
Assessment of Objective: Students will be able to write a dialogue showcasing their own natural dialect. Students will be able to evaluate the role that dialect plays in identity formation.
Lesson Sequence:

1. **Viewing & Listening Activity:** *(5 minutes)*
   a. Ted Talk: *3 Ways to Speak English*
      i. Students will view the Ted Talk as a whole class.
2. **Worksheet:** *(12–15 minutes)*
   a. Dialect Reflection:
      i. Students will first respond to the questions independently prior to sharing their answers out loud to reflect on their relationship with dialect and language.
         1. What does it mean to speak a language?
            a. How is language a factor of identity?
         2. Who gets to regulate language? To whom does language belong?
            a. How do you know?
         3. Lyiscott references her "three languages." Do you see yourself as having different languages, or different ways of expressing yourself based on different situations?
            a. What does it mean to change your language? How does that change others' perception of you? How does that change your perception of yourself?
   b. Partner Sharing:
      i. Students will partner with a peer to share their reflections.
   c. Teacher may emphasize the importance of *self-reflection.*
3. **Speaker's Theater:** *(15–20 minutes)*
      1. Directions: In pairs, you and your partner will write ten lines of dialogue to showcase your individual speaking voices. This activity is intended to allow you to express yourself through language. You and your partner may choose to create a scenario, lay out an elaborate scene, or simply demonstrate classroom banter. The primary goal of this activity is to evaluate your relationship with language. How can you best use language to express yourself? Try it out!
      2. Sâenz Benjamin Alire. "7." *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe*, Royal National Institute of Blind People, Peterborough, England, 2016.

a. Drafting Dialogue:
   i. Students will draft ten lines of dialogue with a partner, focusing on writing in their natural and conversational dialect.
   ii. Topics of dialogue must be school-appropriate.
b. Practice:
   i. Students will read aloud their dialogue with their partner, paying special attention to the linguistic choices made.
c. Perform:
   i. Students will perform their ten lines of dialogue for their peers.
d. Reflect:
   i. Students will reflect on the experience of intentionally crafting dialogue in their own dialect.
      1. Reflect: What was the process of crafting this dialogue? How did it feel to focus on your language?

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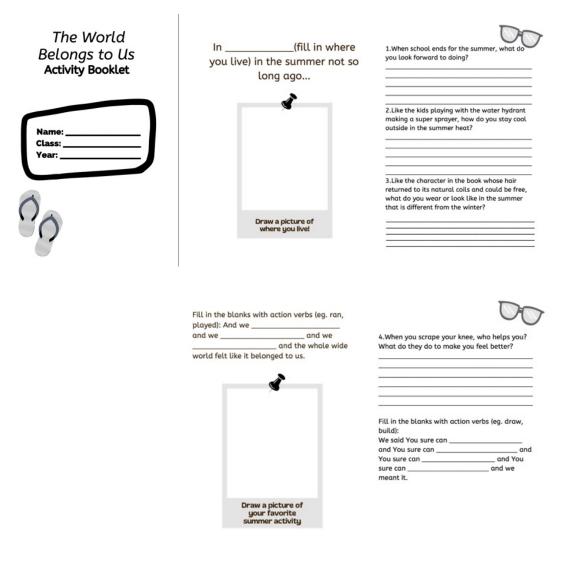# Appendix B: Simple Ways to Include Inclusive Grammar Strategies in your Lesson Plans: Grades 6–8

Topics	Research	Summary	Classroom Implementation
The Power of Standard English	Babel, Anna. Who Counts as a Speaker of a Language? 1608134429. www.ted.com, https://www.ted.com/talks/anna_babel_who_counts_as_a_speaker_of_a_language_dec_2020.	• Social categories, languages, and people's assumptions impact the lives of multilingual students. If people are not aware of their biases related to language and social categories, multilingual students will continue to be judged on their ability to use Standard English and are more likely to be racially profiled. This has implications in areas such as college admissions and job interviews (Babel, 2020).	Let's Talk Engage students in a conversation about the concept of language and words having power 1. In pairs have students share a time when someone made them feel good or hurt their feelings by what they said 2. Invite students to write on the board some of the words that they or their partner shared 3. Engage students in a conversation about how words have the power to make someone feel good or bad and they also have the power to share your experiences and tell others about yourself 4. Share with students a vignette from "The House on Mango Street" by Sandra Cisneros 5. Have students write a short piece of writing about themselves focusing on their word choice
	Ryan, Patricia. Don't Insist on English! 1301322660. www.ted.com, https://www.ted.com/talks/patricia_ryan_don_t_insist_on_english.	• English classes and teachers have become gatekeepers to higher education and the advancement of knowledge. When we equate intelligence with English we diminish the possibility of new ideas because each language possesses the ability to express concepts differently. The purpose is not to discourage people from speaking English, but from emphasizing it at the expense of other languages (Ryan, 2011).	
	Sealey, Alison. "Teaching Primary School Children about the English Language: A Critique of Current Policy Documents." Language Awareness, vol. 8, no. 2, Apr. 1999, pp. 84–97. DOI.org (Crossref), https://doi.org/10.1080/09658419908667120.	• Despite policy's attempts to institute Standard English as the main dialect to be taught and used in schools, the social and political meanings that are attached to each dialect make it unlikely that only one dialect will win. The article questions the interactions, power, and social resources found in the texts students are presented and the language they are taught to use when writing or writing for an audience (Sealey, 1999).	

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Topics	Research	Summary	Classroom Implementation

Speech, Writing, and Identity	Green, Neisha–Anne S. "The Re–Education of Neisha–Anne S Green: A Close Look at the Damaging Effects of 'A Standard Ap–proach,', the Benefits of Code–Meshing, and the Role Allies Play in This Work." American University.	• Neisha–Anne S. Green describes her experience with code–meshing and the effects of when she does not engage in the practice. Code meshing allows her "to be able to self–consciously and un–self–consciously blend (her) own accent, dialect, and linguistic pat–terns as they are influenced by a host of folks, environments, and media" (Green, 2006). Engaging in code meshing allows the au–thor to retain her identity in how she communicates with all people. When she does not she compares the experience to physical symp–toms such as dry mouth from being unsure what voice or accent will come out when she begins to speak. Ultimately, she concludes that "language and identity are directly connected and rather in–tertwined" (Green, 2006).	Grammar Detectives:
			Invite students to notice patterns in their own writing and in authentic, representa–tive literature (check out the booklist)
			  1. Provide students with a one–page piece of writing or have students write a short story about their identity
			  2. Ask students to circle all the verbs
			  3. Invite students to share patterns they see throughout the sentences
			  4. Continue this process by identifying different grammatical constructions (e.g., nouns, direct objects, apostro–phes, adjectives)
			  5. Ask students how these patterns or word choices can reflect a person's identity
			
			Grammar in Communities:
			Students create projects that explore their neighborhoods and communities
			  1. Have students write a greeting that they would say to a member in their community
			  2. Students share their greeting with the teacher and class
			  3. Students then write three ques–tions that they would like to ask their chosen community member about themselves (e.g., where did you grow up, what was your favorite subject in school, what language(s) do you speak or have learned)
			  4. Have students record their conver–sation and reflect or present on their experience

	Delpit, Lisa D. (1988, August). The Silenced Dialogue: Power and Pedagogy in Educat–ing Other People's Children. Harvard Edu–cational Review, 58(3), 280–298.	• Delpit identifies five aspects of power: "issues of power are en–acted in classrooms, there are codes or rules for participating in power, the rules of the culture of power are a reflection of the rules of the culture of those who have power, if you are not al–ready a participant in the culture of power being told explicitly the rules of that culture makes acquir–ing power easier, and those with power are frequently least aware or least willing to acknowledge its existence whereas those with less power are often most aware of its existence". This article provides insight into the common phrases and perspectives of middle–class teachers and how because of al–ternative worldviews, people of color do not engage in the same practices, thus influencing the suc–cess of students of color in the classroom. Through examples and scenarios, this article discusses code switching, moralization of language, and contrastive analy–sis from the perspective of Black and White students and teachers.	Linguistic Autobiography:
			Students write their own autobiography about how they learned to write and how they write
			  1. Invite students to write their autobi–ography as entries in a journal
			  1. Provide students with prompts
			    a. Reflect on a time when your writ–ing was graded and it made you feel positively or negatively
			    b. Write about how you learned how to write and what your experience was like
			    c. Write about who you feel most comfortable with reading your writing and in what setting you feel most comfortable writing

The World Belongs to Us
Activity Booklet

Name: _____
Class: _____
Year: _____

In _____(fill in where you live) in the summer not so long ago...

Draw a picture of where you live!

1.When school ends for the summer, what do you look forward to doing?
_____
_____
_____
_____

2.Like the kids playing with the water hydrant making a super sprayer, how do you stay cool outside in the summer heat?
_____
_____
_____
_____

3.Like the character in the book whose hair returned to its natural coils and could be free, what do you wear or look like in the summer that is different from the winter?
_____
_____
_____
_____

Fill in the blanks with action verbs (eg. ran, played): And we _____ and we _____ and we _____ and the whole wide world felt like it belonged to us.

Draw a picture of your favorite summer activity

4.When you scrape your knee, who helps you? What do they do to make you feel better?
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Fill in the blanks with action verbs (eg. draw, build):
We said You sure can _____ and You sure can _____ and You sure can _____ and You sure can _____ and we meant it.

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